

DETA



distance education and teachers' training in africa

CONFERENCE 2011

PROCEEDINGS

3–5 August 2011

Universidade Eduardo Mondlane,
Maputo, Mozambique

Editor: Dr Ruth Aluko

Assistant Editor: Dr Francisco Januario

*ENSURING THE HIGHEST POSSIBLE QUALITY OF
EDUCATION IN A CHANGING AFRICA*

DETA CONFERENCE 2011

PROCEEDINGS

3 – 5 August 2011

Eduardo Mondlane University, Maputo, Mozambique

Editor

Dr Ruth Aluko

Assistant Editor

Dr Francisco Januario

**ENSURING THE HIGHEST POSSIBLE QUALITY OF
EDUCATION IN A CHANGING AFRICA**



Proceedings of the 4th biennial International Conference on
Distance Education and Teachers' Training in Africa (DETA) held at
the Eduardo Mondlane University, Maputo, Mozambique.

August 2011

Publisher: Unit for Distance Education, Faculty of Education,
University of Pretoria, with the Eduardo Mondlane University,
Maputo, Mozambique.

Editor: Dr Ruth Aluko

Assistant Editor: Dr Francisco Januario

Place of publication: Pretoria, South Africa

Printed by: BusinessPrint

Language editing and layout by: Janine Smit Editorial Services

ISBN 978-1-77592-032-8

The authors are responsible for the accuracy and correctness of
the content of the contributions, although DETA provided some
editorial assistance. DETA does not accept responsibility or liability
for the content of any contribution published in these proceedings.

DETA CONFERENCE 2011 PROCEEDINGS

Foreword

The Distance Education and Teachers' Training in Africa (DETA) 2011 was hosted by the Eduardo Mondlane University, Maputo, Mozambique, from 3 to 5 August. It was the fourth of its kind. The biennial conference was born out of the necessity to create a unique platform for all faculties of education to share knowledge and deliberate on educational issues as they affect Africa. We understand our contextual landscape as it affects education better and expanding education and improving its quality is central to the continent development. African scholars always meet at international conferences, but at the inception of the DETA conference in 2005, there were few conferences to bring these scholars together. DETA's major objectives are to contribute to the debate on teacher training in Africa and to build capacity for the delivery of teacher training programmes in Africa. These objectives represent ways in which the conference can support NEPAD, various protocols on education and training in Africa, the Millennium Development Goals, and some of the recommendations of the All-Africa Education Ministers' Conference on Open Learning and Distance Education.

The conferences are co-hosted by the organisers and other educational institutions and organisations.

The theme of the 2011 conference was "Ensuring the highest possible quality of education in a changing Africa". Sub-themes included the following:

- Education in a changing Africa: how is Africa changing, and what are the implications for education?
- Teacher education in a changing Africa: what counts as quality teacher education in a changing Africa?
- The role of leadership, management and governance development in ensuring quality education in a changing Africa
- The role of open learning, distance education, ICT and open educational resources in ensuring quality teacher education in a changing Africa
- Learning from success – how can we generalise *from successful/innovative educational initiatives?*

More than 200 delegates from 14 African countries (Botswana, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Nigeria, South Africa, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe) and three other countries (Canada, the United Kingdom and the United States of America) attended the conference. A total of 83 papers were read.

Nine contributions were finally accepted for inclusion in the proceedings. This is DETA's second volume of conference proceedings and it is by no means perfect.

However, the editorial team wishes to emphasise that academic robustness and merit were of paramount importance in the selection of contributions. DETA has a developmental dimension, and it hopes to put better and more voluminous proceedings before its readership in the future.

We appreciate the hard work and input of the authors, the editorial team (Dr Ruth Aluko and Dr Francisco Januario), Prof Johan Beckmann for his support, and the reviewers of the manuscripts, the speakers, the sponsors and the secretariats of the institutions that co-hosted the conference.

We wish you interesting reading and look forward to having your paper included in the next volume if you are a participant at the 2013 conference in Nairobi.

Johan Hendrikz
University of Pretoria
South Africa

Eugenia Cossa
Eduardo Mondlane University
Mozambique

Co-chairpersons

DETA 2011

CONTENTS OF THE PROCEEDINGS

This volume consists of nine contributions and the contributions are from the papers presented at the DETA 2011 conference.

In the first paper, citing the example of Ghana, **Dr Clara Akuamoah-Boateng and Dr Kankam Boadu** argue that that the goal of distance education can only be achieved if enrolled students finish on time. Thus, the paper examines tutors' and students' perception on the attrition rate of distance learners. Findings reveal that most of the significant causes are evolutionary issues that can be resolved as time goes on through improvement in technology, effective course design, better understanding of learner characteristics and appropriate learner support systems. The authors opine that the complexity of causes of attrition and measures to reduce it, only allow for few practical or readily applied solutions. Finally, they made some recommendations to curb high attrition rates among UCC distance learners.

Prof Martin Dwomoh-Tweneboah discusses effective assessment and evaluation strategies for Distance Education. In his contribution, the author argues that very little has been written and discussed about the effectiveness of distance learning and the effective ways of assessing and evaluating distance education programmes. Therefore, his paper explores various programme evaluation strategies and assessment tools and practices for distance education. Dwomoh-Tweneboah's conclusion is that these not only help determine what and how students have learned, they also help in improving the quality of the programme. However, he cautions that the methods and data collected may vary, depending on each context.

Dr Sharon Mampane examines how the facilitators of Distance Education in an Advanced Certificate in Education programme are trained and supported to improve their work. The author's argument for the analysis is two-fold. The first is to investigate whether facilitators are adequately trained, quality assured and supported so that their students can be able to study independently. The second is whether the training, quality assurance and support of facilitators contribute to improving their facilitation skills. Mampane employs a theoretical framework based on the principles of human learning and concludes that there are no standardised support mechanisms for the facilitators which results in some facilitators being better prepared than others. She hoped the findings would contribute to the development of standardised training and support strategies to assist both the trainers and the trainees.

In her paper, **Dr Teresa Ogina** emphasises the need for distance education providers to enhance distance students' learning experience through effective support structures. She draws on theoretical insights from Transactional Distance Theory (TDT), focusing on learning support in terms of dialogue in the learning facilitation process; the structure of the programmes; and learner autonomy. Ogina concludes that though student-participants in the study found the support sessions valuable, there is the need for the continuous development of learning-support facilitators, learning materials and administrative support structures to enhance the quality of the support system in order to reduce transactional distance.

In their contribution, **Dr Alice Olagunju and Omolola Oloyede** attempt to examine the effect of outdoor activities as well as the influence of gender on secondary school students' environmental attitude to Biology. This was necessary due to the need to encourage students to develop a positive attitude towards the environment. Using a quasi - experimental design, findings reveal that there was a significant effect of outdoor activities on students' environmental attitude and a significant influence of gender on the attitude of students to the environment. Outdoor activities were observed to have brought about significant attitudinal change in the students. Therefore, the authors recommend outdoor activities for the teaching and learning of environmental education in Biology for both sexes.

Dr Margaret Funke Omidire uses a qualitative study to employ curriculum-based dynamic assessment (CDA) as a means of reducing the inequity in the assessment of learners using a language in which they lack proficiency in mainstream education. Although the results suggest a generally positive influence of CDA, to varying degrees, the participants' low level of additional language (AL) acquisition, which was not helped by some of the teacher-participants' inability to be models of language, was almost crippling to the entire study. The question of the adequacy of teacher training and continuous professional development for teachers came to the fore, indicating a profound need to expand teacher education and in-service training through distance education.

Dr Samuel Oyoo cites a famous literature playwright who asked the intriguing question: *"What kind of science can a child learn in the absence, for example, of basic language competence and an attendant inability to handle concepts?"* Though it appears that Africa is perhaps the only continent in the world where most formal/school education is conducted in instructional languages that are foreign to most

learners and their teachers, achievement of general proficiency in the instructional language is a necessary first step if any learning is to be expected in that language. Through sustained literature reviews of cross-national research on language in science education over the last 40 years, he argues for an appropriate perspective on the use of (the foreign) language by science teachers during teaching and suggest approaches to assist in this area of need.

Prof Yvonne Reed attempts to fill the gap in teacher education pedagogy literature on the topic of the need for teacher educators to take a critical look at how they mediate knowledge and skills to pre-service and in-service teacher education students. Using examples from a critical pedagogic analysis of selected South African teacher education materials, she argues that when teacher educators design materials for teacher education at a distance, they should consider not only the pedagogies that they wish to describe and discuss *in* the materials but also the pedagogies *of* the materials because both contribute to the constitution of particular subject positions for readers (as students and as teachers). Her take-home message for distance teacher education material designers is the need to select and mediate knowledge in a way that encourages teachers to be not just consumers but also producers of knowledge.

Freda Wolfenden cites the case of Malawi in her paper. She contributes to current debates on how to address the gap in qualified female teacher recruitment and retention in rural areas. There is ample evidence that gender parity in primary and secondary education is yet to be achieved in many countries in Sub-Saharan Africa. She suggests that one solution to break the cycle of low female achievement in rural areas is through the use of distance education to prepare local women to become teachers within their own communities. Finally, she highlights areas for further study.

THE REVIEW PROCESS

In March 2011, DETA sent out a call for papers for the conference to be held in Mozambique in August 2011. Conference speakers were requested to submit papers for possible inclusion in the second conference proceedings to be published, if they so wished and they were given guidelines on the submission. A total of 34 drafts, which covered the conference subthemes, were submitted. The drafts were subjected to double blind reviews. Of these 34 drafts, 12 were provisionally accepted and returned to the authors for improvements. Eventually nine drafts were selected for inclusion in this proceedings document.

Academic sturdiness was the primary criterion used in selecting contributions, but DETA also proudly espouses a developmental dimension in the African research and publication context. Though readers may find one or two papers not directly related to teacher education, they have been included to show examples of well written papers. We are confident that the proceedings will comply with the standards of academically acceptable conference proceedings worldwide.

The editorial team wishes to thank the following peer reviewers for reviewing the drafts and providing the authors with valuable comments:

Aguti, Dr J	Kruger, Dr J	Pathudi, Dr N
Amadi, Dr M	Letseka, Mr M	Prinsloo, Dr S
Bholah, Dr R	Lumadi, Dr T	Reed, Dr Y
Blignaut, Prof S	Madiba, Dr M	Safford, Dr K
Cossa, Prof E	Mampane, Dr R	Schulze, Prof S
Engelbrecht, Dr A	Mays, Mr T	Sutherland, Dr D
Ferreira, Prof R	Mnguni, Dr L	Van der Berg, Dr G
Fraser, Prof W	Modesto, Dr S	Van Niekerk, Prof L
Gatsha, Dr G	Mowes, Dr D	Van Vuuren, Dr H
Gumbo, Dr T	Nagel, Dr L	Van Wyk Prof N
Hamweete, Dr W	Nieuwenhuis, Prof J	Venter, Dr E
Joubert, Prof R	Ogina, Dr T	Wolfenden, Ms F
Kabanda, Prof G	Olivier, Dr H	
Kamper, Prof G	Olorundare, Prof A	
Keraro, Prof F	Omidire, Dr M	
Kirkup, Dr G		

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The editors wish to express their appreciation towards the following individuals and institutions:

- Dr Johan Hendrikz, Manager of the Unit for Distance Education, Faculty of Education, University of Pretoria, for the opportunity to publish this volume of conference proceedings
- The various contributors for their contributions
- Mr Pieter van der Merwe of the Department of Library Services of the University of Pretoria for his assistance
- Janine Smit Editorial Services for the final editing of the contributions, the design of the cover, and the layout of the publication
- The University of Pretoria for its financial and other support
- Eduardo Mondlane University, Maputo, Mozambique, for hosting the conference
- BusinessPrint for their professional printing service

DETA



distance education and teachers' training in africa



TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. REDUCING DISTANCE LEARNERS' ATTRITION RATE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST: TUTORS'/STUDENTS' PERCEPTION – Dr Clara Akuamoah-Boateng and Dr Kankam Boadu	1
2. EFFECTIVE ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION STRATEGIES FOR DISTANCE EDUCATION – Prof Martin Dwomoh-Tweneboah	27
3. FACILITATOR PREPARATION, SUPPORT AND QUALITY ASSURANCE FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF STUDENT PERFORMANCE AT CONTACT SESSIONS – Dr Sharon Mampane	43
4. DISTANCE EDUCATION STUDENTS' EXPERIENCES OF LEARNING SUPPORT SESSIONS – Dr Teresa Ogina	65
5. EFFECTS OF OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES ON BIOLOGY STUDENTS' ATTITUDE TO THE ENVIRONMENT– Dr Alice M Olagunju and Omolola O Oloyede	85
6. THE IMPORTANCE OF CONTINUOUS TEACHER DEVELOPMENT THROUGH DISTANCE EDUCATION FOR TEACHERS USING ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE FOR LEARNING, TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT – Dr Margaret F Omidire	101
7. FOREIGN LANGUAGES IN AFRICAN SCIENCE CLASSROOMS: PERSPECTIVES ON AND APPROACHES TO LANGUAGE USE DURING TEACHING – Dr Samuel Oyoo	121
8. PEDAGOGIES <i>OF</i> AND PEDAGOGIES <i>IN</i> DISTANCE LEARNING MATERIAL FOR TEACHER EDUCATION – Prof Yvonne Reed	149
9. SUPPORTING INDUCTION TO THE TEACHING PROFESSION FOR WOMEN IN MALAWI – Freda Wolfenden	171

