

Chapter Five

The Access Challenge for the Botswana Higher Education Sector

5.1 Introduction and Overview

The data analysis in this chapter focuses mainly on finding out the challenges that contributed to the Botswana higher education sector's inability to adequately provide for the high demands for access to participate in higher education. It also analyses the participants' views on the strategies through which the perceived access bottleneck can be addressed. The academic puzzle behind this study was my hope to understand why some dual mode higher education institutions in Southern Africa continued to enrol low numbers of students despite adopting ODL as one of their strategies to improve access into their programmes as well as why at other universities where there was increased enrolment due to employing ODL in some faculties, the ODL strategy was still not adopted in more faculties to increase access to more programmes. Table 1.1 in Chapter One illustrates that ODL increased enrolments substantially in dedicated ODL higher education institutions, while within some dual mode institutions it made very insignificant contribution towards increasing participation to university-wide programmes. However, this situation was contrary to what ODL scholars and proponents (Rumble, 1992; Hope, 2006; Daniel, 2007; Pityana, 2008) put forward. The puzzle that needed to be unlocked was a condition in which some dual mode institutions wanted to reduce participation barriers to increase enrolments and had identified ODL as a strategy with which to do so, yet they seemed not to utilise this strategy fully to achieve their goal. In Chapter Four, I identified qualitative content analysis as the preferred route to follow in order to discover the missing pieces of this puzzle, to come up with a clearer picture of what could be interfering with the identified strategy fulfilling its promise.

Aided by the selected documents for analysis and the transcripts of the fifteen interviews, I embarked on the process to establish whether or not the demand for higher education in

Botswana was indeed too high to be adequately contained through the capacity of the local institutions. Then I explored the participants' views on how this challenge could be addressed. During the reading and re-reading process, I started watching for and analysing the emerging categories and themes, as well as considered some pre-set categories, as captured under Table 1.2 in Chapter One.

5.2 Analysis and Interpretation of Data

Qualitative data like all other data need to be analysed and interpreted to bring order and understanding. As many scholars have observed, there is no single best way to analyse and interpret qualitative data since unlike in the case of quantitative research, there are no fixed rules and formulas for analysing qualitative data (Taylor-Powell and Renner, 2003; Patton, 1999; Basit, 2003; McBride and Schostak, 2008). Many see qualitative data analysis as a creative process that depends on the researcher being partly intuitive and partly methodical, though explicit systematic technical soundness cannot be overemphasised (Patton, 1999; McBride and Schostak, 2008; Tellis, 1997).

Following the process of transcribing the fifteen interviews, all the participants were contacted and sent their individual transcripts to appreciate and comment on how representative of the interview they felt the transcripts were. Many sent confirmation that the transcripts captured the interview successfully. Two participants requested a further meeting each and that was arranged. With the first participant (Participant 1), the requested meeting was held on 5 November 2009 from 0900hrs to 0930hrs, at his place of work. Though I recorded the proceedings of this meeting, it turned out that it was mainly confirmation of what was already on the previous transcript. Therefore later when I listened to the new recording and looked at the hand written comments on the original transcript, I decided not to write a separate transcript, but rather to make the necessary additions on the original one. The meeting provided me with the opportunity to make a follow up on a few issues, just to confirm that the information had not changed since the time of the original interview a year earlier. Most of the information had not changed and apparently not much had been lost on the original recording as I had feared, when I discovered earlier that the recording was not complete. In the case of the follow up meeting with the other

participant, I had actually sent some follow up questions through e-mail. The participant preferred to answer those questions on a face-to-face basis too. Unfortunately this follow up meeting never materialised as the participant's schedule suddenly changed. However, there was confirmation through email, that the contents of the original transcript were representative of the initial interview. All the other respondents confirmed the representativeness of the transcripts through email except one who did not give feedback after acknowledging receipt of the transcript. Seventeen people participated in this study. However, only fifteen interviews were conducted. Fourteen of the fifteen interviews were one to one, while the fifteenth interview was a group interview with three of the seventeen participants in the group. Therefore the transcripts analysed were of the fifteen interviews, including the group interview. I identified the three participants in the transcript of the group interview as T15A, T15B and T15C. The rest of the participants identify with the transcript of their interviews as T1, T2 up to T14.

5.2.1 Demand for Higher Education in Botswana

When I reviewed some documents from Botswana and from other sources that I listed under Table 4.2 and Table 4.3 in Chapter 4, there was evidence that in Botswana concerns had been raised about the low level of participation in higher education and that there was need to raise this level in order to ultimately achieve transition from an agro-based to a knowledge based economy (Republic of Botswana, 1994; University of Botswana, 1999; University of Botswana, 2004, University of Botswana, 2005; University of Botswana, 2008a). Literature therefore justified the need for increased participation in higher education in Botswana, identifying higher participation and high success rates at this level as among the most important pre-requisites for high performance in economic development. Literature also revealed a high level of demand for higher education from youth and adults, which local providers were unable to satisfy (University of Botswana, 2006; Richardson, 2009; Dodds *et al*, 2008). According to Richardson (2009), about 20,000 students completed senior secondary education annually. Out of these school leavers, approximately 18,000 were eligible for admission into higher education on an annual basis. The UB, which was the only public dual mode university in Botswana, was able to admit about 3,500 of this target population. This left 14,500 not admitted at UB and hoping to find alternative placement anywhere else (Richardson, 2009). This picture was corroborated by other studies like Kamau (2007), Dodds *et al*

(2008) and Sikwibele and Mungoo (2009), which were mainly looking at the demand from adult employees, especially teachers.

The first assumption that I made, which was that there was high demand for participation in higher education in Botswana, which the local providers were not able to satisfy was therefore confirmed through the review of the literature. However, since the participants in this study had worked in the Botswana higher education sector, I also explored their points of view with regard to this issue. The semi structured interviews with open-ended questions were meant to allow the participants to freely express their opinions about the phenomenon under study. I started by looking for and abstracting the participants' expressed observations, experiences and knowledge concerning the demand for higher education in Botswana. Though there were seventeen participants in this study, there were fourteen one-to-one interviews and one group interview that comprised three of the seventeen participants. To guide the direction of discussions through each of the fifteen interviews, I had several questions that I had prepared for the semi-structured interviews that I held with the seventeen participants involved in this study. In the area of demand for higher education in Botswana, around which my first assumption was perceived, I specifically wanted to know whether in Botswana like literature indicated was the case in other countries, there was a growing interest of the adult population to participate in higher education. The responses of all the participants indicated that there was this growing trend. Indications were that more adults and especially employees in different employment sectors showed a high level of interest in enrolling on part-time and ODL programmes. Therefore I was interested in the participants' views regarding what might be influencing adults' interest in higher education. The unit of analysis was text from the fifteen interview transcripts and the focus was on the aspect of establishing what factors might be influencing the level of demand for higher education in Botswana. I put all the responses to my question that wanted to know what could be influencing adults to show an interest to enrol in higher education programmes under the heading 'factors influencing demand for higher education in Botswana', which was derived out of the interview question area. Examination of participants' responses sought to elicit the type of factors and if they might contribute towards the perceived high social demand for higher education. Four types of factors seemed to emerge from the abstracted data. Table 5.1 below

draws out and classifies these factors under four areas or families, which seemed to contribute to the demand for higher education.

Table 5.1 Factors Influencing Demand for Higher Education

Theme: Need for economic sustainability		
Family 1	Environmental factors	
Codes	Category 1: Global influence - shift in employment patterns – agro based to formal jobs - inflated educational qualifications - rapid technological advancements - developmental requirements - need for enhanced and improved quality of output	Category 2: Increased opportunities - ability to combine work and study - increased private institutions - country prospered and increased affordability - availed government sponsorship to private institutions - initially employed with low level qualifications - improved ICT infrastructure
	codes	Category 3: Policy requirements - RNPE and Vision 2016 expectations - need for global competitiveness - upgrading of qualifications
Family 2	Social Factors	
codes	Category 1: Self-actualisation - status - retirement concerns - repositioning	
Family 3	Economic factors	
codes	Category 1: Economy diversification - diminishing reliance on minerals/diamonds - need to improve national human resources - need for multi-skilling - career changes - preparation for retirement	Category 2: Limited employment opportunities - seeking high level jobs - higher education better living standard - promotion requirements - change to become more marketable - need to provide future livelihood - enjoy the economic boom
Family 4	Job requirement factors	
codes	Category 1: Raised job requirements - re-tooling to keep job - high skilled jobs - improving on skills - working people want to acquire higher post secondary qualifications - changing technology - ever changing skills requirements for jobs	Category 2: Job security - multi-skilling to be competitive - employers demand higher productivity - initially employed with low level qualifications

The four families of factors that seemed to influence demand for higher education, which emerged from Table 5.1 were the family of environmental factors, which had three categories, social factors with one category, economic factors with two categories and job requirement factors with two categories. I first discuss in detail, how the participants perceived environmental factors to influence the demand for higher education. Later I discuss just briefly, the remaining three families of factors influencing demand for higher education, together with the link that seemed to run through these families, which I perceived to be the theme pulling together all the factors that were perceived to influence the demand for higher education in Botswana.

Participants perceived that the current environment influenced adults to want to enrol in higher education programmes and since there were already many secondary school leavers who also wanted to pursue further studies and were keen to enrol in higher education, this tended to pick up the demand level for higher education. With the assistance of Figure 5.1 below I discuss the first of the four families, which is the family of environmental factors, which has three categories; global influence, increased opportunities and policy requirements.

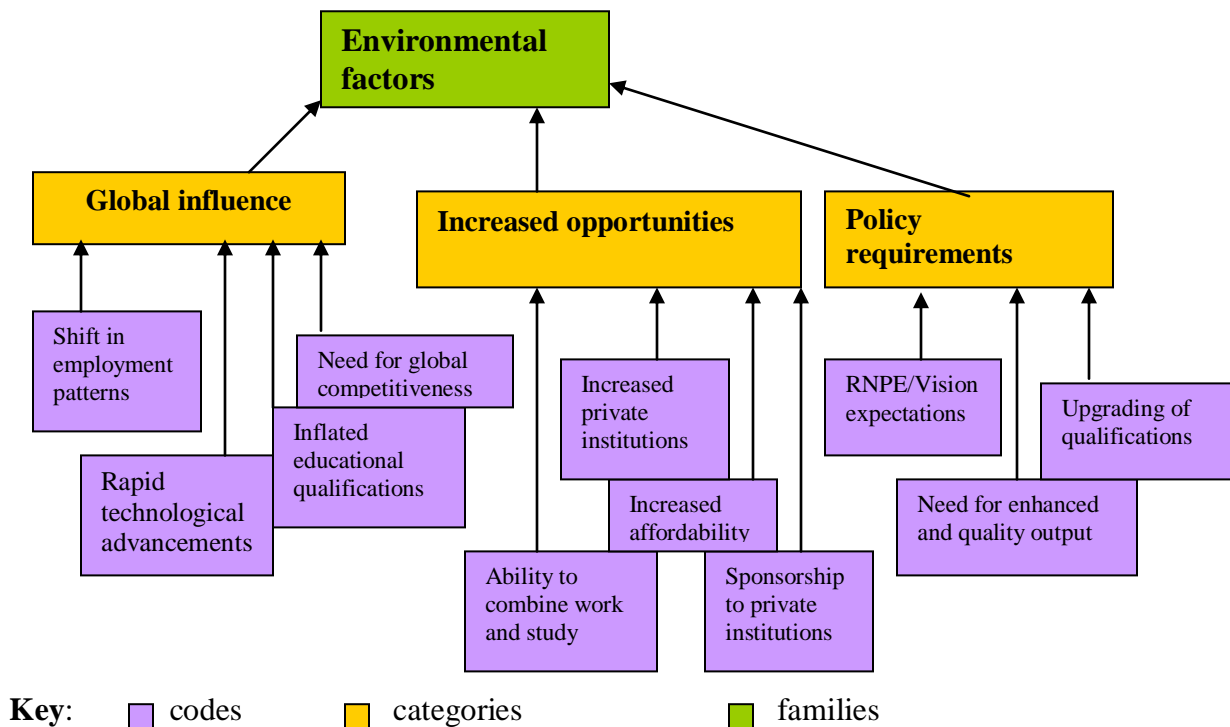


Figure 5.1 Environmental factors influencing demand for higher education

The first category under the environmental factors family was global influence. This category seemed to have a direct impact on how the country positioned itself on the competitive global market. This immediately had bench marking implications for Botswana, indicating that it was important for the country to strive to improve its human resource capacity in order for it to produce goods and services, and human capital that could compete in the global market. Literature reviewed in Chapter 2 indicated that expanded participation and higher achievement in higher education has a direct influence on enhanced economic development of a country (Bloom *et al*, 2006; Young, 2006; World Bank, 2008a; Global Competitiveness Network, 2009). If global trends were shifting towards high skills, and technological skills, as it appeared to be the case, then it would necessarily mean that a country like Botswana, whose participation in higher education was still perceived to be low, should take policy decisions to increase participation and that would hike the demand. At individual level, once such a policy decision has been taken, people would like to align themselves with the policy expectations in order to remain or become competitive in both the local and the global economy for jobs and/or trading of goods and services.

Botswana is expected to gradually move, under this global influence, away from agro based towards an industry driven economy and this shift, as participants observed, brought with it certain developmental requirements. One of the codes under the category of global influence indicated a shift in employment patterns which adults had to respond to by preparing themselves through acquisition of relevant qualifications and skills, in order for them to stay relevant in the employment scenario and the current dynamic economic environment. Participants noted that due to increased global competition, people were gradually under pressure to acquire higher qualifications and higher order skills, in order to be competitive in the local and global market. To a question which wanted to establish why adults were showing so much interest in participating in higher education, some of the responses were “*global trends probably...*” (T7:6)¹⁰, “*it’s a trend as educational qualifications...get bloated up...*” (T11:5). Once trends

¹⁰ T7:6 Transcript No. 7 page 6. The transcripts are numbered from 1 to 15. Transcript No. 15 is from a group interview and participants within the group are identified as A, B and C. Quotations from this transcript therefore have T15A, T15B and T15C respectively.

influenced bloated up qualifications, this would increase the demand for participation in higher education.

Rapid technological developments were also perceived to bring a shift from the way a lot of things had been done before, and hence would affect life experiences. Technological developments can affect the way education is delivered and considering e-learning advancements and the advantages they bring to learning, such developments would increase the level of interest in participating. They were perceived to affect the way business and the economy was run, considering e-business, e-governance and all the other spheres of life. So people needed to adjust to these new ways of doing things if they had to be competitive at any level. A major result of these changes was that people should acquire higher order skills, which are attainable through participation in higher education (Global Competitiveness Network, 2009). As this realisation dawned on people, they would want to access higher education and that would increase the level of demand. High demands for higher qualifications and higher order skills were seen as a response to global competition and a need to improve the quality of products and services for the market economy, as well as a need to ultimately achieve sustainable economic independence. One participant observed a change in the Botswana economy since independence from an agro based to a job based economy and commented that

The country has prospered and boomed. So I think it's inevitable that Batswana have wanted to... enjoy the boom that is taking place. Not by occupying low level jobs ... but by seeking high level, high skilled jobs (T3:9).

The second category under environmental factors was increased opportunities. Under this category participants perceived an opportunity offered to adults by the availability of ODL, either from the few available local providers or through technology from external providers. Participants noticed that since ODL offered people the opportunity to work and study at the same time, the constraints that adults used to experience coming with having to leave work and family to go and study were minimised. One participant observed

You find people talking about the fact that it is very difficult nowadays to leave your family and leave your job and say you are going to be at school, because the economic situation has changed ... it is very expensive to buy food, to take children to school with everything now changing. So people are really interested now in something that they can study from home (T10:9-10).

Participants acknowledged the influence of opportunities to study through ODL and those offered by available ICTs even though noted to be at rudimentary stages of development. However, once there was an opportunity for adults to study and continue earning a living, while also being with their family, they would cease that opportunity. Even though such opportunities might be limited, they were perceived to generate in people an interest to learn and that was seen as contributory to increased demand for higher education. Still under the category of increased opportunities there was an area of increased private institutions. Previously UB was the only higher education institution in Botswana. However, in recent years, the higher education sector opened up opportunities for private institutions to be screened by TEC and be registered to operate in the country if they were found to meet the set criteria. That brought the total of registered higher education institutions in the country to thirty by 2008. One participant noted improvement in the level of participation as an effect of that

... the availability of more private tertiary institutions which are slightly more recognised through the registration of TEC. Even private students have found reason to go there ... government has also increased its own public tertiary institutions (T1:4).

While additional institutions had improved participation in higher education, their presence was perceived to have also increased demand, in that more people keep hoping that they might be admitted and keep trying to find an opportunity to enrol.

Affordability was also an opportunity that participants noted as contributing to increased demand for higher education. Some participants observed that the Botswana economy had steadily improved over the years since independence and until the recent world economic recession.

They noted that as a result of that economic improvement before the recession, some people were in a better position to afford fees for higher education. Those contributed to a higher demand for higher education. The last issue coded under increased opportunities, which was seen to contribute to increased demand for higher education was government opening up sponsorship for study through private institutions. A participant explained that

[i]initially government sponsorship was only available to students who were coming to the UB ... then with time, to those who were going to some of the government institutions. But then, recently the government sponsorship is also available to the private universities within the country (T12:3-4).

With this opportunity more people were seen to have been encouraged to come forward to look for a chance to enrol, with the hope that they would receive government sponsorship.

The last category under the environmental factors family was policy requirements, which had three codes. The first code dealt with the 1994 Revised National Policy on Education and Vision 2016 expectations on the education sector. One of the expectations on higher education from the RNPE was that all primary school teachers with a Primary Teacher Certificate (PTC) should be upgraded to at least Diploma in Primary Education, to enhance the quality of primary education (Republic of Botswana, 1994). The challenge with this policy decision turned out to be that the four Colleges of Primary Education in the country did not have the capacity to handle the high demand, which was estimated at around 11,600 PTC holders (Kamau, 2002). The other challenge of the policy requirement for teacher to upgrade en-mass was that even if the Colleges of Education could accommodate large numbers of teachers, there would be serious manpower shortages in the primary schools where they were teaching. However, this was one of the policy decisions perceived to have picked up the level of demand for higher education. Another policy challenge was perceived to come from one of the pillars of Botswana's national vision for growth and development, which expects Botswana to be an informed and educated nation when the country attains 50 years of independence in the year 2016 (Republic of Botswana, 1997). Participants observed that this national vision had been very widely publicised and

communicated. Botswana had been encouraged to take advantage of any available opportunity to be part of an informed and educated nation. The publicity of the vision seemed to have received resounding response that was observed to have contributed to the raising demands for higher education. Indicating the wide publicity of Vision 2016, one of the participants observed:

I think it's a vision that has been communicated widely in the country, because communities are aware of Vision 2016 and one of its pillars, an educated and informed nation. President Masire who was President then when this thing was started was saying that ... a graduate for every family, something like that (T7:6).

That level of publicity and political support seemed to have achieved a high level of response from the Botswana population. The second code which falls under the policy requirements category dealt with the need for enhanced quality output. This code seemed to intersect with that of the need for global competitiveness under the global influence category, both of which dealt with production of quality products and services including skilled manpower, which would be capable of competing in the global market. The last code under this category was upgrading of qualifications as a policy requirement, aiming at enhancing the skills level of the economy and the ability for the country to have human resources comparable to the best regionally and internationally. It can be inferred that global influence impacted on local policy, through which a country could achieve global competitiveness, which would in turn require acquisition of upgraded qualifications and skills. Only one category emerged out of the family of social factors and this was the self-actualisation category, which covered three codes of status, retirement concerns and repositioning. This family dealt with factors related to personal development and the individuals taking care of their image, status and issues of fitting into the dynamic environment with dignity. Through the code dealing with retirement concerns, for instance, participants had observed adults going towards retirement getting themselves prepared for an active retirement age by up-skilling and acquiring higher qualifications, which would benefit them and allow them to continue being active and useful to the society beyond retirement. Asked to comment why many adults were showing interest to enrol for higher education programmes, one participant responded:

... not just for the sake of qualifications. May be promotion, may be the job area and also the changing technology ... And you find that many of the people coming ... it's not the young people. It's people who are middle age, some older, acquiring ... skills late in life ... My own assessment is that they need these skills in their job area before they retire. Perhaps after they retire, they may need these skills for solving problems (T8:9-11).

The remaining two families of economic and job requirement factors had an underlying effect of stiff competition, both for better paying jobs and for acquisition of the highest qualifications and skills, in order to have a competitive urge for new jobs as well as for job security. The participants perceived that many people wanted to advance their educational qualifications as well as enhance their skills such that they could either get a better paying job (which is an economic reasoning), or to secure the one they already had. Looking at Table 5.1, it appeared like factors from these two families together constituted the bulk of the factors perceived to influence demand for higher education in Botswana. Of the two, economic factors seemed to be the most frequently expressed as influencing the demand for higher education. These two families of factors actually appeared very closely related with each other, as well as related to the rest of the families. The need for higher qualifications and higher order skills and the need for better paying jobs and competitive goods and services, competitive human resources all seemed to point to the need to be economically self-sustainable. It can be inferred from the discussion of the different factors perceived to influence the demand for higher education that the need for economic sustainability of the self or of the country could be what was actually driving the demand for higher education. Therefore the overarching theme that appeared to be driving all the different families of factors discussed above seemed to be the need for economic sustainability, as Table 5.1 above reflects. That is why the individual would want to be competitive and get the best job, or produce the best goods and services that attract the best prices. The overall aim for all the up-skilling of the individual or the nation is primarily to achieve comfortable living, which can be attainable through economic sustainability among other things. When asked why so many adults showed interest to participate in higher education programmes, one participant had this to say: *“I think it is the realization that education is the key to life”* (T4:8), while another one thought *“people are tending to realise that unless you keep on*

improving on certain skills, you cannot guarantee yourself either a job or a future livelihood” (T2:10).

A further observation made by another participant was that

... people appreciate the fact that the more education you have ... I think the more you are likely to get a better paying job and therefore may be higher education equals ... a better living standard (T7:6).

Figure 5.2 illustrates the resulting pressure of the various factors put on the Botswana higher education sector and that the various factors affect each other and all affect and are affected by the provision of higher education in the economy.

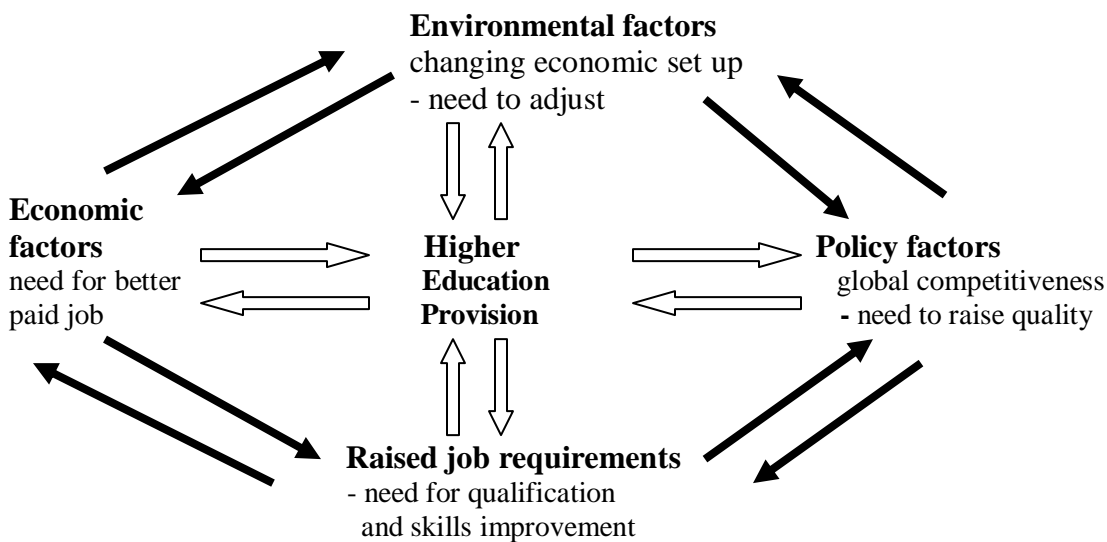


Figure 5.2: Pressure on Higher Education

It would appear like there was a lot of pressure on the higher education sector which was supposed to service all the other sectors. While there was pressure on the education sector to address high demand for higher education in order to satisfy economic, environmental and policy factors as well as raised job requirements, all these areas appeared to continue to suffer pressure when the higher education sector continued to fail them.

5.2.2 Level of Demand and Participation

Upon establishing some of the factors perceived to influence demand for higher education in Botswana and their inter-relationships, I moved on to the level of demand compared to availability of opportunities for entry into higher education, as perceived by the participants and compared their perceptions and opinions with what the documents indicated about it. I also wanted to know where this demand was coming from, apart from adults and employees that had been identified as showing a lot of interest in participating in higher education. Building from the factors that participants perceived to be influencing demand, as illustrated in Tables 5.1 and Figure 5.1 above, Table 5.2 below helped me to also compare the emerging level of demand for higher education with the level of its supply so that I could conclude my first assumption that higher education in Botswana was in high demand, while existing providers were unable to cope with it. Here I extracted from the manifest data some phrases that gave an indication of the level of demand as well as the level of participation in higher education by the various groups of clientele, as perceived by participants as well as indicated in some of the documents consulted. In terms of data from interview transcripts, I also indicated in brackets how many of the participants held that view.

Table 5.2 Demand and supply of higher education in Botswana

Indications of the level of demand for higher education		
Participants' observations and experiences	Level demand (high/low)	From documents
large numbers of 18 – 24 sent outside the country for undergraduate programmes (12 participants)	→ high ←	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - increasing numbers of secondary leavers putting pressure on higher education sector (Richardson, 2009; Dodds <i>et al</i>, 2008) - annually 18,000 senior school leavers eligible for university, UB able to admit 3,500 and 14,500 not admitted (Richardson, 2009)
influx of demand from adults (13 participants)	→ high ←	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - challenging need for skilled population (Richardson, 2009; Republic of Botswana; 1997)
people in employment want to enrol (13 participants)	→ high ←	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - policy requirement → all primary school teachers to have a minimum of Diploma in Primary Education (Kamau, 2002; Sikwibele and Mungoo, 2009; Kamau, 2007) - by 2003, 11600 PTC holders to be upgraded to diploma level (Kamau, 2002) - working adults for career advancement in different professions (Dodds <i>et al</i>, 2008)

Table 5.2 indicated three groups of potential learners putting pressure on higher education institutions for opportunities to participate, which were 18 to 24 year age group from senior secondary schools. To indicate the level of demand, ‘large numbers’ of this age group was said to be sent outside the country for higher education because inside the country there was not enough capacity to handle the need. One participant indicated that

there is a major constraint in terms of availability of opportunities within the country ... in fact as a result of that constraint, government has been spending an enormous amount of money sending students for under-graduate programmes ... outside the country (T1:2-3).

The second group of potential learners demanding higher education was adults, as indicated by thirteen out of seventeen participants and the documents cited on Figure 5.2, which identified a challenge of the need for skilled manpower (Richardson, 2009; Republic of Botswana; 1997). The third group was of people in employment. In addition to pressure from individual members comprising these three groups, there also seemed to be pressure coming from government through certain policy expectations for enhanced levels of qualifications for certain cadres of its employees (Kamau, 2002; Sikwibele and Mungoo, 2009; Kamau, 2007, Richardson, 2009).

The main challenge that this situation seemed to pose for the institutions was that of pressure to accommodate more students than the limited space, facilities and other resources can handle. The concern expressed by most of the participants was the perceived resulting compromised quality, since institutions would be under pressure to take more than their human resource capacity and other resources were originally planned to handle. Many responses indicated that where demand was too high and resources not adequate, quality service was expected to be compromised. Many private higher education institutions had been registered and students were being enrolled in large numbers in those institutions in recent years. One participant summed up the concern indicating that “*the particular challenge that we’re facing is in relation to quality Even if we made some progress in terms of access, quality ... is very, very poor*” (T3:6). Participants identified some of these institutions as having been set up for business and a concern was being

raised that as more and more secondary school completers continued to scramble for admission, some of the profit making institutions might continue to enrol beyond their capacity, in order to maximise profits. One participant commenting on compromised quality when such institutions ceased an opportunity to admit more than the planned capacity observed:

it needs slightly more funds to develop facilities to remain sustainable on the market ... But we find that the entrepreneurs themselves who invest in education, regard it as a normal business ... This is where you find that may be the ratio of students to the teachers increases, irrespective of the disciplines (T2:13-14).

Meanwhile, where resources were over-stretched, quality would be compromised and students end up provided with poor quality education. Too much pressure for more access may cause other institutions the challenge of losing quality even where it originally existed. A participant commented that

... it also depends on the nature of quality of education they are giving. Because if they are in it mainly for money, then the more numbers they have the better ... then the more numbers they have the better. I would say it depends on the class sizes and things because when you look at some of these institutions, some are very, very small (T8:11-12).

All participants found the level of participation in higher education to be very low in Botswana, and estimated it at around 12% of the 18 to 24 year olds who qualified to enter this level of education and training. These observations also seemed to be corroborated by the research conducted in the country in recent years (Republic of Botswana, 1997; Kamau, 2007; Dodds *et al*, 2008; Kamau, 2002; Sikwibele and Mungoo, 2009; Richardson, 2009). Dodds *et al* (2008) and Richardson (2009) also estimated the participation in higher education at a rate of about 12%. The UB through its Development Plan 8 observed that Botswana was providing access to university level education to only a small proportion of the qualified and eligible age group, with nearly two thirds of those who actually apply being turned away for lack of places (University of Botswana, 1999). The EFA Monitoring reports of 2005, 2007 and 2008 also indicated

Botswana’s participation rate in higher education to be lower than Mauritius, Namibia and South Africa (UNESCO, 2007). These three Southern African countries are used in Botswana as its comparators (Tertiary Education Council, 2008a). The data from documents consulted on the demand and supply of higher education in Botswana (Republic of Botswana, 1997; Kamau, 2007; Dodds *et al*, 2008; Kamau, 2002; Sikwibele and Mungoo, 2009; Richardson, 2009), as well as that from the interview transcripts (see Table 5.2) seemed to agree on the level of supply and demand for higher education in the country, and seemingly confirmed my first assumption that there was high demand, which existing higher education providers were unable to cope with. As reflected through Table 5.1, several factors seemed to influence this high demand from both youth and adults, who put pressure on the few existing higher education institutions in the country.

5.2.3 Challenges for the Higher Education Sector

Having established that there was high demand for higher education and low participation, the next level of analysis focused on the challenges and constraints as perceived by the participants, which might be making it difficult for the higher education sector to adequately address the high demand for higher education in Botswana. I deduced from the data, challenges at national, institutional and individual level. Through Table 5.3 below I identified problem areas which might be contributing to the limited ability of the higher education sector to adequately address the demand.

Table 5.3: Challenges for the Higher Education Sector

Meaning unit	Codes	Categories	Families	Theme
placement is lower with limited academic programmes	limitations on available academic programmes	limited programmes	Limited enrolment opportunities	L I M I T E D
don't have the necessary infrastructure physical facilities and other infrastructure not developed to take care of increasing numbers	slow development of facilities and infrastructure	Limited facilities and infrastructure		
local institutions cannot meet social demand for higher education major constraint with availability of opportunities	low capacity of local institutions	limited face-to-face opportunities		



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - within country - lack of institutions - one university and few other higher education institutions - limited places 	too few institutions to accommodate demand			E N R O L M E N T A N D P A R T I C I P A T I O N
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - low development of ODL which could absorb more adults - programme provided only in Gaborone - if programme in satellite areas numbers would soar - high Botswana geographically dispersed in terms of scattered population - professionals have to go to rural areas to go and serve once they're there, in terms of education they're stuck 	<p>ODL programmes not available in parts of the country</p> <p>Limited capacity to reach scattered populations</p>	Limited ODL opportunities		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - drop out due to lack of finances - part-timers to pay individually, get paid back after successful completion - some working people's salaries not enough to pay for higher education - finance affects accessibility - younger generation concerned about payment of fees - sponsorship for post secondary education tight to government - no scholarships arranged through banks or any other organisations 	<p>many people unable to pay</p> <p>ODL and part-time study not sponsored</p> <p>only one sponsor for higher education</p>	limited sponsorship avenues	Financial constraints	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a very expensive education level - no operating budgets to run infrastructure and pay necessary salaries 	budget limitations affecting implementation	Budget limitations		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - since independence focus to build primary then secondary, little focus on higher education, not received much policy or strategic attention 	less concentration on higher education sector for too long	Unbalanced development of education sector	Low development of the higher education sector	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - wastage and poor management of resources, lot of tiny micro institutions, no efficiency - large number of outbound students, very expensive - lack of monitoring of public funded institutions - poor records management and lack of data 	<p>inefficient management of resources and records</p> <p>expensive education strategy</p> <p>poor monitoring</p>	Poor planning and monitoring		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Batswana do not have a reading culture 	Lack of interest and enthusiasm in reading	Poor reading habits	Low reading culture	

Nine areas of constraints emerged, which led to four major challenges that could have ultimately contributed to limited participation in higher education in Botswana. In Table 5.3, I included a column which I thought “meaning unit” as discussed by Graneheim and Lundman (2004) described it better. According to Graneheim and Lundman (2004) a meaning unit is a group of words or statements that relate to the same central meaning. The meaning units reflected on Table 5.3 are statements deduced from the participants’ responses, and not quoted in verbatim. I captured each statement the way I understood it from the transcript and grouped related ones in meaning units, so that I could interpret them together in those group areas. Once I condensed these meaning units they began to give me an idea of the names I could give to them as the various data areas and hence they gave me codes. The various groups of codes then gave me categories, which I then grouped into themes. In Table 5.3 above, the nine emerging categories contributed to limited enrolment opportunities, financial constraints, low development of the higher education sector and low reading culture, as four emerging families, which all culminated in one theme which I called limited participation in higher education. A closer look at the meaning units indicated challenges that could affect individuals, the institutions and the higher education sector.

I then randomly picked one of the four families of challenges faced by the higher education sector in Botswana and presented it with its family members in Figure 5.2 below for closer examination.

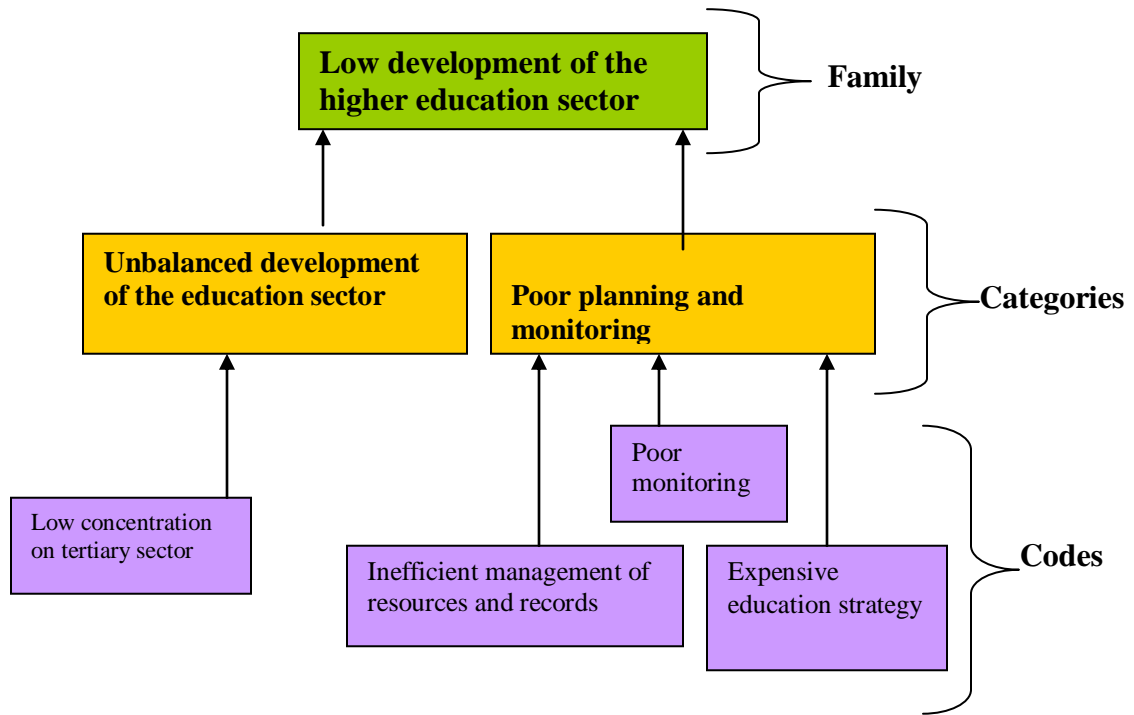


Figure 5.3 Challenges for the higher education sector

The family of low development of the higher education sector had two categories. Only one code emerged under the category named unbalanced development of the education sector, while under poor planning there emerged three codes. The situation of unbalanced development of the education sector in Botswana seemed to have part of its origin from the historical condition of the sector at independence. A scan of the literature under Chapter Three indicated that at independence Botswana inherited from the colonial government, a very poorly developed education sector (Mogae, 2005; World Economic Forum, 2009; University of Botswana, 2008a). The new government had to prioritise where to start in terms of developing the education sector and as one participant observed:

the major issue has been that Botswana's focus since independence is to build up basic ... start education from the base, focusing on primary, focusing next on secondary. And there are major achievements there I mean ... we're almost at universal access in terms of primary. We're heading towards that way in terms of secondary. We will be there by the end of NDP 10 (T3:5).

When it came to higher education, the observation was that

there's been very little focus on tertiary level education over the period of independence ... it hasn't received very much policy or strategic attention until TEC came into being three years ago (T3:5).

The above observations by the participants seemed to be corroborated by some of the evaluated literature that is listed under tables 4.2 and 4.3 in Chapter Four. Literature indicated that at independence in 1966, there was no university in Botswana and skilled manpower was scarce (Colclough and McCarthy, 1980; Crowder, 1984; Mokaeya, 1986; Mokaeya, 1992; Leburu-Sianga and Malobe, 2000; University of Botswana, 2008a; Mogae, 2005; World Economic Forum, 2009).

Another participant noted that higher education was a very expensive level of education that required costly infrastructure and facilities that the country had not been able to develop to the required level. He observed that

therefore it is not surprising that many countries don't have the necessary infrastructure, or where some have infrastructure, they don't have the operating budgets to run those infrastructure and pay the necessary salaries (T1:3).

Another factor that was perceived to have delayed the development of the higher education sector, which might be resulting from the low operating budgets, was the perceived inability of the sector to retain good quality teachers and lecturers in the system. Under the category of poor planning I identified from the data, three codes covering inefficient management of resources and records, poor monitoring and expensive education strategy. With regard to the code of inefficient management of resources and records, a number of the participants expressed concern over a perceived high level of wastage and poor management of resources. One participant had observed “*a high degree of decadence of the infrastructure because of poor maintenance*” (T1:3), while another one noted that the level of financing of education including higher

education in Botswana was very high compared to many developing countries, citing that about 8% of the Gross Domestic Product goes into education, and about 20% of that education budget goes into higher education. The participant expressed concern that despite this level of investment in higher education, the sector's performance seemed to be disturbingly low, and attribute this level of performance to poor management of resources. One participant submitted that "*our output, our quality rankings and all rankings are very low. So we are just wasting a lot of money ... it's frightening*" (T3:26). Another participant was worried about what she described as mass wastage of education facilities country wide.

But we actually are not exploring or exploiting our brick and mortar buildings ... actually they're a waste. Passed the hour of six and during the holidays, nothing takes place in our institutions. You find that it is a small portion of the facilities that are being used. The rest of the facilities lie fallow (T2:34-35).

This wastage was perceived to result in extremely limited access to higher education compared to other comparator countries. One participant observes that unlike Botswana which was spending about 20% of the education budget on higher education, Mauritius was spending about 13% on the same sector "*and they do double what we do in terms of access*" (T3:25). One of the main sources of wastage and inefficiency in the system as perceived by one participant was the presence of a lot of tiny micro institutions. Some participants alluded to poor management of records and the lack of data within the higher education sector as one of the major challenges of the system, making planning very difficult, including planning for manpower development for the sector and the entire economy. In terms of adults above 24 years old, there seemed to be no data since none had been collected or kept centrally, or at national level, which would have been inclusive of data from all the higher education providers for adults. Asked what plans are in place to address the high demand for higher education that seems to be coming from the various adult populations, one participant's opinion was that

there is nothing that will alter that ... because we haven't been doing too much about it ... An absolutely, totally untapped market if you like, neglected entirely. There's been total lack of attention paid to data and data management and data

analysis. So I think in short all I can say is ... we don't know ... We know more about mineral resources than we know about our people (T3:10-11).

Data collection, analysis and management seemed to have been neglected over the years. There appeared to be no records, especially at national level that could indicate the level of participation of adults in higher education in Botswana. On the basis of this identified gap, it appeared necessary for the higher education sector to start collecting data on the participation of adults above 24 years in higher education, since such data would go a long way in human resource development planning for the country, as well as in the identification of relevant areas of training development and delivery.

Another code under the category of poor planning was 'expensive education strategy' and dealt specifically with the government strategy of sending large numbers of students outside the country to access higher education, even for access courses for entry into under-graduate programmes. The participants appreciated that there would always be need to send some students to study outside the country for various reasons, including cases where certain programmes of study were not available in the country, or "*... so that you really don't have a work force which has only been trained in one institution or local institutions*" (T13:10). However, they also thought that the strategy of sending huge numbers outside the country, which seemed to be largely meant to address the problem of lack of or limited facilities and infrastructure in the country, might be a result of poor planning in the past. One participant's concern was that probably over the years

our projections and planning(s) were not coherent. The growth in ... the senior secondary schools was not matched by the growth in the tertiary. Hence now this mismatch where the output for secondary school is so huge we can only absorb 11% after 42 years of independence (T13:10).

Sending large numbers of students outside the country was seen as very expensive for the country and also counter productive. A participant complained:

But the other side of the same coin is how much are we spending on that? Had we may be invested part of it in developing our own, how many universities would we be having today? (T13:10-11).

Poor monitoring was the last code under the family of poor planning and monitoring. Under this area the concern of the participants seemed to revolve mainly around the issue of perceived non-accountability for resources allocated. They thought that this non-accountability by some of the institutions funded under the MOESD was reflected in what they perceived as low levels of implementation of certain policies. Their assessment was that the MOESD did not seem to be closely monitoring implementation of policies and demanding that some of its institutions should account for the resources allocated to them.

I would expect the Ministry of Education to be actively involved in institutions that they fund ... Like for instance, if there is such a recommendation and money is being put into this institution, why is it that, very little has been done. And people here have the liberty to sort of say ... 'we can do it we can not do it' (T4:35-36).

The participant commented as follows:

...you look at our mission statement, our vision statement ... you look at our Strategic Plan as an institution, all these things are there. If you see these documents, you will say 'these people are actually implementing RNPE. They are actually working towards Vision 2016', when in fact they are no. (T4:39).

The issue of poor planning and monitoring therefore was perceived to have contributed immensely to the state of low development of the higher education sector in Botswana. I discussed the remaining three families of challenges; limited enrolment opportunities, financial constraints and low reading culture through assessing how they affected each other and together could have contributed to the perceived limited participation in higher education. A table like Table 5.3 above might not show inter and cross relationships well, and it might give an impression that the codes, categories and families of challenges affected one another only

through linear relationships. These codes, categories and families of challenges were derived from data that came from human experiences. As such, naturally the way they would contribute towards the manifestation of the various constraints, and do so in several crisscrossing relationships, as observed by Graneheim and Lundman (2004).

Figure 5.4 illustrate, not in any exhaustive manner, some of the relationships that the above problem areas and challenges might have and how they could affect each other. Their sum total would seem to culminate in low or limited participation in higher education.

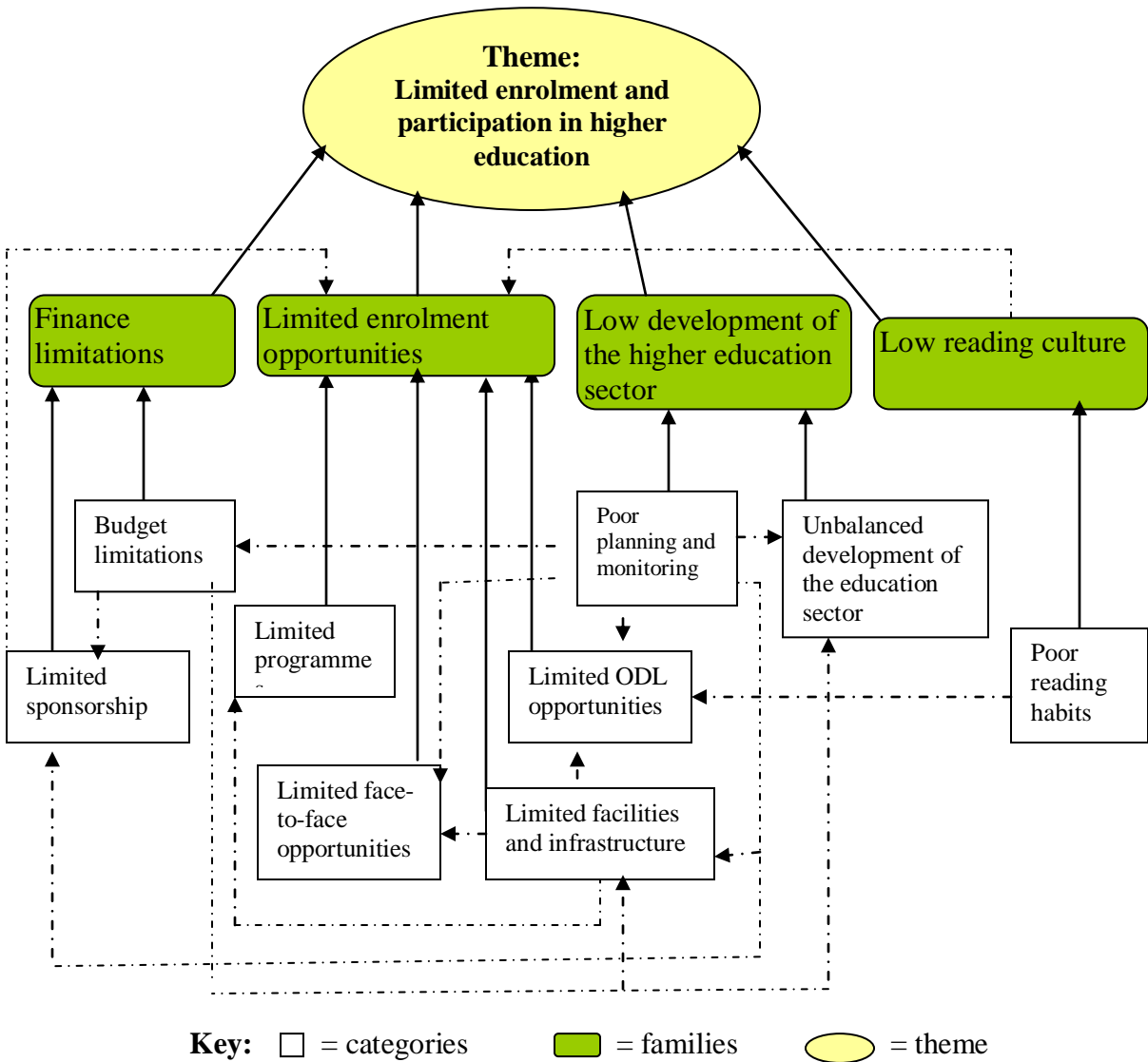


Figure 5.4: Inter-relationships between problems contributing to low participation

The thick arrows on Figure 5.4 above indicate family relationships where several categories may belong under one family, while the dotted lines indicate inter-relationships where a category may affect other categories within or outside their own families. The challenge of budget limitations, which is a category falling under finance limitations, was perceived to have the potential to affect or lead to limited sponsorship under the same family, which in turn would lead to limited enrolment, which is a different family. Budget limitation was seen as a challenge that could also lead to limited facilities and infrastructure as well as unbalanced development of the education sector. The effects of budget limitations therefore would result in creating limited enrolment as well as low development of the higher education sector, which were different families. Within the family of limited enrolment, which had four categories, some of those categories seemed to affect each other. Limited facilities and infrastructure appeared to contribute to limited opportunities in both ODL and face-to-face. Limited programmes also seemed to limit opportunities through ODL. All of these together would lead to limited enrolment and participation. Poor planning and monitoring from the family of low development of the higher education sector appeared to contribute towards the state of budget limitations, limit the development of facilities and infrastructure, which would result in unbalanced development of the education sector and contribute to limited ODL and face-to-face opportunities. The family of low reading culture appeared not to be affected by any other family or category outside its own. It seemed to affect only one other family both directly at family level and at the level of categories. While this might indicate that the low culture of reading has slight impact on the performance of the higher education sector in terms of enrolment and participation, it might be necessary to look further into it when developing educational programmes to see what types of delivery methods can attract more participants into education programmes. Probably the young generation is shifting away from reading books towards computers, TV and many other electronic media of learning tools. So although this family of challenges does not seem too damaging in the current concerns of expanding opportunities for participation, it might become more relevant in the near future and might need looking into.

However, it would appear that poor planning and poor monitoring was capable of adversely affecting more areas or causing more problems across three families of challenges. This could mean that actually poor planning and poor monitoring might be a main source of the challenges

of the Botswana higher education. Earlier when discussing the family of low development of the higher education sector (see T13:10-11 under Figure 5.3 above), participants came out quite strongly about poor planning and poor management of resources, which is an element of monitoring. There was indication that due to poor planning, the higher education sector had not received attention since independence and until recently with the establishment of TEC. One observation was that poor planning could have resulted in lack of foresight, where huge amounts of money had continued to be spent on sending students outside the country when some of those funds could have been used to develop the local facilities and infrastructure. Limited resources and lack of developed physical facilities and other infrastructure, their proper management and maintenance, as well as the lack of developed human resources, were identified as some of the constraints inhibiting expansion of opportunities for participation in higher education. Lack of funding for a large number of individuals who would like to pursue their higher education was also identified as a contributing factor inhibiting wide access to higher education. However, in the same breath, some of the participants indicated that when it came to financing of education, Botswana appeared to have had an edge over some of the SADC countries because of its economy. Funding for education in Botswana seemed to compare favourably with many in the developing countries since it was estimated at 8% of the GDP. The share for the higher education sector was further estimated at 20% of the total education budget, which was supposedly high even by international standards. However, one of the concerns seen as a contributing factor was where Botswana seemed to be achieving less access with more funding for higher education, was perceived to be lack of proper management of resources. A lot of wastage was alluded to, as well as a lack of data collection, analysis and management. The lack of proper records on the state of the human resource base of the country, which should assist in decision making, on the development and delivery of higher education was seen as a contributing factor also resulting from poor planning and monitoring. A low level of accountability by some higher education institutions, especially among those funded by the state was expressed as a concern, where the Ministry of Education & Skills Development was perceived to be neither keeping a close eye on usage of resources nor tightening its monitoring systems and demanding accountability from the institutions receiving state funding. So when looking at the data through Table 5.3, Figure 5.3 and Figure 5.4, the challenge of poor planning and monitoring and poor management of resources seemed to be central or possibly among the major contributing factors

towards the inability of the higher education sector to increase enrolments substantially. The participants identified limited space in existing face-to-face higher education institutions, as well as limited opportunities through ODL in the country as some of the main contributing factors to low enrolment and also attributed these to poor planning and poor management of resources.

5.2.4 Strategies to Increase Participation

Participation rate of the APR had been planned to increase to about 20% by around the year 2026. However, it appeared that this rate would still fall short of the estimated rate of 40 to 50% of the APR in order for a country to achieve sustainable economic development (Kanwar and Daniel, 2008). Botswana was also aiming to enhance its human resource development and increase participation of more adults in higher education. Participants offered several possible strategies to achieve such increased enrolment for both the APR and adults.

Table 5.4: Strategies for increasing participation

Meaning unit	Codes	Categories	Families	Theme
TEC putting measures to address quality evaluation and registration of institutions	Availability of accredited and relevant programmes	High quality relevant programmes available		I N C R E A S E D
programme accreditation provide relevant programmes, and reduce number of outbound students	Quality standards set and adhered to			
setting of standards and ensuring adherence	Availability of specialised institutions	Provision of quality ODL services	a range of quality programmes and services available	
put together institutions that offer tertiary education leading to specific goal	Ensuring provision of best quality ODL	increased number and range of quality programmes on ODL mode	through both face-to-face and ODL	
learn from good examples of ODL best practice	Increasing number and range of programmes on ODL mode			E N R O L M E N T
avoid very poor quality ODL part-time evening programmes to include graduate and post graduate BOCODOL to move rapidly towards providing more graduate programmes	Need to develop ODL fully	Availability of ODL	study options available through different	
recognition that if country to effectively expand tertiary then				A N



expand ODL			modes	D
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ODL more flexible, convenient, efficient, cheaper and can accommodate a lot more when fully developed - conceptually to have one ODL to five face-to-face institutions - conceptually ODL to contribute about 20% of student community - provide programmes in other areas, not just in Gaborone, have satellites. Reach them through video or teleconferencing 	<p>Developing ODL proportionately with face-to-face</p> <p>Expanding ODL provision in the country</p>	<p>Increasing the capacity of ODL</p>	<p>increased capacity for ODL to enrol more</p>	P A R T I C I P A T I O N I N C R E A S E D E N R O L M E N T A N D P A R T I C
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ODL may be cheaper option for government and providers to expand access and more affordable to individuals - tertiary providers rigid regarding payment regulations 	<p>Reducing the cost of tertiary education</p> <p>reducing rigidity for non sponsored students</p>	<p>Increased affordability for tertiary education</p> <p>introduce flexible payment terms for ODL students</p>	<p>tertiary education affordable</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - using ODL through external providers - to attract satellite institutions to have some programmes accredited by other universities 	<p>Explore use of external ODL providers</p>	<p>Using external ODL providers to expand access</p>	<p>enrolment opportunities available through recognised external ODL providers</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ODL to be complementary - consider other modes to relief face-to-face - the country to take a serious look at how can offer distance education 	<p>Deciding on status of ODL (complementary, supplementary or at par)</p>	<p>Allocate resources for ODL in accordance with its status</p>	<p>ODL allocated resources accordingly</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - current policy emphasises dedicated ODL institution - a self-standing ODL institution to establish university or a college or institute devoted to ODL, like an open university for Botswana - whether to embed ODL within existing institutions, however that would not work - certainly our experience was that when you do that, ODL suffers - contribution of ODL towards tertiary to be planned - contribution of ODL to the current student body is minimal to zero 	<p>Establishing dedicated ODL institution</p> <p>Deciding whether to have dual mode programme delivery</p> <p>Planning the contribution of ODL towards</p>	<p>Focusing direction of ODL growth</p> <p>Deciding on percentage target enrolment for ODL</p> <p>Deciding on audiences to access tertiary through ODL</p>	<p>Focused ODL provision</p>	



- increase new public and private institutions - for face-to-face to target youth	Reserve face-to-face provision for youth	to-face provision	opportunities available for adults	A T I O N I N C R E A S E D E N R O L M E N T A N D P A R T I C I P A T I O N
- determine funding level for tertiary institutions	Determining levels of funding for tertiary institutions	institutional funding levels determined	Institutions funded accordingly	
- sponsor students across modes - government sponsoring students to private tertiary institutions - Government to extend sponsorship to ODL students	Government sponsorship to include ODL students	Government to sponsor ODL students	More sponsorship and subsidy opportunities available for both ODL and face-to-face students	
- Scholarships that can be arranged through banks or any other organisations	more sponsorship avenues explored	exploring sponsorship avenues with banks and other organisations		
- access encouraged by making tuition fees affordable - support for ODL programmes in the form of subsidies, something that tallies to a person's income bracket	providing subsidies for ODL students	subsiding ODL students		
- there is need to change mindset people charged with ODL provision to educate stakeholders (the public, government, potential sponsors and other tertiary providers) and change mindset about ODL - to be willing to accept that distance education is another important way of offering programmes just as conventional is, not just by the way - give both distance and conventional equal importance. If they're given that equal importance it means even in terms of human resources	To educate and change mindset of stakeholders and the public about ODL To give ODL and face-to-face equal importance and recognition Allocation of resources for ODL and face-to-face to reflect their equal importance	Government, the public and sponsors to value ODL Resources allocated for ODL to reflect its importance and value	ODL valued	
- have data and know more about human resources - Pay more attention to data management and data analysis - Proper planning, projections and planning to be coherent - match growth at the tertiary level with secondary output - invested more resources in developing infrastructure	Have data on which to base decisions about human resources To achieve coherence between projections, outputs and investment and allocation of resources	Making informed decisions Plan for aligned growth	Facilities, infrastructure and operating resources commensurate with planned growth	
- Ministry of Education to be	To ensure			

actively involved in monitoring of resource usage and demand accountability, especially in institutions that they fund	achievement of maximum utilisation of resources	Close monitoring of implementation	Education resources utilised maximally	
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Sixteen strategies emerged from Table 5.4, which participants believed if applied could significantly increase participation in higher education in Botswana. The first strategy would deal with increasing the number and range of higher education programmes available in the country through both ODL and face-to-face mode. This was seen as a strategy that could alleviate the problem of sending large numbers of students outside the country and subsequently release some of the funds spent on this process to develop local capacity to absorb more, both through ODL and face-to-face. The second and third categories together dealt with increasing the capacity of ODL. This strategy was expected to result in making more options available for participation of the different groups of clientele already identified. Data from Table 5.4 put forward that Botswana could consider, as a general rule, the possibility and feasibility of reserving opportunities into face-to-face institutions for enrolment of the younger 18 – 24 age group fresh from senior secondary schools, while adults above 24 years in all the sectors of the economy could generally be encouraged to access their higher education through ODL provision. It was envisaged that this would increase the APR participation rate.

Anybody who's got a tertiary education qualification, let's say a Diploma... that person will be an adult ... That is the part of the population which distance education should target, so that access can increase for the younger load of students who come straight from Cambridge into tertiary institutions... Anybody else should explore this area of distance education (T2:32).

Making higher education affordable through the use of ODL was seen as another strategy that could increase participation. This strategy was perceived to have the potential of being cheaper in the long run for government, institutions and individuals. *“May be the capital outlay initially ... might be large. But I think from there onwards it should be cheaper” (T2:33).* It was perceived that as higher education becomes less expensive for government through provision of more ODL opportunities, it would become accessible to more people. Closely related to this

strategy was the one where participants thought government sponsorship should be extended to ODL students in the same way that it was made available to students of different ages pursuing their studies through the face-to-face mode:

... the students who come for full-time will receive a full scholarship and the students who actually want to do the same programme by distance would be told, 'no you need to find your own' ... I've seen a lot of faces coming here of people who want to enrol. But because of financial commitments and obligations, they're not able to proceed with their studies" (T5: 22).

Participants therefore perceived the lack of sponsorship for ODL as discrimination and stigmatisation of the mode, as well as making it second rate in the eyes of the potential students. Participants' observation was that potential students tended to struggle to get admission into face-to-face programmes where they could access sponsorship, and only considered ODL when chances of securing admission into a face-to-face programme were no longer feasible. *"First of all I think there is responsibility to de-stigmatise distance learning or part-time learning"* (T5:6), one participant commented regarding stigmatisation of ODL. Participants saw sponsorship and subsidy opportunities possible for both modes if arrangements could be made with banks and other organisations, so that government should not remain the main sponsor for higher education as was the case then. Participants also suggested that higher education providers could reduce rigidity surrounding payment methods by learners and consider flexible payment mechanisms, and subsidies based on individual learners' resource base and sources of funding.

Enabling policies equally affecting government institutions and the private sector were also seen as a strategy to improve participation of workers in higher education through ODL. The envisaged policies would provide an enabling environment for participation, where employees would be encouraged through time off, in addition to annual leave, and reimbursement when they successfully completed courses. Incentives, including salary adjustment as recognition of learning, were perceived as a way of encouraging more employees to participate in higher education through ODL. Such policies, affecting all sectors of the economy were seen as cumulatively being able to encourage people to actually choose ODL as an alternative or first

option to continue studying while working. Another strategy discussed at length was a consideration for more regularised shared use of available resources between the face-to-face mode and ODL. It was that the face-to-face programme could use facilities during a given period and then allow the ODL programme to use the same facilities as would have been agreed and regulated. This was seen as maximisation on the usage of the available education facilities and other resources, which were perceived to be grossly underutilised in the Botswana education sector in general.

On the whole, many suggested strategies coming out of Table 5.4 seemed to be aimed at establishing a well focused, appropriately resourced ODL mode of provision, as a strategy to increase participation at higher education level. The emphasis seemed to be on the need to develop a solid foundation for ODL at higher education level. The participants warned that the development of ODL would require high initial capital outlay, which in the long run, would prove to have been wise investment for the higher education sector, if done properly. There was also caution that bench marking was crucial for the development of ODL at higher education level, since participants had observed examples of good ODL, as well as those of not so well conceived and implemented systems in many parts of the world. Therefore they saw as of utmost importance as Botswana considered further or enhanced development of ODL at higher education level to know what was perceived as good practice as well as what might or might not work for the country.

The next section of the analysis briefly explored participants' views on the development of ODL in Botswana generally.

5.2.5 Development of ODL in Botswana

In Chapter Three literature indicated that Botswana had prioritised ODL as a mode that needed to be developed and expanded, in order to increase participation in higher education (see § 3.6). Through Table 5.5 below I examined the participants' responses to my question through which I wanted to know what their opinions were regarding the level of development of ODL in Botswana since 1994, when the RNPE started being implemented.

Table 5.5 Level of development of ODL at higher education level

Meaning unit	Code	Category	Family	Theme
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - major and successful initiative was creation of BOCODOL - at least good start by establishing BOCODOL as parastatal responsible for ODL efforts mainly around UB/CCE - Baisago also coordinate ODL 	<p>ODL developed through BOCODOL and CCE in UB</p> <p>ODL developed through Baisago</p>	<p>through two public institutions</p> <p>through one private institution</p>	<p>public and private providers</p>	L O W
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - BOCODOL only college registered with TEC as ODL tertiary institution - UB has terribly under-developed small window 	<p>BOCODOL dedicated ODL institution</p> <p>UB has face-to-face and small window of ODL</p>	<p>through one dedicated public institution</p> <p>through one dual mode public institution</p>	<p>dual and dedicated public provision</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Originally it was the UB, now BOCODOL has started its own programmes - we have seen that over the years UB are not able to satisfy the needs - very limited access looking at numbers, compared to full-time University enrolments - we do see programmes that are being offered by BOCODOL - One would expect BOCODOL for instance, to be now venturing already into offering degrees - a growing number of individuals using over-sees or out of the country ODL privately 	<p>UB and BOCODOL offer limited number and range of ODL programmes</p> <p>limited participation through UB and BOCODOL</p> <p>individuals accessing ODL programmes outside the country</p>	<p>limited range and number of ODL programmes limiting enrolment</p>	<p>Limited programmes and participation</p>	A N D
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - has been development definitely but not as expected - very little that has been done - one would expect institutions like UB for instance to be having a full fledged ODL programme, well oiled, running smoothly, without a lot of hitches - very little has been done - has been very slow in fact 	<p>slow ODL development in the past</p> <p>neglected, was ill-</p>	<p>slow development</p>		G R O W T H

<p>we have moved very, very little in that regard</p> <p>has been seriously and stressfully neglected</p> <p>but really we should have put a lot of emphasis and a bit of money in developing that sector</p> <p>hasn't been any real focus on looking into the issue of distance education</p> <p>piece meal isolated efforts</p>	<p>resourced</p> <p>no real focus on development of ODL in the past</p> <p>isolated, uncoordinated efforts</p>	<p>low resources</p> <p>unfocused, uncoordinated efforts</p>	<p>slow development of the sector at the beginning</p>	<p>L O W</p> <p>D E V E L O P M E N T</p> <p>A N D</p> <p>S L O W</p> <p>G R O W T H</p> <p>L O W</p>
<p>Our ODL is still developing picking but it's not there yet</p> <p>I think it's slow</p> <p>I would say it's slow</p> <p>don't think we're doing enough to develop it</p>	<p>currently developing slowly</p> <p>not doing enough to develop it</p>	<p>experiencing slow limp growth</p>	<p>current slow limp growth</p>	
<p>Of course putting up physical structures takes so long the infrastructure is still at a rudimentary level</p> <p>merely trained to develop material for the distance learning mode</p>	<p>capital outlay for ODL development still lacking</p> <p>Specialised training for ODL limited to materials development skills</p>	<p>infrastructure foundation laid still inadequate</p> <p>acquisition of specialist skills limited</p>	<p>weak foundation for growth</p>	
<p>UB CCE seemed unresponsive in terms of the challenge certainly didn't meet that challenge</p> <p>University of Botswana because of the pressures on it, of being the only state university in the country for decades, has been focusing more on face-to-face</p> <p>type of clientele that was actually putting pressure on the University for its services was predominantly the school leaver</p> <p>the nature of that clientele is that they look for face-to-face more than anything</p> <p>May be BOCODOL perhaps at the level where it is, perhaps little by little it might be edging in</p>	<p>UB unresponsive, not meeting demand challenge through ODL</p> <p>only dual mode institution concentrated on development of face-to-face</p> <p>slow and uncertain growth</p>	<p>ODL not used to meet demand challenge</p> <p>ODL growth lag behind in only dual mode institution</p> <p>slow growth of only dedicated institution</p>	<p>very slow ODL growth, with uncertainties</p>	
<p>I would expect the Ministry of Education to be actively</p>	<p>Ministry not playing active monitoring</p>			

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - involved especially in institutions that they fund - If there is such a recommendation and money is being put into an institution, why is it that, very little has been done - while we must acknowledge that on paper the development of ODL has been there, the practice has rather been slightly slow - It's like nobody ever checks on whether, like the case of ODL for instance is actually being implemented 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - role in implementation - implementation of tertiary ODL RNPE recommendation not satisfactory - monitoring not satisfactory 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - implementation of recommended ODL growth not satisfactory 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ODL growth not satisfactory 	D E V E L O P M E N T A N D S L O W G R O W T H
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - initial focus from RNPE was expanding ODL from secondary - mandate placed on the CCE by RNPE to increase access to tertiary through ODL - needs for new approach, a new institution or BOCODOL transformed - to start implementing most strategies during NDP 10 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - initial focus on developing ODL at secondary level - CCE mandated to develop tertiary level ODL 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - initially less attention on tertiary ODL development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ODL development lacked behind 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - quite a lot that needs to be done to accommodate the fact that there is ODL - We talk of access, participation and ODL. But when you really look at the kind of support that ODL gets from the system, you begin to see that there're a lot of gaps - even on paper significance of ODL somewhat, only come as a background thing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to give ODL recognition - ODL needs support and recognition - ODL needs to be given prominence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lack of recognition - Lack of support - Lack of prominence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - lack of recognition and support 	

Table 5.5 came up with ten areas, eight of which indicated the participants' opinions regarding the level of development of ODL at higher education in Botswana. The other two areas indicated the types of institutions that provided ODL programmes at higher education level in the country. There was one private institution and two public institutions that offered ODL programmes at higher education level. Of the two public institutions, BOCODOL was a dedicated ODL provider, while UB was a dual mode provider.

All participants seemed to believe that the development of ODL at higher education level had lagged behind. They perceived that ODL continued to experience slow growth in the Botswana higher education sector. One of the limitations identified through Figure 5.5 seemed to be the limited range and number of ODL programmes, which was perceived to result in limited enrolment through ODL. Low resources and unfocused, uncoordinated efforts were indicated as some of the constraints that initially contributed to the slow growth of ODL. One participant observed that

... putting up physical structures takes so long. But really we should have put a lot of emphasis and a bit of money in developing that sector that has been neglected. I believe that has been seriously and stressfully neglected (T13:13).

Asked what he thought could have contributed to that kind of neglect, or the slow development in that area, the participant suspected perceptions of planners:

Well, I think ... partly may be it's because of perceptions may be of may be those who were in the forefront of planning things. You see there is always this perception that if you do it through ODL, you've not done it right (T13:13).

The growth of ODL was described as slow and limp. The reason for this was attributed mainly to low resources for the mode, *“the commitment of resources is not really indicative of the level of commitment towards the distance learning”* (T5:17), probably still attributable to perceptions about the value of ODL. Participants appeared to perceive that the capital outlay, critical for ODL development was still lacking. One participant described the infrastructure as *“still at a rudimentary level”* (T2:10). When asked about what percentage of the higher education budget was planned to go into the development of ODL at that level, the participant said *“I'm glad you say planned. Because I don't think there is anything going there ... there is zero right now, if one were to talk specifically about tertiary”*(T2:24). Apart from low resources, rudimentary infrastructures, the lack of budget and specialised skills for ODL were also perceived to be limiting factors for the growth of ODL in the Botswana higher education sector. One participant wondered *“how many people on the ground right now understand and know what this ODL our*

animal is about?” (T5:20), then he observes “*I don’t think we have enough distance education practitioners. We have a few, very few for that matter, who really know what is happening*” (T5:25). Therefore the issue of training for ODL seems to be a worrying phenomenon when it comes to its development and growth. It is possible, according to these opinions of the participants, that leadership for the development of ODL might be limited and very few people, including planners, really know how to plan for ODL. One participant emphasizes this by stating “... *we really need ... people who are trained ... specialised people in that area because they have to provide guidance of this particular mode*” (T5:26). It appeared that with the perceived low resources, a rudimentary infrastructure and poorly trained human resources who could lead in this area, participants concluded that there was a poor foundation for the development and growth of ODL in Botswana. ODL therefore appeared to experience a lot of uncertainties, lack of recognition, support and prominence in the higher education system, seemingly resulting in very slow growth.

5.3 Conclusion

This chapter has demonstrated from participants’ perceptions that there was high demand for higher education in Botswana, which the local face-to-face institutions were unable to satisfy. Challenges, such as a shortage of institutions providing ODL programmes, low development of the requisite infrastructure, limited resources for expansion have been identified among many, as contributory to the perceived imbalance between the level of demand and that of supply of higher education in Botswana. Several possible strategies to address the demand have been identified, among them the ODL strategy. Finally, the chapter has indicated that though ODL had been identified as one of the strategies to increase higher education level enrolments in Botswana, the strategy, whose development started on a very weak resource foundation, continued to experience low attention, low support and recognition resulting in slow uncertain and uncoordinated growth. Chapter Six continues with data analysis, with particular reference to challenges that the development and growth of ODL face within the UB’s dual mode system.

Chapter Six

Challenges of ODL in Dual Mode Institutions – UB’s Experiences

6.1 Introduction and Overview

The data analysed in the previous chapter indicated that the high demand for higher education in Botswana was not adequately met by the opportunities available in the country through face-to-face provision alone. Chapter Five also indicated that ODL had been identified as one of the strategies to increase participation in higher education. In the introduction of Chapter Four, I indicated that I made an assumption that UB had adopted ODL as one of its delivery strategies, in order to address the problem of high demand, which it seemed unable to meet through the face-to-face strategy alone. The main concern that I want to understand through this study was why some dual mode higher education institutions in Southern Africa continued to enrol low numbers of students despite adopting ODL as one of their strategies to improve access to their programmes. The literature reviewed in Chapter Three and the data analysed in Chapter Five, revealed large numbers of potential students who applied to UB annually, and the University only able to enrol about one third of those who qualified for admission (UB, 1999; Dodds *et al*, 2008; Richardson, 2009).

In Chapter Six I explore the participants’ knowledge and perceptions about the reasons for introducing ODL in the UB programme delivery system, in order to assure myself whether it could be true that ODL was meant to assist UB to expand access into its programmes. Another assumption I indicated having made was that even though UB had adopted ODL as one of its strategies to increase participation, the expansion of the ODL mode of delivery within the UB dual mode system was slow compared to that of the face-to-face mode. Through the views and opinions of the participants, I examined the challenges that the development and growth of ODL might be facing within the UB’s dual mode system.

The analysis process in this chapter was divided into two sections. The first section addressed the rationale for ODL in the UB system. The second section focused on challenges that seemed to impede the growth of ODL within the UB system.

6.2 ODL in the UB System

The literature review in Chapter Three indicated that when the Gaborone campus of the former University of Botswana Lesotho and Swaziland (UBLS) became a national University (UB) in 1982, ODL was already part of the delivery system of the University (see § 3.7). It had started during the UBS transitional phase in 1979, with a Diploma offered by the then Department of Theology (Dodds and Youngman, 1994). This diploma programme was indicated to have run from 1979 until 1990, when it was discontinued. Low enrolment, academic and administrative challenges had been identified as some of the constraints that the University was facing with regard to this programme (Dodds and Youngman, 1994). It is indicated through the literature that within the period of the Department of Theology's experience with ODL, the Institute of Adult Education also started offering a Certificate in Adult Education by distance mode from 1983, as a project for the Ministry of Education until 1984/85, when the University adopted it as a regular UB ODL programme. The University was satisfied with the performance of this programme, following its evaluation by 1989 (Dodds and Youngman, 1994).

6.2.1 The Rationale for ODL at UB

It appeared from the literature that following the evaluation in 1989 of the Certificate in Adult Education by ODL methods, the University established CCE in 1991, with a Unit specifically responsible for the development and delivery of ODL programmes (Dodds and Youngman, 1994; Tau, 2002). Although the ODL strategy seemed to have been inherited from the former University of Botswana and Swaziland (UBS) in the 1970s (Dodds and Youngman, 1994), it would appear that with the establishment of CCE in 1991 and a specific unit responsible for ODL, the University was renewing its emphasis on the ODL mode. While UB (1999) had indicated a need to increase access to higher education and lifelong learning through distance education, UB (2004) indicated that increased opportunities to access University programmes,

especially by the working people, would be achieved through an increase of programmes available at various levels through part-time and ODL provision (UB, 1999; UB, 2004). UB (2008a) identified access and participation into UB programmes as the first of its five priority areas for the plan period from 2009 to 2016 and beyond and reiterated that:

Extending access to education and increasing opportunities and levels of participation in tertiary level education remains essential to the achievement of Vision 2016, the delivery of the National Human Resource Development Strategy and for advancing the economic development of the Nation in a global economy. The needs of national human resource development and the targets set in the Tertiary Education Policy will require a significant expansion of tertiary sector enrolments, and within this context, UB will be expected to deliver growth (UB, 2008a).

These policy documents seemed to confirm my second assumption that UB adopted ODL within its system with the intention of expanding access to University programmes. However, I also needed to find out what the participants knew about the reasons for the University to adopt ODL and become a dual mode institution. In order to explore the experiences of the participants, I asked them what they thought were the reasons for UB to adopt ODL into its system. I divided the data coming from the participants' responses to this question into two major areas as reflected in Figure 6.1 and Figure 6.2. Through these two figures I tried to tease out what the respondents perceived could have led the University to consider ODL as one of its important strategies for the delivery of its programmes.

Figure 6.1 discussed the rationale for UB's adoption of ODL in its programme delivery system, with more emphasis on the need for the University to increase access and participation in higher education in Botswana. Though Figure 6.2 also examined the rationale for adopting ODL into the UB programme delivery system, its main focus was on the need for the University to explore avenues that could assist in increasing its capacity and capability to increase access and participation in higher education.

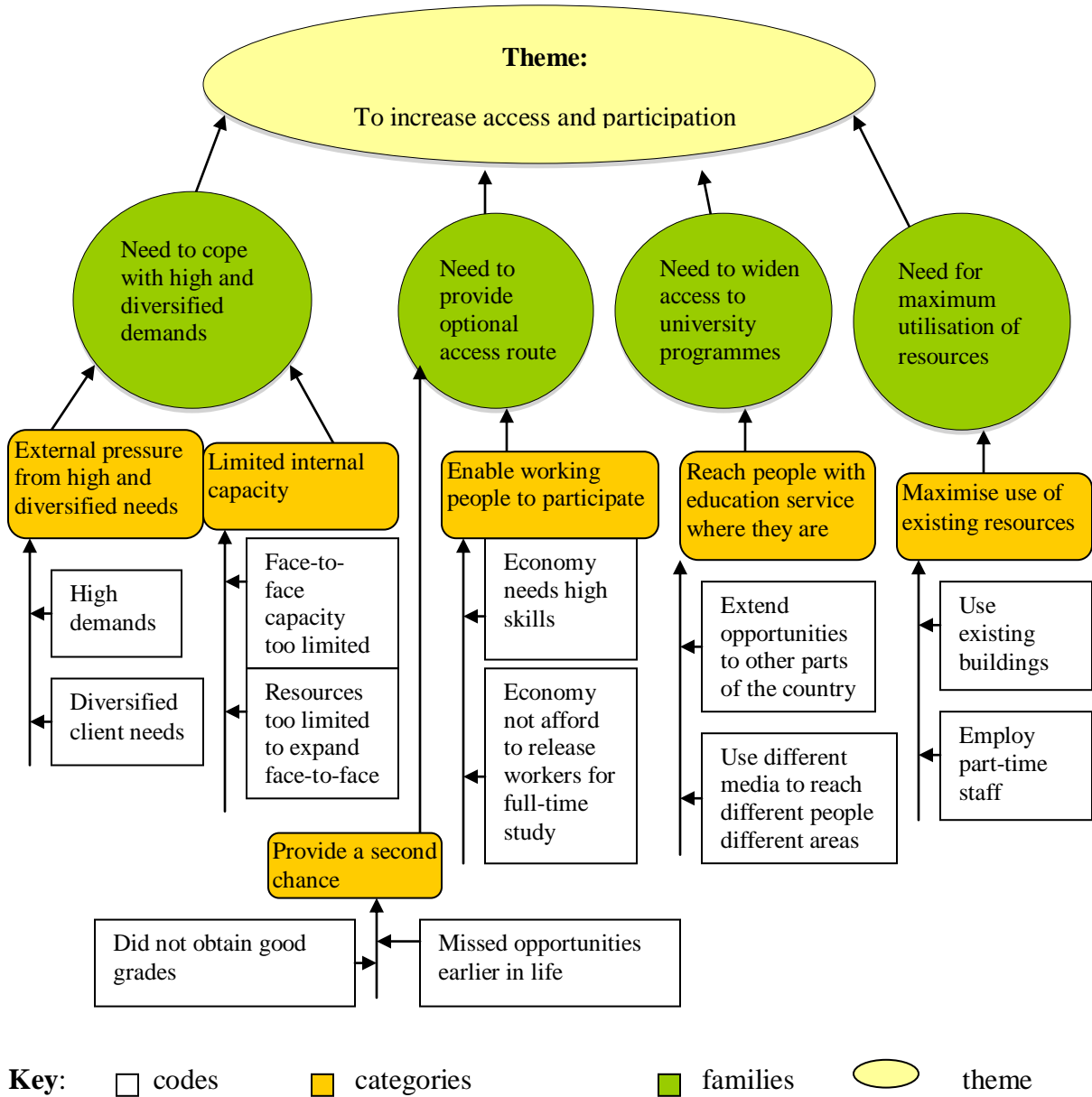


Figure 6.1 *Need to Increase Access and Participation*

Four families of factors, with six categories between them, emerged when analysing the participants’ responses through Figure 6.1. These were some of the considerations that participants thought might have influenced UB to adopt ODL as one of its programme delivery strategies. When the factors from these four families were added up, they seemed to suggest that the University adopted the ODL strategy in its system to expand access and participation, which tallied with the analysis of some of the literature sources listed under tables 4.2 and 4.3

(see § 6.2.1 above). From Figure 6.1, the first family of factors had two categories. The first one discussed external pressure put on the University to provide higher education. The second category looked at the capacity of UB's face-to-face delivery strategy to adequately address such demands, which participants perceived to be inadequate. In the first category, external pressure seemed to be coming in the form of high demands from different groups with different client needs. Document review in Chapter 3 (see § 3.8), as well as the data analysis in Chapter 5 (see § Table 5.2) indicated a high demand from secondary school leavers (Richardson, 2009; Dodds et al, 2008). Participants also observed a high demand from the 18 to 24 year age group coming from senior secondary education. One participant shared previous experience where “... *the type of clientele that was actually putting pressure on the University for its services... was predominantly the school leaver....*” (T1:13).

Another participant confirmed this observation as well as what came out of the literature (Dodds, *et al*, 2008; Richardson, 2009), indicating that “*the number that comes from schools have a reasonable pass level, certainly the proportion eligible to come into UB*”. (T11:5). Although a reasonable number were eligible for admission into UB programmes since they would have passed their senior secondary education at admissible pass levels, the University had to “*set ... cut-off points which are ... arbitrary way of trying to manage numbers applying*” (T11:5-6). One participant indicated that “*we still have a large number of outbound students being sent outside the country ... Our participation rate is still very, very low*” (T3:6). Commenting on the 18 to 24 year age group being sent for higher education outside the country in large numbers, another participant observed that if there was more access locally, it could “*bring back more students and also the foreign exchange that we have been taking to educate our students outside*” (T8:7).

The external pressure was seen as coming from different types of clientele and not only the school leavers. In agreement with what came out of the literature (Kamau, 2002, Dodds, *et al*, 2008; Sikwibele and Mungoo, 2009, Richardson, 2009), participants seemed to have observed that many adults, mainly in employment also put a lot of pressure on the University to provide higher education. One participant observed that “*A lot of Batswana now really want to be educated*” (T10:9). Another one was of the opinion that “*people are tending to realise that*

unless you keep on improving on certain skills, you cannot guarantee yourself either a job or a future livelihood” (T2:10). Pressure was also observed to have from institutions like government departments which needed their groups of employees provided with upgrading programmes in their different fields of operation. One participant remembered that there were always “demands from the different sectors of the economy including the Ministry of Education” (T6:12). Another participant illustrated the kind of requests that came from Ministries, putting the only university in the country under tremendous pressure:

... always subjected to enormous amount of pressure from the requests from government, asking us to mount this programme and that programme ... So we were always either upgrading a group of professionals like Teachers or Police ... well, certificate in law for example, or Prison Officers with certificate in criminology and penology, Social Workers here ... there (T1:14).

Through the second category under this family, participants perceived that the University’s face-to-face mode did not have the capacity to handle such demands on its own *“the physical facilities and other infrastructure has not been developed to take care of increasing numbers” (T6:12). Participants indicated the constraints that the University experienced trying to accommodate the numbers and types of clientele that showed interest to participate in higher education. It became apparent that face-to-face alone could not cope with the high numbers which added “the burden of places and availability of resources, physical and human ...” (T1:9). However, due to limited resources, it was not feasible to provide more face-to-face facilities enough to harness the challenge ... “Because you then would need either more lecturers ... more schools ...” (T1:9). The participant observed:*

a major constraint in terms of availability of opportunities for tertiary ... as a result of that constraint, government has been spending an enormous amount of money sending students for under-graduate programmes to study outside the country (T1:2-3).

Participants believed that it became apparent to the University that the limited resources were not going to allow them to expand the face-to-face mode fast and adequately enough to enable it to address the demands satisfactorily on its own. They perceived that the University must have considered it necessary therefore to provide an optional access route for participation in higher education. One participant perceived that under this kind of pressure higher education providers needed to apply:

the skills of looking at the whole thing more efficiently by using other modes of educational delivery to relief the face-to-face system. Or even sharing of facilities for that purpose (T1:9).

Participants indicated that since the University could not cope with the diversity and high volume of demand through face-to-face alone, another route would be necessary to address such needs adequately. This observation seemed to be in agreement with the expressed need through UB literature, to develop ODL for the achievement of increased access (UB, 2004, UB, 2008a). The participants also indicated that there were employees who needed to access higher education programmes without having to leave their employment and go to study on a full-time face-to-face basis. From the first family of factors under Figure 6.1, which was concerned with the need to cope with high and diversified demands, one participant summed up the challenge: *“generally the conclusion would be that there is more social demand for places than is currently being met...”* (T11:6).

The second family of factors proceeded to justify the need for the University, as the only higher education provider in the country at the time, to provide an optional access route into higher education. The first of the two categories within this family of factors considered the needs of people who missed an earlier opportunity to undertake higher education programmes and needed a second chance. One participant observed that:

There are young adults ... who ... may be had not had an opportunity to go into tertiary education because of lack of the facilities. Because of the lack of

institutions they were forced into work. Therefore they see the provision of ODL as an opportunity (T13:5).

Apart from those who might have missed the opportunity, participants observed that there were also people who had not performed well in their previous attempts and would therefore need an opportunity to upgrade so as to continue with further studies at higher education level. Since such people might be adults with different responsibilities, they would need an optional route towards achieving the same goals that they could not achieve through the face-to-face mode at an earlier chance. The second category under the family of providing a different access route discussed an enabling environment for the working people who needed to participate in higher education. Through this category, participants perceived that the Botswana economy needed people with high skills. One participant observed that there was pressure from employers on their employees to “*get higher qualifications and some more knowledge*” (T6:3). The participant perceived that “*demand from that side is also increasing*” (T6:3). Due to the expectations from work environments for higher qualifications and higher skills, an increased number of people in employment were observed to need to access higher education to satisfy job demands. Another increasing demand for participation in higher education was observed to come from either people looking for employment, or employees who wanted to have better paying jobs. These were perceived to want to participate in employment “*not by occupying low level jobs ... but by seeking high level, high skilled jobs*” (T3:9). Participants perceived that since it would not be easy for the working people to stop earning a salary in order to go for full-time face-to-face programmes, the University must have found it necessary to consider another route through which it could address the educational needs of employees and other adults. One participant observed that:

... it is very difficult nowadays to leave your family and leave your job and say you are going to be at school ... So people are really interested now in something that they can study from home (T10:9-10).

Some participants had observed an increasing number of requests for ODL programmes from the working potential students. Some had received “*many calls from the public asking ‘do you run this course ... through distance education ... do you run this other course?’*” (T8:9).

Participants were also of the opinion that while the economy needed high qualifications and high skills, employers were reluctant to release employees from work to go and undertake long full-time face-to-face programmes at the expense of continued production. They therefore perceived that due to this dilemma, the University must have become sensitive to the needs of its environment and found an optional route to address dilemma. Participants therefore perceived that ODL became a justifiable route for the University to provide increased access for working people to participate in higher education:

Because a small economy ... you cannot manage the economy without people. While equipping the people in their jobs, you better provide it in distance education. And they get qualifications, skills and the economy will grow (T6:21).

This observation seemed to echo the UB concerns that the economy needed enhanced qualifications and high skills and that the adult clientele needed a different or optional route to access higher education. It appeared that literature indicated that UB identified and responded to this need by identifying ODL as such an option, in order to open up access opportunities for the different types of clients who needed to participate (UB, 2004 and UB, 2008a). While the potential clients needed an optional access route to UB programmes, the University also seemed to have needed to take higher education to the people who might not be able to come to the face-to-face programmes, according to the participants.

The third family of factors considered the need for the University to widen access to its programmes. There was one category under this family, which discussed the need for the University to take higher education to the people. Under this category, participants perceived that the University wanted to extend opportunities for acquisition of higher education programmes to other parts of the country. Some of the participants had observed many people who had shown interest in participating in UB programmes, but had been prohibited by the lack of accessibility in their localities and expenses to go and access such programmes as

evening part-time programmes from the main campus in Gaborone, which was the only place where they were accessible before the introduction of the ODL mode in the UB system. A participant observed that “*Some of them would like to come but it’s only that they are far away*” (T10:10). The participant went on to illustrate the determination of some employees who used to travel long distances from their work stations by bus and back at night by train to attend some part-time evening classes that were available only in Gaborone:

We have people who are determined to come from places like Tonota to come ... to attend classes ... In the evening she would travel by bus to come here. And then go back ... the night train after taking the class, to be in class the next morning (T10:11).

ODL therefore would provide the optional route for the clients to access UB programmes without having to stop what they were doing in order to go to attend full-time university studies, as well as an opportunity for the University to take education to other parts of the country and nearest to its clients. This optional access route was perceived to have the potential to widen access to higher education and address the bottlenecks identified between demand and supply at this level of education (see § Table 5.2). Participants thought that UB was attracted to the ODL strategy by the possibilities offered by the different media that it employed to deliver programmes and found that such media would enable the University to reach the different parts of the country and widen access and participation:

more people would enter if opportunities were there ... if it was to be provided in other areas, have satellites ... that can serve the students. Reach them through video or teleconferencing ... the numbers would soar high (T10:12).

Another participant reiterated the need for UB to invest in the use of technology and “*incorporate modern learning aspects, particularly those that are enhanced by technology*” (T5:9), in order to widen access to University programmes.

In terms of limited resources to increase face-to-face capacity, the participants perceived that the University chose ODL as it does not always need to have its own facilities in all parts of the country, particularly physical facilities. The only category in the last family of factors under Figure 6.1 discussed the possibility that UB might have had the need to maximise the use of existing resources. The category looked at resources in terms of buildings and other facilities in educational institutions, as well as human resources. Participants envisaged that ODL would share existing facilities and maximise their utilisation and by so doing, save a lot of resources that would have been used to build more in different parts of the country. The human resources too were envisaged to be maximally utilised through ODL, where one teacher could service more students through ODL than through face-to-face.

The factors discussed through the four families under Figure 6.1 elucidated some of the possible reasons for UB to introduce ODL in its programme delivery strategy, with the primary aim of increasing access and participation in higher education in Botswana. Once all the four family areas on Figure 6.1 above have been satisfied, there would be a higher possibility of more enrolments and increased participation. These were not the only reasons identified as possibly influencing the University to adopt ODL in their programme delivery system. Through Figure 6.2, I examined another set of reasons, which respondents perceived might have also influenced UB to adopt ODL as one of its programme delivery strategies.

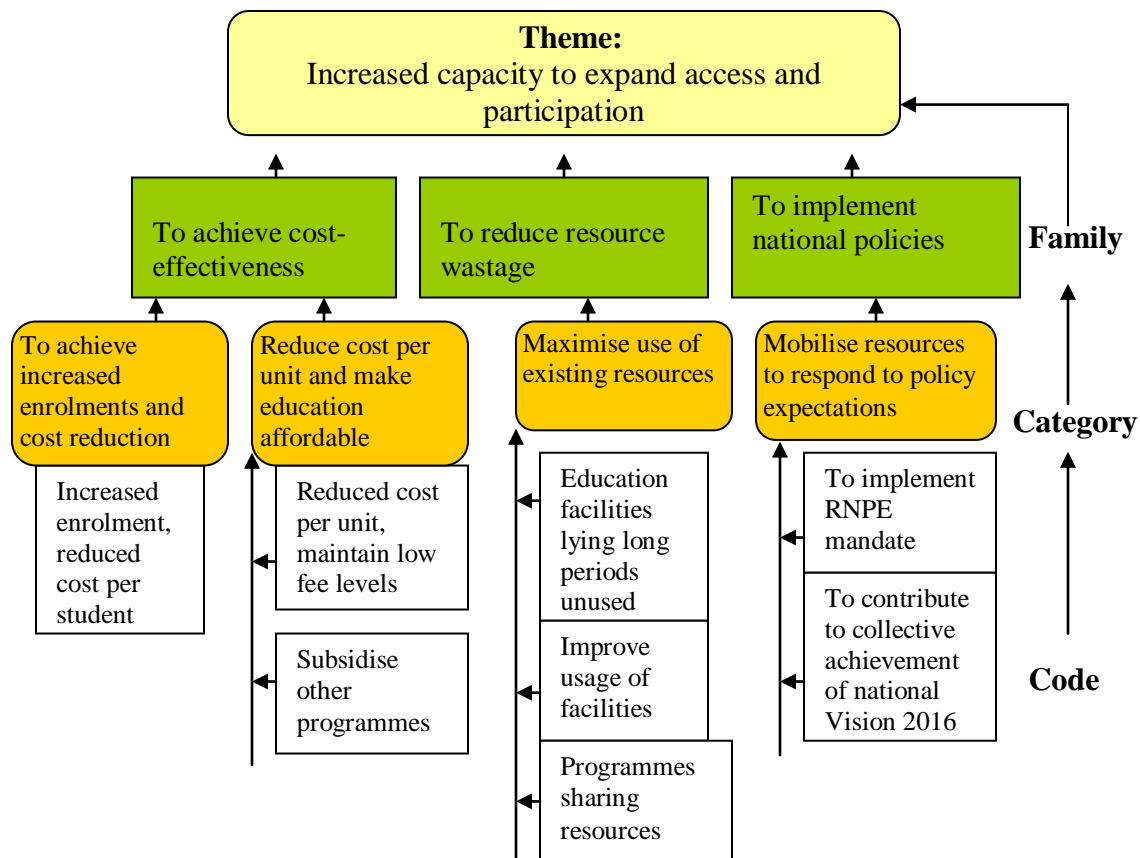


Figure 6.2 *Need to Improve Capacity to Increase Access and Participation*

Three families emerging from Figure 6.2 contributed towards the theme of increased capacity to expand access and participation. The first family addressed cost-effectiveness under two categories. The first category discussed the need for increased enrolment, through which the University could realise cost reduction. In this category, participants focused on the reduction of the unit cost, which they considered to be achievable through large enrolments, especially if they go on over a period of time. Achieving large enrolments was considered to be a factor that could enable the cost of providing as well as accessing education to go down. The lower unit cost would allow the University to enrol more and at the same time reduce the fee levels. This would allow more people to afford education and lead to a further increase in participation. One participant believed that the University recognised that if they were going to expand participation in higher education in a very significant manner, “*then the face-to-face would take us a long time. And it was going to be limited*” (T1:22).

Participants believed that the University must have considered ODL as another strategy to deliver programmes since it was perceived to have the potential to expand enrolment opportunities better than face-to-face:

So we were actually making the same assumptions that are being made around the world that the ODL mode is cheaper and can accommodate a lot more ... more efficiently (T1:22).

However, some participants were cautious on the perceived cost-effectiveness of ODL, which they believed depended on enrolment levels over a period of time since the initial capital outlay for ODL was perceived to be high:

If you have fewer students enrolling, then you have a problem because your investments in terms of your initial capital investments on it will not actually be justified. But if you have a larger pool of students to address, then you definitely are going to enjoy the benefits of the investment (T5:11).

Therefore participants perceived that the University having assessed the high demand for higher education and its inability to meet the demand through face-to-face alone, saw the introduction of ODL as an option that could open access. One participant observed that “*potentially, ODL does open access and can provide quality education*” (T11:11). The participant also argued that “*economies of scale ... would make ODL really viable*” (T11:8). Even though ODL had the potential to achieve economies of scale, the participant noted a possible challenge for Botswana due to the small population.

The problem would always be that in the smallness of the population, the economies of scale that would make ODL really viable are always going to be very difficult to achieve (T11:9).

Despite the smallness of the population, when considering reasons for introducing ODL, economies of scale would always be amongst such reasons. It was envisaged that the cost of educating a student would be reduced, enabling fees to be affordable through ODL. Some participants thought that the University must have also considered the potential for ODL to subsidise other programmes in the long run as another important factor to take into consideration. The possibility of enrolling more students by utilising existing facilities, discussed under the second family of factors, was seen by participants as providing an opportunity for achieving cost-effectiveness and making it possible for ODL to subsidise other programmes in the long run. One participant observed that *“when the numbers are increasing, may be thousands and thousands, definitely it’s very cost-effective. You can even cross subsidise the face-to-face”* (T6:31).

The second family with only one category discussed the need to reduce wastage of resources that some of the participants had identified as one of the challenges of the Botswana higher education sector. They perceived that the wastage resulted in low performance of the sector. Some of the participants had seen wastage related to poor maintenance of the educational facilities and infrastructure. One participant had observed *“a high degree of decadence of the infrastructure because of poor maintenance”* (T1:3). Another one was of the opinion that *“the main source of wastage within our system is that we have a lot of tiny micro institutions”* (T3:25). Therefore the lack of coordination and management of resources was perceived to have been a prevalent issue of concern in the Botswana higher education sector. Maximum use of existing resources by ODL was seen as another way of reducing the wastage that was perceived to prevail where some education facilities were observed to be under-utilised for some long periods of time during the course of the year. One participant had observed that a lot of educational buildings were not utilised fully, maintaining that:

We ... are not exploring or exploiting our ... buildings. Which is why ... actually they’re a waste ... Passed the hour of six, nothing takes place in our institutions. There is no evening school. You find that it is a small portion of the facilities that are being used. The rest of the facilities lie fallow (T2:34-35).

The participant further observed that maximum use of facilities could be achieved if providers could “*combine formal teaching with the distance mode, where structures that are meant for formal can in the evening be accessed by those who are doing distance learning*” (T2:20). Participants perceived that the University could have been influenced by such considerations that ODL was capable of taking advantage of already available resources and maximising their usage. Some participants believed that ODL could potentially be “*a cheaper option of educating the young citizens*” (T2:20).

The last family, which also had one category discussed participants’ perceptions on possibilities that UB could have introduced ODL in its system as a response to national policy expectations. A participant indicated that “*The Revised National Policy actually designated UB Centre for Continuing Education that it would be the national centre ...*” (T3:12). So UB/CCE was mandated through the 1994 RNPE to lead in the development and expansion of ODL at higher education level (Republic of Botswana, 1994). The adoption of ODL at UB could have among other reasons, been influenced by the need to carry out its mandate as expected through the RNPE. Another participant confirmed the presence of this mandate for UB to develop and grow ODL at higher education level. However he indicated that “*there was never the investment of resources that would be required to make it possible*” (T11:7). Participants therefore believed that may be UB could have taken it upon itself to mobilise resources in order to implement this mandate. They believed that once the resources were mobilised and the mandate implemented, UB would achieve increased capacity to expand access and participation, which was perceived as the overall aim of exploring opportunities to open access. Botswana also adopted a national Vision to 2016, one of whose pillars is an educated and informed nation (Republic of Botswana, Presidential Task Force for a Long-term Vision for Botswana, 1997). Participants perceived the adoption of ODL as another strategy that could enable UB to make a significant contribution towards the achievement of this pillar. Responding to a question in which I wanted to know why UB introduced ODL in its system, one participant indicated that apart from the need to open access, another reason could have been “*may be to address like Vision 2016. The pillar of an educated informed nation by 2016*” (T4:10).

The seven families discussed through Figure 6.1 and Figure 6.2, indicated challenges that UB would address effectively through ODL and achieve its priority area of increased access, as well as respond to some national policies as indicated that “*UB will be expected to deliver growth*” (UB, 2008a). From the UB documents (UB, 2008a) and the views and opinions of the participants, it became clear that UB adopted ODL in its system mainly to expand access to University programmes. My second assumption which was that ODL was adopted into the UB programme delivery system to significantly expand access was therefore confirmed.

6.2.2 The Growth and Expansion of ODL within the UB System

My third assumption was that though the University had adopted ODL in its delivery system to significantly expand access into its programmes, the ODL mode was growing very slowly in terms of increasing access, compared to the face-to-face mode. Therefore the next section of this analysis examined the growth of ODL within the UB system by looking at its performance with regard to increasing enrolments.

6.2.2.1 ODL Contribution to Access and Participation within the UB System

First of all I wanted to establish what the opinions of the participants were concerning the performance of ODL within UB with regard to its intended purpose of expanding access opportunities and increasing enrolments. I therefore asked them what contribution they believed ODL was making towards increasing participation in higher education. Figure 6.3 assisted me to understand the situation through their responses.

The ODL strategy was adopted in the UB system, primarily to address the problem of high and diversified demands for higher education in Botswana, which UB could not satisfy using the face-to-face strategy alone. However, the situation reflected from the three families on Figure 6.3 seemed to indicate a disappointing performance by ODL within the UB system in terms of its contribution in increasing access and participation in UB programmes, as well as addressing diversified needs. One participant observed that “*UB CCE seemed unresponsive in terms of the challenge. It certainly didn’t meet that challenge*” (T3:13).

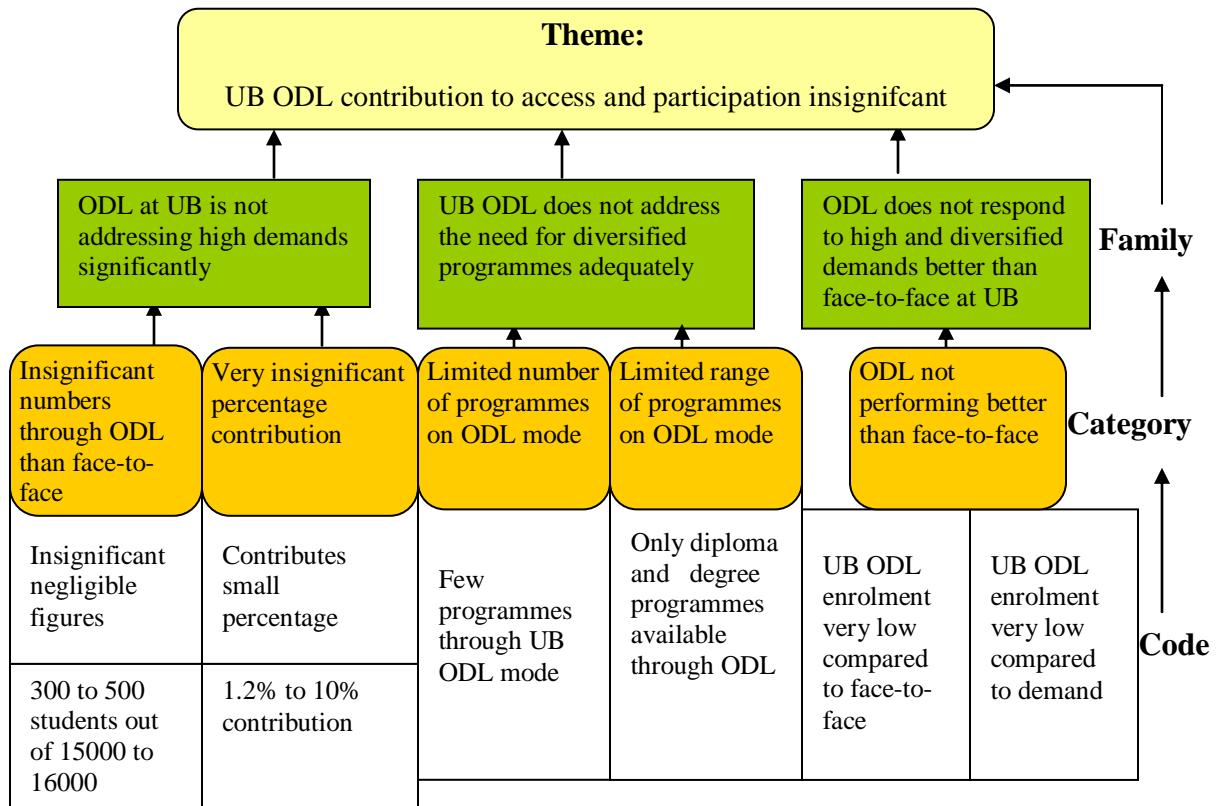


Figure 6.3 ODL Contribution towards increasing participation in higher education

Factors discussed in the first family seemed to indicate that the ODL strategy within UB was not addressing high demands significantly. This observation also seemed to come through some of the documents studied, which seemed to indicate poor performance of the ODL strategy within the UB system regarding its contribution to increased access UB programmes (UB, 2007; Tau, 2008; Dodds *et al*, 2008; UB, 2008d; Richardson, 2009). The strategy seemed to make a very insignificant contribution towards increasing enrolments into UB programmes (see Table 3.1 under § 3.8). One participant explained that ... “*the population of students in UB are about fifteen thousand and out of those there’re about three hundred or so students who are studying by distance*” (T5:3).

Comparing ODL performance within UB with that of other institutions that she had information about, one participant was of the opinion that UB enrolled:

... a low number when you consider the fact that when you ask other institutions how many their enrolment in distance education programmes ... you find that the number is quite high ... (T10:3).

Participants described the contribution of ODL to the student population at UB as minute, insignificant, negligible, and minimal to zero “*it’s negligible ... I would be surprised if it is two percent*” (T1:12). This observation appeared to reconcile with data reflected in some of the University records (UB, 2008c; UB, 2008d; UB, 2008e) and other sources (TEC, 2007; TEC, 2008a). Therefore from the data on some of the reviewed documents and from the interview transcripts, it would appear that ODL did not address the problem of high demands for higher education any better than the face-to-face mode of delivery in the UB system.

One participant had first hand experience with small enrolments in UB ODL programmes:

I’ve been involved with the Business degree by distance mode from 2003 ... it’s frustrating. The numbers right now, from that time up to now, the enrolment is actually very low. At one time I was teaching in Palapye and I would find myself teaching ... sometimes four students ... (T15C:13).

Another participant expressed surprise that ODL could have contributed as high as 3% of the student body, “*I’m not sure it’s as high as that ... it’s about five hundred. So you can make a calculation ... five hundred out of sixteen thousand ...*” (T11:17-18). Generally participants estimated the percentage of the ODL students in the UB system at a range from 1.2% to 10% and in actual numbers they ranged it from 300 to 500, out of a total student population of about fifteen to sixteen thousand. Data from the University’s Facts and Figures also seemed to confirm these low estimates (UB, 2006; UB, 2008c; UB, 2008d; UB, 2008e). Commenting on continued high demands for higher education, which the UB ODL mode did not seem to address adequately, some participants shared experiences where they had noticed a growing number of ODL institutions from outside the country which were offering their programmes inside Botswana:

I think we are enrolling very low figures. That is actually evidenced by the heavy presence of UNISA here ... there have been a lot of other institutions which offer through distance education ... a number of institutions are marketing themselves. But you'll find that within the country here, we're really lagging behind in terms of enrolment (T9:18-19).

Another participant who had also observed “a growing number of individuals... using over-sees or out of the country privately ... distance learning” (T1:11) indicated the low level of growth of the ODL initiative within UB: “the University of Botswana has a small window, which is terribly under-developed” (T1:11). Therefore ODL within the UB system appeared to be ineffective in terms of increasing enrolments and participation in higher education. Compared to the face-to-face enrolments (e.g. Tables 3.1, 3.2 and 3.3), it gave an impression that UB could actually increase access and participation in higher education more effectively through face-to-face than through ODL. The second family under Figure 6.3 looked at the performance of UB ODL in terms of addressing the diversity of needs, through the provision of diversified programmes and seemed to indicate that UB was not addressing this challenge adequately either. The first of the two categories under this family showed that there were few UB programmes available through the ODL mode. Participants indicated that there were about seven programmes that were available through the ODL mode. This was perceived to limit the choices for potential students who would have preferred to study through ODL and therefore could be contributory to low enrolments through the UB ODL mode. One participant thought that one of the reasons for low enrolments through ODL could be that:

... when it started, it probably limited its focus in the sense that ... it started with CABS and DABS ... from there Primary Education. So ... probably it started small ... in terms of the programmes that are being offered through distance education. May be if the start was much broader, it would have grown big right from the beginning (T15A:1-2).

When asked how many UB programmes were also available through the ODL mode and to indicate the enrolment levels in those programmes, one participant responded:

Roughly we have just below five hundred students registered for diplomas and degree programmes ... four Bachelors degree programmes and three diplomas ... About seven programmes. The diploma programme, the one that would have more students ... like Adult Education, would be having something like, may be thirty students or so. And then the others have quite lesser than that ... most of these people are for the degree programmes (T9:1-3).

The third family compared the performance of ODL and face-to-face in terms of their potential to increase enrolments and seemed to suggest that within the UB system ODL did not address both high demands and diversified needs any better than face-to-face. The picture that emerged from Figure 6.3 indicated ODL's apparent low performance and low contribution towards increasing enrolment into UB programmes. This picture seemed to be corroborated by UB's own reports. For the 2007/08 academic year UB reported a similar situation, where out of a total of 13 791 students, only 485 were ODL students (UB, 2008d). It became important to find out why ODL enrolments were so low compared to face-to-face enrolments, as reflected in UB records as well as the participants' views.

To try and understand this phenomenon, I explored the participants' views on the challenge. Using the example of UB, I posed a question which wanted to know participants' views on why the enrolments through ODL in dual mode institutions seemed to be generally lower than through the face-to-face mode of delivery.

6.2.2.2 Factors contributing to lower enrolments through UB ODL

Through Figure 6.4 and Figure 6.5 below I tried to analyse the participants' responses to my question, in order to understand the possible contributing factors to a situation where ODL performed far less than face-to-face, when it was adopted to make a major contribution towards increasing enrolment into UB programmes. Figure 6.4 looked at the factors that were considered to be outside the University's control, while Figure 6.5 was concerned with issues that seemed to be internal to the University.

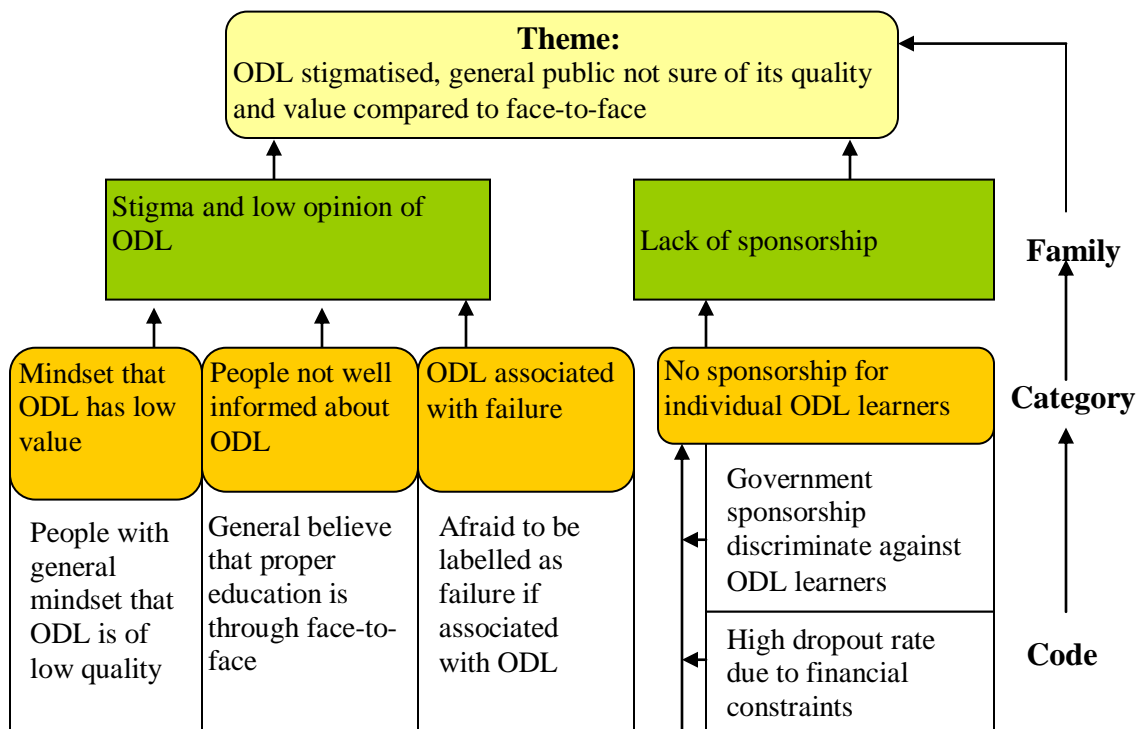


Figure 6.4 External Factors Contributing to Low ODL Enrolments at UB

Factors contributing to lower enrolments through ODL than face-to-face in the UB dual mode system emerged in two families under Figure 6.4. These factors seemed to be more from the external environment of the University. In the first family which dealt with the perceived stigma on ODL, there were three categories. In the first category, participants believed that the general public in Botswana had a low opinion of ODL compared to the face-to-face mode of delivery. They thought that generally people in Botswana still believed that ODL was of less quality compared to the face-to-face mode of provision. Participants perceived that generally people still believed that proper education was through face-to-face.

One participant observed that Batswana “*still have a very strong believe that education and learning is a ... direct face-to-face interactive process*” (T1:19). With this type of mindset, it was perceived that fewer people would choose to enrol in ODL programmes, if they had an equal opportunity to access programmes through the face-to-face mode of delivery. The participants perceived that prospective students in this kind of mindset would not take ODL as

a mode of their first choice. One participant indicated that in the Botswana environment, if there was a national qualifications framework that could assist to equate competencies acquired through ODL with those acquired through face-to-face, may be the continued mindset that ODL was inferior to face-to-face would be alleviated:

... the difficulty is ... how do I equate ... I'm not sure whether you're getting the same competencies that I'm getting when I'm face-to-face and you're distance. Are we getting the same competencies? There is no ruler. But to me the framework, the National Qualification Framework is there bringing a ruler. So when we have that ruler to say when you have done this, you're here, then it shouldn't now matter how I achieve those (T14:51).

To this concern of whether the competencies were equivalent since there was nothing to measure the quality of those acquired through ODL, I made a follow-up question. I requested the participant to explain why people were already happy with the quality of competencies acquired through face-to-face even though currently there is no “ruler” and yet they were doubtful and uncomfortable about those acquired through ODL, on the basis of the absence of the ruler. The response was:

That's why I'm saying it's a mindset. Because you believe you're getting more quality when you have the teacher. But you cannot really say from the current system ... this is what I can do ... this is what I can't do. But the NCQF now will be talking about competencies, which will make me more comfortable ... But now if I say I have “A” in Standard 7 and you also have “A” in Standard 7, I can feel my “A” is better because that “A” I don't even know what it has ... the competencies. And because of my mindset, I will think my “A” is better because I have the teacher. The teacher showed me one two three. Who showed you that? Because face-to-face the teacher will be there demonstrating ... Maybe ODL delivers its differently ... I will think that because the teacher was there and holding me and he didn't have anybody to handhold, He didn't get as much as I got (T14:52-54).

On the same issue of the mindset on ODL compared to face-to-face, another participant observed:

It's more of a mindset sort of a thing because most people up to now, myself included, believe that for you to go to school, you have to leave everything you are doing and enter an institution (T2:23).

Another participant suspected that even in the employment area, the same mindset might be prevalent. Some employers might suspect that education acquired through ODL might be inferior. This would cause prospective students to be cautious when considering enrolment through ODL and the future value and prospects of their qualifications in helping them to get employment:

... if for instance I am an employer. If two people, potential employees come in. One has got a distance eh ... certificate ... distance education qualification, the other one is face-to-face. I would opt for the one with face. May be because one, in terms of value, I may be wrong but this is what I believe. And I think other people believe in it as well ... the face-to-face student is thoroughly monitored. (T15B:27-28).

Asked about his opinion about the quality of the programmes offered through ODL at UB currently, the participant responded:

They are superficial, that's what I would say ... if you look at the content, you'll find that what they're taught is the same that is taught to the face-to-face. So on paper it's more or ... when it comes to the instruction that is I think where the problem is. Because in distance you're there alone, at home, doing homework, and like I said, monitoring ... you don't know really if the students put more effort... because passing is one thing ... acquiring the skills is another (T15B:30-31).

Participants therefore believed that the people's mindset was that face-to-face was of higher quality and that ODL needed to be measured against face-to-face. Without any means of

measurement that could assure them that ODL was as good as face-to-face, it would be difficult for them to choose it until they had tried and failed to get their education through the face-to-face mode, which they perceived to be giving them the best quality and the best value. This kind of mindset would most probably be one of the factors that could interfere with enrolment numbers increasing through the ODL mode on UB programmes.

The second category under the family looking at stigma and the perceived low value attached to ODL indicated that generally people might be not well informed about ODL. *“I think ... most people do not understand distance learning ... that ... it serves the same purpose as face-to-face learning”* (T2:25-26). Another participant indicated that not many people knew about ODL, even within the University:

How many people really know ... I didn't know about this thing ... I remember the first time I heard about this thing was when we were invited to write materials for this thing. So it could be that these people did not do anything to market distance education (T15A:10).

Some participants believed that there was need to educate the public and other stakeholders like government and employers about ODL and its value in the delivery of education and training. One participant believed that *“people who are charged with ... distance ... learning need to go out to the people to change their mindset with regard to what distance learning actually means”* (T2:25). The participant went on to indicate that may be even *“Government itself ... might not be aware that they could actually have a cheaper option of educating the young citizens”* (T2:28). Another participant thought that the process of educating people about ODL should actually start from within the UB itself and spread out to other stakeholders and the public:

When it comes to UB Management ... since most people in the Management area ... come from the conventional system, their attention is towards the face-to-face ... when it comes to distance education ... in the case of providing facilities, technology, delivery, e-learning and things like ... Management's attitude ... the Management's perception towards distance education is not that high ... And we

need to provide sensitisation workshops for most of the Management groups ... about our delivery system and the problems that we face (T6:16-17).

The last category under the first family discussed another mindset issue that participants perceived stigmatised ODL. According to the participants the mode has been historically associated with people who have failed. One participant associated the importance of ODL with people who had failed, indicating that it was important because “*we have students who did not pass well ... and in that way they can be able to upgrade themselves through distance education*” (T15B:7). Echoing similar sentiments about ODL, another participant remembered that during their time ODL “*... used to be meant for people who could not make it to the University of Botswana. That stigma itself ... discouraged some people...*” (T15A:9). With this kind of mindset, participants perceived that people might shun away from enrolling on ODL programmes for fear of being associated with failure.

The second and last family from Figure 6.4 discussed the lack of sponsorship for students enrolled on ODL programmes. Participants perceived that lack of sponsorship for ODL programmes by government, might perpetuate the stigma and contribute to low enrolments on UB ODL programmes. Asked to comment on government sponsorship for employees, where those taking full-time programmes were paid for upfront, while those on ODL programmes had to pass first and claim for reimbursement later, one participant responded:

Yes, I don't know. Because even face-to-face part-time, I mean, people doing our Diploma in Accountancy and Business Studies ... have had to pay individually, and then they get paid back later after successful completion and approval (T11:10).

Speaking specifically to the relationship between finances and low level of participation in ODL programmes, one participant observed:

... I imagine the major contribution in Botswana, I may be wrong, but the sponsorship and the absence of it from that mode at tertiary level ... I don't think

Student Placement have really as yet ... have been able to avail sponsoring on the distance learning (T3:26-27).

Associating this lack of sponsorship with discrimination, another participant noted that “... *first of all ... there is responsibility to de-stigmatise distance learning or part-time learning*” (T5:6), while the other participant shared the experience where students would register for ODL programmes at UB at the start of the academic year, and then “*start to drop out*” (T9:8), with a high dropout rate of “*may be 20% to 25%*” (T9:8). Even though the participant thought this dropout rate could be due to a lot of other challenges, his experience was that “*Some of them would drop out due to financial constraints...*” (T9:8).

Observing that sponsorship was a major contributing factor for participation in higher education in Botswana since it is known to be an expensive level of education, a participant concluded that:

The one thing that is the issue to also bring on board here is the sponsorship. More youth may be wanting to go for tertiary education, but would not have the finance to pay for themselves. Even some of the working people ... Their salaries are not sufficient enough to even pay for tertiary education ... I cannot really say whether they are coping because the issue of finance also affects accessibility (T12:5-6).

Another participant had witnessed that many people would come to UB and apply for ODL programmes:

But because of financial commitments and other obligations, they're not able to proceed with their studies. And because they don't have that kind of support ... to finance them ... into this distance education, they have failed. But ... even if you were to approach the Registry and find the numbers of people who apply to enter and do their degree programmes by distance, you'll will find that they are significantly large (T5:5).

The two families discussed under Figure 6.4 seemed to point to several external factors that the participants perceived might be contributory to the apparent low enrolment into UB programmes through the ODL compared to the face-to-face mode of delivery. Figure 6.5 looked at some of the internal factors that might also contribute to low enrolments through the ODL mode of provision.

Internal factors that might be contributing towards low enrolment through ODL on UB programmes emerged through four families under Figure 6.5. The first family of factors discussed restrictive plans and resources allocated to ODL. When asked why ODL seemed to continue to enrol low numbers at UB compared to the face-to-face mode of delivery, one participant thought that *“perhaps some of it is an issue of not planning ... May be the powers that be don’t have a clear picture as to ... how they should handle ... ODL”* (T5:22). The participant had earlier made an observation that *“distance learning should be resourced”* (T5:8) arguing that if not resourced, ODL could not be expected to grow or make any significant impact on enrolment. Another participant was convinced that *“the University can open access if it has increased the resources”* (T10:13). The ODL mode at UB seemed to have been contributing not more than 3% of the student body up to the end of the NDP 9 Strategic Plan period. This was coming out of some of the UB reports like the review of NDP 9 enrolment, reflected in the UB student enrolment plan for the period 2009 – 2015 (UB, 2008e). By the 2007/08 academic year, the planned 3% contribution seemed to have translated into 485 students enrolled on ODL programmes at UB. This figure however, excluded part-time students who were usually reflected separately from ODL students in UB records (UB, 2008e). The University seemed to have decided to maintain the 3% annual growth for undergraduates through ODL and part-time during the NDP 10 period, to reach an enrolment target of 3050 students by 2015/2016 (UB, 2008a).

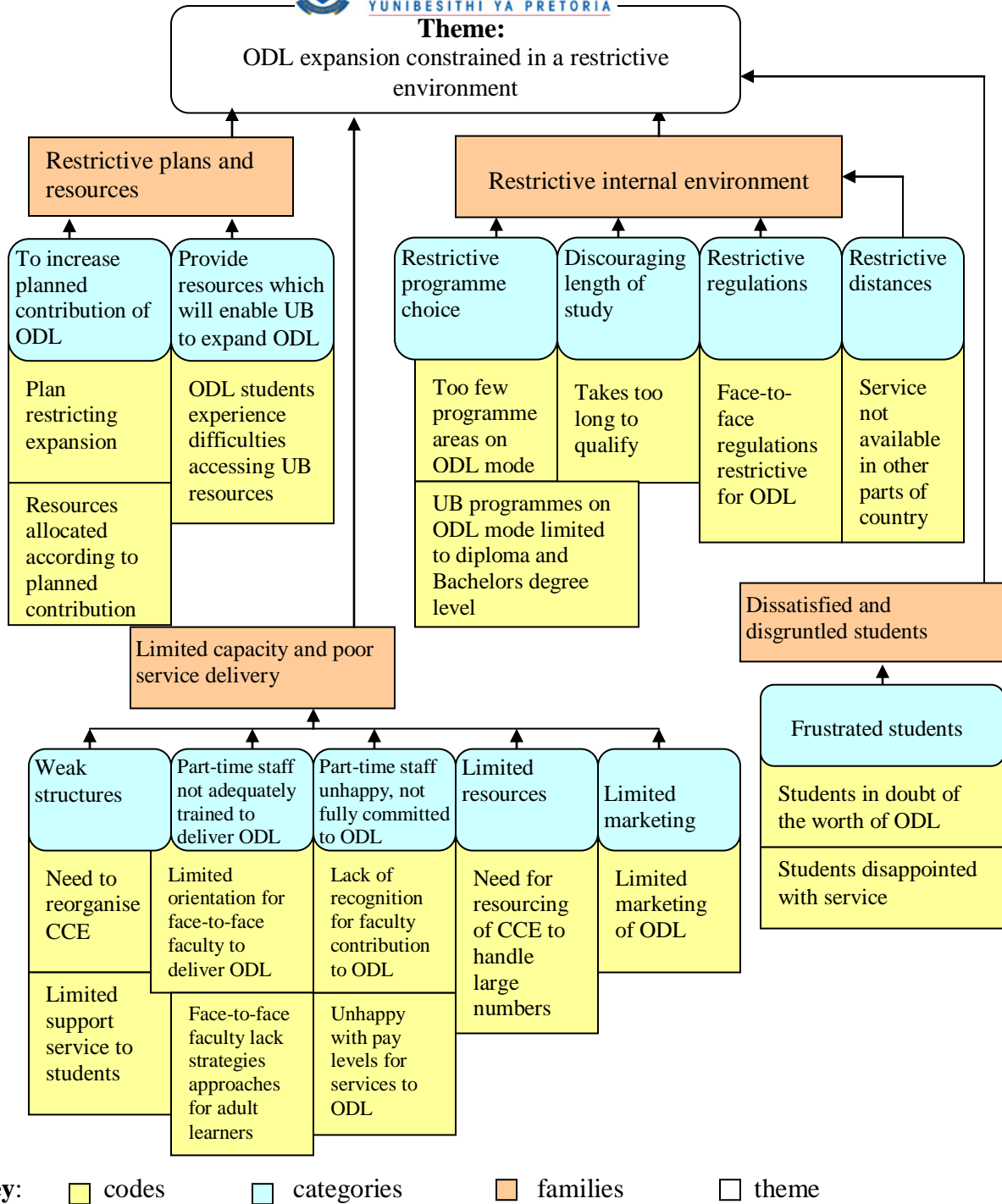


Figure 6.5 Internal UB Factors Contributing to Low ODL Enrolments

In the first category under the family of restrictive plans and resources, participants viewed this plan as very restrictive since they believed that resources would be allocated in accordance with expected deliverables. One participant thought that it would have been more ideal if the University had increased on both the face-to-face and ODL modes, rather than maintain the

target for ODL at the 3% that was reflected as its previous contribution “... *the students who are ... waiting out there are many. So the ideal thing ... would have been to raise both sides*” (T10:24).

Echoing the same concern of a restrictive plan, another participant had observed that there were many people who wanted to enrol on UB programmes, who qualified for admission. However, “*the University has got an enrolment quota as dictated by NDP plans ... they cannot go beyond that number*” (T6:11-12). Enrolment was perceived to be restricted according to the plan. Participants perceived that the proportion of the resources allocated for ODL would be determined according to the expected output of the mode. So a restricted expected contribution would result in a restricted resource allocation. One participant maintained that ODL should be expanded “... *even ... in a dual mode institution, with the purpose that this is what we shall be doing ... and the resources clearly identified*” (T8:20). Several participants reiterated what some documents had already revealed (UB, 2000; UB, 2004; UB, 2006; Dodds *et al*, 2008; Richardson, 2009), that there were many people who qualified but could not access UB programmes because the face-to-face provision was unable to accommodate them. One participant thought that “... *numbers can be increased by opening access, increasing the enrolment target and then increasing the resources*” (T10:13). Asked why the University would want to maintain the enrolment target for ODL as low as it seemed to be, the participant suspected that:

The problem could be that UB all along because it has functioned more in delivering conventional programmes, they are still inclined to want to increase on the conventional side ... (T10:24).

Commenting on the planned 3% ODL contribution to the student body, another participant felt it was reflective of the low commitment of the University towards ODL and observed that “*the commitment of resources is not indicative of ... actually putting distance education as one of the engines of the institution*” (T5:19).

The second category under the family of restrictive plans and resources looked at provision of resources which would enable UB to expand its ODL mode of delivery. Through this

category, participants' views were further explored in terms of how the plans and perceived inadequate allocation of resources might have affected students' participation. Some participants indicated the strain that the lack of resources for ODL delivery had on the students. One participant explained how he had experienced resources being a limiting factor to participation in one of the ODL programmes at UB:

... our group which is in Primary Education ... It was a bit difficult for some of these people to have access to resources. And that itself is a constraint ... Even those who are enrolled sometimes are discouraged a lot ... because of the lack of resources (T15A:8-9).

Reiterating similar concerns, another participant indicated how difficult it was for CCE to campaign and attract more potential students in a bid to increase enrolments for fear of bringing large numbers of students on programmes and then due to limited resources fail to give them quality service:

if we ... go out there and campaign, we are likely to get good responses. But are we ready for those numbers? I think not. Not yet. We need to have resources channelled to actually meet those numbers should they come up aboard (T5:34).

However, other participants felt that the planned 3% contribution was adequately covering ODL. They maintained that the allocation of a small number of students to access UB programmes through ODL was justified by the low performance of the mode since its inception:

I personally I find ... apportioning a very small percentage to distance education ... quite appropriate ... if you look at the situation on the ground ... It's very, very apt for them to apportion it a small chunk ... You can't give it too much when you know its not going to perform ... (T15B:18-20).

Another participant agreed that:

may be that percentage was given after they had made a survey, as to how much progress the distance programmes have made since they were inception. Then may be they realised that here we are not doing well. Why award a large percentage to something that we know we are not doing well in... (T15C:22).

Asked what they thought could be done to increase enrolments, one participant thought that access through ODL should not be restricted:

I think first of all we should be willing to note or to accept the fact that distance education is another important way of offering programmes, not just by the way. But that it is one important way. Just as conventional is important, distance is another important way of offering. Then with that we should open access, not to limit (T10:12-13).

On the whole, restrictive plans and low allocation of resources were perceived as some of the factors that could contribute to low enrolment through the ODL mode of delivery within UB. Many of the participants felt that it would be difficult for ODL to have done well over the years, if it was not expected to make any significant contribution and that was demonstrated through the plans and the allocation of resources. To sum up the concern, a participant commented:

I think it boils down to perceptions of the leadership itself. If the leadership is not quite committed and is not quite convinced that this thing works, how do they demonstrate it? They will demonstrate it by the amount of resources they commit to that particular angle ... the kind of response and the time it takes for them to respond to that issue is indicative of ... the level of commitment they have. So really I think bottom line right now is the perceptions of the leadership (T5:46).

The next family of factors looked at various aspects of the UB environment that might be restricting participation through ODL. This family had four categories discussing restrictive internal environment. The first category discussed limitations related to numbers and levels of programmes offered through ODL. One participant observed that when UB introduced ODL,

they planned it to be too limited, such that only a few programmes were available through that mode:

So what I'm trying to say is that probably it started small ... may be if the start was much broader, it would have grown big right from the beginning. That's one of the reasons that one can think of why it has attracted very few people (15A:2).

This category came up with similar factors with another category discussed under Figure 6.3 above (see § 6.2.2.1). However, under Figure 6.3 the focus was on assessing UB's ability to address diversified demands from the different types of potential clients. Similar factors emerged under this category as part of a restrictive internal environment. Participants noted the few programmes available through the ODL mode as a limitation on choice for prospective students. As it turned out, from more than fifty programmes offered between seven faculties at UB, only "...about seven programmes" (T9:2) were available through ODL. The participant indicated that there were less than 500 students enrolled between the seven programmes, with the majority of these students on degree programmes.

The second category within the family of restrictive internal environment looked at the length of the study period through the ODL mode, which was perceived to be much longer compared to that of the face-to-face mode. Participants believed that this challenge could discourage enrolment through the ODL mode of delivery. They indicated that ODL programmes tended to take too long compared to face-to-face programmes, such that students might prefer to opt for the face-to-face mode, which would allow them to achieve their goals in a shorter period. One participant had observed some students getting discouraged by the likelihood of staying too long in a programme of study. Such students had experienced financial problems where they could not pay for many credits at a time and finish their studies within a reasonable period. The participant concluded that it would not be easy for "*somebody who is very motivated to actually stay eight years doing a degree. They are missing their opportunities*" (T5:35).

Another participant had an experience where a group of up-grading students enrolled on a four year programme and only graduated after about seven years:

... of course some of it was not due to their own doing ... It was due to some logistics which were not working quite well. So the students ended up graduating late, when some could have completed earlier. So they've really taken a long time. But there're those who are able to finish their work in four years or so (T10:4).

Asked on how the length of the study period might have affected outputs, the participant indicated that there were:

... small outputs per year. Like this year for instance ... we just graduated only four hundred and fifty one students. And to me, considering the size of the country and the need that people often express, I feel this is a low number (T10:3).

There were implications of a high dropout rate estimated at about 20% to 25% per annum across the ODL programmes, where students “... would normally register and start to dropout ... because there're a lot of challenges” (T9:8). One of the challenges was perceived to be the length of ODL programmes:

Normally distance education courses take a longer duration than face-to-face would. Even myself if they ask me to choose between them I would go for the face-to-face because I know I would not take long. But if it is going to take five years doing a programme which you can ... do may be for two years ... (T15B:11).

Under the same family of restrictive environment was a category addressing restrictive regulations. Participants suspected that UB still viewed itself as a full-time enrolment and not a dual mode institution. When asked about the status of both face-to-face and the ODL mode at the University, one participant seemed to confirm this suspicion “Well, obviously we're primarily a face-to-face institution” (T11:17). The other participants believed that as a result of this kind of perception, ODL students were subjected to restrictive face-to-face regulations that were never modified to accommodate the ODL mode of provision, which is perceived to have unique peculiarities compared to face-to-face. One participant submitted that “the ODL mode ... requires different skills from face-to-face” (T1:13). He further observed that “universities around the world tend not to have those skills. It takes special skills and effort to develop that mode” (T1:13). Participants believed that due to shortage or inadequacy of such special skills

in dual mode institutions, the tendency was to ignore the fact that ODL required special attention and to subject it to the more familiar face-to-face ways of doing things:

The truth of the matter is that our thinking has been predominantly on face-to-face. This is evident from our registration regulations ... You find them wanting when it comes to ODL (T1:23).

One participant had observed that “most of the time it would be more like the ODL is an attachment and has to follow the regulations of what is already on board” (T5:26). The participant went on to illustrate how existing payment regulations were restrictive for ODL provision “We do not have a payment method that would meet students halfway at least to say, you can start paying instalment to your programme ...” (T5:34). Another participant explained that “distance education processes are carried out in different functions, especially in a dual mode institution” (T7:11). Explaining how the different functions seemed not to serve the ODL students well, the participant explained:

... The Admissions ... Finance ... Distance Education Department ... These functions need to work together in a sense, so that they can serve the students well. But you realize that there are some disconnects in the sense that people who man these other units ... they know there is distance education, but they are not sensitized to the needs of the learners. When it comes to the academic calendar, applications close ... admission, registration and then the commencement of class. But with us you'll have the orientation for the students, mostly just before the conventional start. But then some times facilities are not quite accessible (T7:11-13).

The last category identified under the family of restrictive internal environment was restrictive distances. In this category, participants were concerned that many of the UB programmes were available only from the main campus in Gaborone through either face-to-face or the part-time evening study mode. This was perceived to limit participation since many prospective students would be scattered throughout the country and unable to come to Gaborone to undertake such programmes. The distances would prevent them from participating in the programmes. One participant, having observed that people were really keen to enrol on UB programmes noted

that “*some of them would like to come but it’s only that they are far away*” (T10:10). Illustrating the extent to which some people had demonstrated determination to attend evening classes, the participant explained how one student school teacher in a village more than three hundred kilometres away was determined to attend evening classes in Gaborone to attain a certain qualification:

I had a classmate last year who was coming from Tonota to attend classes. In the evening she would travel by bus to come here after class. And then go back in the evening ... the night train after taking the class ... to be in class the next morning (T10:10-11).

Another family of factors coming out of Figure 6.5 above discussed issues of limited capacity of the CCE to handle large enrolments and the perceived poor ODL service delivery. Five categories emerged from this family. The first one looked at the CCE structures that were perceived to be inadequate and not ready to handle large enrolments, which would be a limiting factor for UB to expand access through ODL. A participant believed that “*there will be need for reorganising ... structuring, to ensure that the Centre for Continuing Education can cater for more students*” (T10:21). Another participant indicated that:

if we ... go out there and campaign, we are likely to get good responses. But are we ready for those numbers? I think not. Not yet. We need to have resources channelled to actually meet those numbers ... (T5:34).

One participant felt that if UB had a well established dual mode system “*whereby both distance and conventional ... run together and they’re given that equal importance*” (T10:14), then they would be given equal importance “*even in terms of ... resources*” (T10:14). The category further discussed the support structures that were perceived to be weak and unsuitable for a dual mode set up. Asked what services were available to support students learning through ODL, one participant indicated that they were supported mainly through print:

... they used to have WebCT ... and it was mainly used by the degree students. But it doesn’t appear to be widely used now ... in the passed two or three years back ... (T9:3).

Asked why the WebCT service was no longer popularly in used like it was the case some two, three years ago, the participant suspected that the CCE link cut:

When CCE link cut, which is the one that is managing the WebCT system ... it was like a project type of activity and it ran for a few years. It has not been rolled out and I think it's just a question of may be people not taking the initiative to make sure that they continue using it ... I don't know whether there were any hiccups experienced with technology (T9:4-5).

One participant felt that it was necessary for the University to “*incorporate modern learning aspects, particularly those ... enhanced by technology, computer mediated, video conferencing, internet and all these other things that go with it*” (T5:9). The participant had observed that such support was available for on-campus face-to-face students, but not for students on ODL programmes:

... not only to enhance full-time learning in those areas ... what we see in UB is that things like Web-CT, Blackboard ... they're being used to actually enhance learning within the institution. So people who are already advantaged are even further advantaged ... And yet when it comes to distance learners there's very little assistance that has been extended (T5:10).

The experiences of another participant seemed to confirm the supposition that technology enhanced learning appeared to be geared towards supporting on-campus students only. The participant submitted that UB was “*... using on-line to enrich in the first instance the experience of our face-to-face students*” (T11:17).

Participants believed that the University had taken long to address the needs of the ODL mode of delivery and as such was still at the beginning stages of providing resources like those for video conferencing, tele-conferencing, Blackboard and the WebCT facility. They perceived that training for CCE staff in the use of such technology had also lagged behind. This presented limitations on the kind of support that the ODL students could have benefited from. Since

many staff members in the CCE/DDE were not yet fully conversant with the use of certain technology, which could enhance programme provision and student support services, they experienced continued delivery problems that could end up discouraging both staff and students:

Your ISDN lines may not be very good, your picture is freezing in the monitor there, but your students see in the video conferencing ... ultimately the time is wasted ... you cannot get back the time. Definitely it's not even five minutes. We're talking about one hour or so (T6:35).

Weak support structures were perceived to have also prevailed as a result of the ODL mode being too dependent on the face-to-face mode for its delivery, even though “*it is a specialised area in the sense that it's a new mode*” (T6:32). For this new and specialised area “*there is no teacher ... we're withdrawing teachers from the mainstream*” (T6:32). The next category under the family of limited capacity and poor service delivery discussed this issue of a specialised mode of delivery that depended on people perceived not to have always been adequately trained to handle it. Participants were of the opinion that most of the part-time staff from the face-to-face delivery mode had not been adequately trained to enable them to function effectively within the ODL environment. One participant ascertained that:

...not many people here are trained in distance education. So how do you expect people to actually be ... facilitators, planning, executing and doing all those other processes when they themselves ... they do not have any exposure ... they know almost nothing about distance education except from the literature that they may have read (T15C:13-14).

Participants submitted that developing and delivering ODL required special skills and special effort. One participant explained that it had not been easy for UB to acquire such skills and put the necessary effort into ODL growth because “*being the only state university in the country for decades,*” the University “*has been focusing more on face-to-face and merely trained to develop material for the distance learning mode*” (T1:10). This gave an indication that less attention had been given to developing capacity for the growth of ODL. This would lead to

lagging behind, over those decades, of the structures that were supposed to service the mode. Reiterating the concern that the part-time lecturers from the face-to-face mode had not been adequately trained to give quality service in the ODL environment, one participant shared some experience:

... faculty who teach at the distance education programme, should also have the teaching strategies ... should have been trained in working with adult learners and these strategies that they can use ... the approaches ... Do they know what to do? Yes, they have got the content. But having content doesn't mean that you're able to deliver it to everybody ... Delivery methods for a baby ... an adolescent at secondary, the adult learners ... Those delivery methods are different. So to me really, people need to be trained accordingly (T10:21-22).

The third category from the family of limited capacity and poor delivery service discussed the perceived lack of or limited commitment in servicing the ODL delivery mode. The constraint that CCE is presumed to have experienced as a result of depending on the face-to-face mode for delivery of ODL programmes was “*the people who are not entirely committed to teaching distance education ...*” (T10:21). To illustrate how the lack of commitment of some lecturers from face-to-face faculties, disadvantaged ODL delivery, one participant explained that:

Many of the distance education programmes are ... supposed to be developed and tutored by staff from face-to-face programmes ... that creates a constraint. Because the people that you bring into distance education programmes on a part-time basis must first of all satisfy the requirements of their parent pre-service programme before they can concentrate fully and well in distance education programmes. So... you find that distance education programmes get compromised because of the dual mode nature (T8:18-19).

Participants considered the possibility of part-time staff being unhappy, which would result in their lack of commitment to the ODL mode of delivery. Participants perceived that the lack of commitment from some of the academic staff members from the face-to-face mode might be resulting from the perceived lack of recognition for their contribution in ODL development and

delivery. They submitted that the University's performance appraisal system did not recognise the contribution that academic staff made towards the development and delivery of ODL as an important factor worth considering for appraisal. One participant observed that it was *"not part of their job description. They come in and do it as part-time like anybody else ... yet they're serving the same entity"* (T5:16-17). Since contribution in ODL was not recognised as adding value towards faculty academic development and could not be considered to count towards promotion, participants perceived that part-time staff from face-to-face faculties would not be as committed to ODL as they would be to the face-to-face mode. Therefore *"missing classes for them is not such a big deal ... they will just give an excuse ... something happened I couldn't come"* (T8:20). Also perceived to contribute to the lack of commitment to ODL by some of the part-time staff was the issue of low remuneration for the services rendered to CCE. *"Sometimes may be your remuneration is not as they are expected"* (T6:30).

Participants indicated very clearly that constraints related to low remuneration for services rendered to ODL, lack of recognition by the University performance appraisal system for their contribution to ODL and inadequate training, would demotivate part-time lecturers, and it would not be very surprising if their commitment level to ODL was to go down. They perceived that this would result in poor service delivery.

The fourth category under the family of limited capacity and poor service delivery looked at limited resources. This category reiterated the need for more resources to enable the CCE to develop ODL further and have the capacity to handle more students or to open up more access to UB programmes. Making an observation on the level of responsiveness of the CCE towards the challenge of the need to increase enrolments, one participant thought that *"UB CCE seemed unresponsive in terms of the challenge. It certainly didn't meet that challenge"* (T3:13). The opinion of another participant, relating to the perceived lack of responsiveness of CCE to handle the challenge was that:

... if you are starting a distance education programme, one should not be an off-shoot of the other. One should develop... with the purpose that this is what we shall be doing and this is how we shall be doing it and with who and these are the resources, clearly identified (T8:20).

The challenge of the lack of a defined purpose for ODL, together with the absence of clearly defined resources could have contributed to the perceived unresponsiveness of the CCE to the problem of high demands for higher education. CCE might have lacked the resources to develop and grow the ODL mode. Another participant seemed to have also observed the lack of allocation of resources to enable CCE to respond to the challenge adequately and remembered that “*there was never the investment of resources that would be required to make it possible ...*” (T11:7).

There seemed to be a perception that the CCE/DDE was helplessly too dependent on the face-to-face delivery mode for the development and delivery of ODL programmes. When explaining how the face-to-face mode of delivery supported the ODL mode, one participant made a comparison between the two modes that:

The.... face-to-face programmes have got permanent facilities ... permanent structures. And the staff ... some of them are on permanent basis some on contract basis ... When it comes to the distance education, it is all part-time hourly basis ... So the full-time are face-to-face support base... the moderators, people who oversee the programmes, everything they support, even they're supplying us the resource persons to move ... this distance education ... without them, it is very difficult to sustain (T6:14).

Another participant shared a similar observation and concern that CCE did not have resources that it could fully deploy and have control over:

... to rely on someone that you know that you don't have total control... CCE does not have total control on the faculty that they are using to teach in the programme... they do give them the course plans ... the time-tables... But at the end of the day really, that person has their full commitment somewhere else (T10:29).

The participants saw the challenge being larger than just the fact that some part-time staff members could be less committed to ODL since they had to satisfy their full-time employment requirements first. The lecturers facilitating on ODL programmes were seen to be over-

stretched and overloaded. One participant indicated that they were “*juggling these services ... the distance becomes a constraint ... for them*” (T8:21). Another participant agreed with this observation:

...they're preparing twice ... for the conventional ... the distance... that workload... In the programmes that they are employed for ... the conventional, they have the PMS to satisfy. And all those requirements are listed out that they have to meet. And ... may be 90% of their time ... goes to this which they're committed to (T10:30).

Some participants echoed the constraints that the lack of identification of resources for ODL had on the service delivery. One participant indicated that facilities were not always accessible for ODL, especially if the ODL tutorial sessions were to take place during the semester:

We can't access some of them, even though sometimes we may book ... someone might find a class and they think it's vacant. And yet we may have booked it for our students (T7:14).

Participants felt that the University needed to provide more resources in order to ensure that all the people accessing their programmes through ODL were able to get the services wherever they were in the country. One participant was of the opinion that “*if you have to increase the numbers, it means even out there the satellites have to be well developed and ... well resourced*” (T10:26).

The last category under the family of limited capacity and poor service delivery discussed issues of limited marketing of ODL. In this area participants perceived that not many people within, as well as outside the University seemed to know much about ODL, its value, how to handle it and what it needed. One participant wondered “*How many people really know ... about this thing*” and suspected that “*it could be that these people did not do anything to market distance education*” (T15A:9). Another participant thought that ODL was not very well catered for within the UB system probably because “*when you're in a dual mode institution, may be the decision makers are not quite sensitive to the needs of distance education learners*” (T9:10). Raising a similar concern about lack of knowledge of management about ODL,

another participant thought that it was necessary for the CCE/DDE to hold sensitisation workshops to educate first of all UB management groups and then take these workshops further than the University to educate the public:

... we need to really go to that... the sensitisation about ... the value of distance education, how it helps the country... they need a lot of sensitisation about stuffs ... across the country (T6:23-24).

Many of the participants indicated that they knew about the ODL programmes because they became involved in the facilitation of some of them. However, they believed that the rest of the University community and other people outside UB might probably know very little about ODL. Some of them thought ODL started in UB “...1991 or early nineties” (T4:9), “around 2000 ... or there about” (T15A:1), “more than five years...” (T9:6). These varying responses, which were far from the time when the ODL mode started in UB seemed to confirm the participant’s own believe that very little was known about ODL. Participants generally thought that CCE had not done enough to market the ODL mode of delivery. One participant thought that may be that was “*equally compounded by the lack of marketing skills by the ODL practitioners themselves*” (T9:10).

The fourth and last family under Figure 6.5 discussed dissatisfied and disgruntled students. Having discussed the various facets of perceived restrictive internal environment that might be contributory to low enrolment in UB programmes delivered through ODL, this last family of factors showed that those students who had managed to enrol on these programmes, were generally unhappy about the services they got through the ODL mode of delivery. Some participants shared their experiences in dealing with the students. Some of these experiences indicated that many students in ODL programmes at UB might be frustrated with poor service. One participant summed up the students experiences:

Students sometimes were frustrated ...it’s like you’ve done nothing. Because ... like there would be clashes ... there would be all these things. It’s like they feel it’s not worth their money ... they feel we’re not doing enough to help them achieve what they thought they would achieve (T15C:15).

This last family summarised the effects of all the factors discussed already under Figure 6.5, which lead to dissatisfied and disgruntled customers. A consequence of this condition could be reluctance to enrol in the UB ODL programmes. Restrictive plans, which were perceived to restrict the allocation of resources, would have a negative impact on the service delivery to students. Restrictive regulations would affect the way the system services students, while the long duration before completion of programmes would add to students' frustration. If students were accessing programmes and services far away and incurring a lot of expenses, they would expect to receive a service that was worth the trouble and the expenses. However, the discussion so far has indicated that there would be poor service due to staff not adequately trained to deliver ODL effectively. Some staff would also not be so fully committed since ODL would not be their first priority. Their commitment would be somewhere else. The staff might be disgruntled with the system that is perceived not to recognise their contribution to ODL. Sometimes students would come and find that there were no facilities and there would be clashes.

Data from Figure 6.4 and Figure 6.5 have indicated restrictive external and internal factors that could have led to low enrolments in the UB ODL programmes. The stigma attached to ODL and perceptions that ODL was of low quality could influence people not to value ODL as they valued the face-to-face mode of provision. In addition to the general public perceptions that ODL was comparatively of poor quality and low value, over many years government sponsorship excluded students undertaking their studies through ODL. This was perceived to have affected enrolments through ODL since tertiary education was known to be an expensive level of education. Many people could have been disadvantaged by the government decision not to sponsor individual students enrolled on ODL programmes. There also appeared to be lack of support and poor service in the ODL delivery mode at UB for several reasons. All the factors discussed under Figures 6.4 and 6.5 would lead to students dissatisfied and consequently sell ODL negatively in the public, resulting in less people willing to enrol on ODL programmes.

The perceived low capacity of the CCE/DDE to handle large numbers of students through ODL indicated slow growth on the part of ODL. This would seem to have been ably demonstrated by the numbers that enrolled through the mode compared to those on the face-to-

face mode. The growth of the ODL mode in the UB system seemed to be affected by identified external and internal restrictive factors. Even though UB (2008a) envisaged increased programmes on the ODL mode to expand access, Figure 6.5 indicated that there were only seven programmes on the mode, at only two levels. It also appeared that the experiences of some of the students who had taken ODL programmes might sell ODL negatively back to the public.

This part of the analysis confirmed a slow growth of ODL in the UB system. Due to its slow growth, many of the participants thought that ODL was new in the UB system. However, documents date its existence back to the UBS days in the 1970s and before 1982, when UB was established as a national University (Dodds and Youngman, 1994). It might have come after face-to-face in the UBS system, but when UB came into being in 1982, the two modes were already part of the delivery system. So ODL had actually existed in the UB system for about thirty years by 2008, even though some participants thought it was newly introduced.

6.3 Conclusion

This Chapter has considered various factors that could have led UB to adopt ODL into its programme delivery system. A major consideration appeared to have been the need to increase access and participation in higher education. The assessment of ODL performance to address this need seemed to reveal a slow growth of ODL in the UB dual mode system which resulted in its insignificant contribution towards increased participation in higher education. Chapter Six also considered some of the external as well as internal factors perceived to have contributed to the low enrolments through ODL into UB programmes.

The next chapter examined the equivalency level between the two modes by studying the perceptions of the UB community towards ODL, in order to establish if those perceptions might be contributory towards its perceived slow growth.