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ABSTRACT

A study was made of how conventional, face-to-face teaching methods might be used in conjunction with correspondence study (CS), programed instruction (PI), educational television (ETV) and radio broadcasts, and other approaches to make higher education more widely available throughout the region served by the University of the West Indies. These auxiliary methods generally showed advantages in reaching scattered populations, coping with shortages of trained and skilled teachers, and enabling adults to study at home during leisure time. Used with ETV, CS enabled students to proceed at their own pace. Used with ETV, CS appeared to lose much of its flexibility but produce more effective learning. CS and PI proved conducive to active student participation and effective feedback. However, certain methods showed disadvantages in cost, feedback, and opportunity for practical work. Detailed guidelines were offered for administering and planning effective multimedia CS programs. The current state of British correspondence study and educational broadcasting was also examined, with particular attention to the newly inaugurated (January 1971) Open University. (Ten references are included.) (1Y)

UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST INDIES
DEPARTMENT OF EXTRA-MURAL STUDIES

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LEARNING AT A DISTANCE

or

SOME BACKGROUND CONSIDERATIONS TO THE
ESTABLISHMENT OF AN EXTERNAL STUDIES PROGRAMME

by

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1. INTRODUCTION:(i) DEFINITION

The term "LEARNING AT A DISTANCE" is defined here as the undertaking of a systematic course of study wholly or partly away from the setting of a teaching institution.

Thus one excludes from this discussion the informal learning which may take place from the superficial viewing of a television programme or from the casual listening to a radio broadcast. But one also includes situations where conventional face-to-face teaching methods may be used alongside - say - broadcasting or postal tuition.

(ii) AREA TO BE COVERED

In this account one will examine the use of various media in whole or in part, singly or together to create a situation in which learning may take place.

The media concerned will be regarded primarily as but an extension of the basic learning media of the spoken word and printed matter. These have been the two media traditionally used in conventional 'face-to-face' teaching methods.

(iii) PURPOSE OF THIS STUDY

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The purpose of this study is to make a contribution to the discussions now taking place in the West Indies, both outside and inside the University of the West Indies as to how the University may extend its resources to make University education available more widely throughout the region served by the University. by the establishment of an External Studies Programme. Throughout this account reference will be made to the current use of the various media concerned for educational purposes in the United Kingdom where the author

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recently had the opportunity of observing the situation at first hand.

2. THE AVAILABLE TECHNIQUES:

It is as well to list rapidly the various techniques which are now available for use in creating learning situations away from teaching institutions.

(i) BROADCASTING (Radio and Television)

From the very beginning of the use of radio and television the possible educational influence of these media have been discussed as it has been recognised that these media can and often do have a great influence on the societies in which they have been used.

A useful classification of programme with an overtly educational bias has been attempted by the Broadcasting Sub-Committee of the Universities Council for Adult Education in Great Britain in an unpublished report. They distinguished between three different types of programme as follows:

(a) THE INSTRUCTIONAL - these include intensive and limited studies often involving preparation for some examination or qualification.

(b) THE EDUCATIONAL - designed to encourage study in the field of liberal education but not directly involving preparation for any particular examination or qualification.

(c) THE EDUCATIVE - programmes which although leading to greater knowledge and understanding on the part of the listener or viewer nevertheless do not necessarily call for serious study.

It should be noted that in some countries there has been some objection to the use of broadcasting in education. Such opposition has been along four main lines:

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It should be noted that in some countries there has been some objection to the use of broadcasting in education. Such opposition has been along four main lines:

(a) That the educational commitment of broadcasting as a whole may be reduced if one group of programme was identified as being ~~an~~ explicitly educational.

(b) That since no immediate student feedback is possible the essential two-way process of education is not possible.

(c) Another objection is its ephemeral period of contact.

(d) Also the rigidity of a broadcast programme planned far away from the true place of learning.

Attempts have been made to meet these objections by eliciting response from viewers and also by encouraging viewer or listener correspondence or arranging for questions by telephone or by way of utilising studio audiences but these efforts all have serious disadvantages.

Also there has been the supplementing of the actual T.V. or Radio Programme by other means such as supporting literature or by other methods which will be discussed elsewhere in this study.

(i) CORRESPONDENCE STUDY

(a) DEFINITION AND TYPES:

Correspondence study has been defined by Harris (1967) as an organised provision for instruction and education through the post.

There are two main types of correspondence courses - PACED Correspondence courses in which the students submit assignments at regular intervals and Free PACING Correspondence courses in which assignments are submitted whenever the students wish.

(b) Prevalence
Learning by postal tuition is a method of study which had long recommended itself to students in many countries including Great Britain and the Caribbean Territories. Apart from some limited and tentative attempts by some Governments ~~to of~~ the region there has been very little indigenous attempts of postal tuition in the Caribbean but this method of study has been used throughout the region especially in the days before Higher Education was available in the region. It would be interesting to know exactly how much correspondence study prevails in the region despite the presence of two Universities.

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(c) Classification of Students
It is generally agreed that students who study by correspondence may be regarded as falling into four main categories:

(a) Those who for economic or geographical reasons or the demands of work can study by no other method - this includes people who live at a distance from a suitable educational institution;

(b) Those whose professional studies are readily available by correspondence such as accountants.

(c) Those who have not been accepted for entry into some recognised institution or wherever particular studies are unavailable

(d) Those who prefer learning alone at home.

The essential features of the machinery for effective correspondence learning will be discussed elsewhere in this study.

(iii) PROGRAMMED LEARNING

Unlike broadcasting and postal tuition programmed learning is still in its infancy and perhaps will not become widespread for many years to come. Not the least of the reasons for this is that such rapid advances are being made in the use of this medium that most teaching machines which have so far been produced are out-of-date by the time they come onto the market and they are very expensive. But the basic principle of programming remains the same, namely the breaking down of subject matter into small units of information which are then arranged in logical sequence. The student is then directed to work through the subject matter unit by unit on his own. The programme is so arranged that the student does not move from one unit of information or frame to the next without first having learnt and given the right answer. This complete mastery of each step makes total learning more effective.

The simpler type of programming is called LINEAR PROGRAMMING since the flow of information moves directly forward in a straight line. ^{There is} In a more complex type of programming called BRANCH PROGRAMMING, the essence of which is that if the student chooses the wrong answer then he is directed through a new remedial sequence of frames (a branch) before joining the main sequence.

The simplest teaching machine is the programmed textbook but complex and expensive electronic computer type of teaching machines are now appearing on the market. It will be some time yet before a good cheap machine is produced.

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(iv) RECORDED MATERIAL:

The use of records in the study of languages is now well-known. Much other material, some educational and some educative, are now available on records and has been put to good use by students requiring help in home study.

Perhaps insufficient use has been made of the tape-recorder in this field. It may be noted here that in the West Indies the Radio Unit of the University of the West Indies has well equipped studios in which much useful material has

been committed to tape for broadcast in some Caribbean countries and for use in discussion groups.

One new striking development which is worth watching is the production of electronic video recorders which could be very useful to home study students if they fulfil their early promise.

(v) STUDY KITS:

These are of many kinds including pamphlets, books, posters, pictures, discussion notes, physical kits for assembly and construction, and much else to suit each subject.

3. ADVANTAGES IN USING THE ABOVE MEDIA

The advantages of using the methods discussed in the previous section are numerous. The first one that comes to mind is that they enable the educationists to reach a widely scattered population. ~~As will be discussed in more detail later~~ This is particularly significant in an area like the Caribbean where the centres of population are scattered over a wide area in fact separated by vast tracks of sea. Broadcasting and correspondence studies are particularly suited to cope with such a scattered population. In most countries nearly all adults have access to a radio set and postal services are available. Television is more difficult as some of the territories have no Television Stations and even where available coverage is limited and the cost of receiving sets is high yet there is the growing tendency for the central governments to supply commercial television sets, ^{as community centres} in towns and larger villages where electricity is available. Thus these are often available in community centres, if nowhere else.

Another great advantage of these methods is that they suggest a method of coping with the shortage of trained and skilled teachers. In using these methods fewer teachers are required as one teacher may, through these methods reach many more persons than he could in traditional face-to-face

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Another great advantage of these methods is that they suggest a method of coping with the shortage of trained and skilled teachers. In using these methods fewer teachers are required as one teacher may, through these methods reach many more persons than he could in traditional face-to-face tuition. Also the best teachers can be used so that the teaching of a very good teacher can be made widely available.

Then learning at a distance can generally take place inside the students' home so that there is the minimum dislocation of his normal life. Thus the student can continue working and study during his leisure time. This is particularly important where for economic reasons the student does not wish

to give up employment in order to study within a conventional institution.

It is also worth noting that recent research suggests that many persons actually prefer to study at home. Thus the Manchester investigation into correspondence study established that "the students' decision to study by correspondence rather than by another method was not forced on them by lack of available oral classes". In fact it was found that in many cases the students' decision to study by correspondence was due to "positive expectations" about aspects of the correspondence method. Considerations such as occupational and domestic circumstances were found to be secondary to this.

Another advantage in using these techniques is that with the possible exception of television it is relatively inexpensive to produce and use material for these media. For example material can be prepared and recorded and used over and over again subject to the necessity for updating the courses. Then for radio, in particular, receiving sets are now generally readily available and are comparatively cheap.

In addition where used alone correspondence study enables a student to progress at his own pace. This is an important advantage as in these circumstances the student is not hampered by needing to strive to keep up the pace with others in a class, nor, on the other hand, if he is a slow learner, is he "lost" by the faster pace of a class of which he may be a member. Of course such an advantage no longer holds when correspondence studies are integrated with radio or T.V. or conventional face-to-face methods where it is required that all participants keep pace with each other within certain limits.

But this should not be interpreted to mean that such integration of media is entirely disadvantageous.

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Although positive evidence is scanty it seems clear that students find it easier to learn when correspondence studies are linked with the broadcasting media than when studying by correspondence alone. For example, where television is used it seems that the students are encouraged to work and to sustain their efforts to the end of the course. Also, good television programmes may enable the student to learn things which cannot be effectively taught by correspondence. Then when linked with correspondence study broadcasting material can be made more effective by being particularly tailored to meet

the peculiar needs of the participating students. This is especially because the broadcaster will know just who his audience is and what areas of the subject are being effectively covered by the correspondence studies. Thus he may, for example, chose not to cover areas of the subject which are being subsequently covered by correspondence but to concentrate on doing the things for which the broadcasting medium is best suited.

Another example of the flexible use which can be made of these media is by linking them with conventional face-to-face teaching situations in which the latter can be made to overcome some of the disadvantages in the use of these media alone. For example it will be possible to offer practical work in this way and thus overcome one of the real difficulties involved in attempting to learn most areas of most science subjects "at a distance".

Also by this means the instructors are able to obtain some feedback from their students and deal with some of the real intractable problems with which they are unable to cope effectively when teaching at a distance.

In most countries classes in higher educational institutions are becoming bigger and larger thus making personal attention more and more difficult. In such a situation the techniques being discussed here brings the additional element of personal attention and tuition. This should be an important feature of any worthwhile correspondence course.

Another advantage which is particularly true of correspondence studies and programmed learning is that,-- unlike the traditional passive methods, the student learning by these methods is actively responding the whole time which it is considered greatly improves the learning process. Also the student is made aware of how he or she is progressing by the method of presentation of the material.

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4. DISADVANTAGES IN USING THE ABOVE MEDIA

Perhaps the greatest disadvantage of 'learning at a distance' is that the student often is isolated and requires much self-discipline in order to complete the course. This is particularly true of Correspondence Study but as will be discussed later this feeling of isolation can be at least partially overcome by linking correspondence tuition to other media such as radio or television or face-to-face tuition. But in any case these media will be most effectively used by

students who have a great enthusiasm for learning.

When compared with conventional teaching methods these media involve a great delay in the teacher reaction to student response, if any at all. It is particularly difficult to arrange for such feedback in broadcasting but here again this problem can be overcome, if only partially, by linking broadcasting with correspondence study by which latter medium a certain amount of feedback - although delayed - can be obtained. This presumes the existence of a fairly efficient postal service with a widespread network of mail receiving and distribution centres. With care the feedback of earlier programme can be made use of in the later programmes in order to meet the difficulties being experienced by students. It is even suggested in some quarters that the programmes should be put out live in order to make full use of feedback material collected as a result of earlier programmes in a given series. But for obvious reasons there is much persuasive argument against producing such programmes live although there are certain notable exceptions such as the famous Farm Forum programme in Canada.

Then there is the problem of cost of preparing, producing and circulating or broadcasting material for use on these media. While the cost of preparing correspondence studies is comparatively low yet, on the other hand, the cost of producing television programmes is very high and the cost of receiving sets is still not negligible. But while the cost of correspondence courses to the student is quite high the cost of television programmes to the individual student may be low especially where communal sets are available for viewing.

The Manchester Study of correspondence education in the United Kingdom found that, as there was generally no subsidy for correspondence education, participating students were being asked to pay fees six to seven times as high as those for equivalent courses in Technical Colleges. It was further noted that even this level is only being maintained by

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Another disadvantage of the educational use of these media is the difficulty in arranging for the student to do necessary Practical Work where the nature of the subject

being taught requires this. Examples of these are some science subjects and some professional studies. Again this difficulty can be partially overcome by linking the use of these media to each other and to conventional face-to-face tuition. Thus the Open University in the U.K. is planning to meet this problem by supplying "Practical Kits" for use at home, extensive practical demonstrations on television and practical instruction in summer schools which students will be expected to attend. But despite all such efforts it may be that some subjects do not lend themselves to easy study through this media. For example, programmed learning may only be effective with subjects which have a large volume of factual material.

As will be emphasised again later the use of these media require a higher degree of organisation and administrative skill and drive in order to maintain service to the students at an effective level. This is particularly true where more than one of these media are being linked together or are being used along with conventional teaching methods.

In countries where indifferent administration is the rule especially, in the field of education much care has to be taken over the selection and training of administrative and clerical staff.

5. THE ADMINISTRATIVE AND TEACHING MACHINERY

(i) INTRODUCTION

The setting up of effective learning situations "at a distance" require an efficient administrative apparatus. This is particularly true of correspondence studies which must revolve around a highly organised office. This involves the writing of courses, tutorial guidance, and the correction by letter of material regularly submitted by a widely scattered group of students each working in his own place and time. Thus there are both administrative and educational sides to this

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Also problems are multiplied when an attempt is made to integrate the use of various media or to correlate the use of these media with conventional face-to-face teaching. This latter presents serious problems of timing and organisation.

Thus, as already mentioned, while in correspondence tuition ~~tuition~~ alone the individual student may proceed at his own pace and at his own choice of place and time yet when such study is linked with T.V. or Radio broadcasts or face-to-face tuition then all participating students need to proceed at the same pace in order to be able to make maximum use of such broadcasts or tutorials.

(ii) RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE SIDE

In correspondence study the teaching unit is a written "lesson" which requires study over a given period and covers one topic or section of information.

The chief duties on the administrative side are:

- (a) The printing or duplication of study material;
- (b) The despatch and receipt of material on its way to and from students;
- (c) The supply of textbooks, if undertaken; and
- (d) The recording of students' marks.

In practice the written lessons may be supplied in one of three main ways:

- (a) All may be sent at once. This method is the most economical but has been questioned on educational grounds;
- (b) They may be sent at regular intervals. This is quite expensive and requires maximum discipline on the part of the learner.
- (c) Whenever the student returns previous exercises. While educationally very good yet it has many administrative disadvantages, especially where linked media studies are being undertaken.

In order to minimise the isolation of home study the tutor-student and student-college relationships should be as intimate as large-scale administration and writing styles will allow. But there can be some variation in the treatment

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In order to minimise the isolation of home study the tutor-student and student-college relationships should be as intimate as large-scale administration and writing styles will allow. But there can be some variation in the treatment of written communication from the student and of the nature of the personal advisory service from the student adviser and the student tutor. Thus material from the student may be submitted directly to the tutor and then through the record office for return to the student where the tutor's work can be checked on behalf of the student.

The administrative side to good broadcasting is important but both television and radio are technical media which require skilled and expert producers and teachers and script writers. Television, in particular, requires skilled direction, competent camera work and precision timing. Also it is essential to give long advance notice of broadcasting plans. For obvious reasons it is important that the technical quality of educational broadcasting should not fall below the level of broadcasting for entertainment purposes.

(iii) RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE EDUCATIONAL SIDE

In correspondence studies the educator has the primary responsibility of anticipating students' problems since student response is much delayed. If this is carefully done it will reduce the volume of personal correspondence.

The chief tasks on the educational side are:

- (a) The writing and editing of courses;
- (b) Revision and continuous up-dating of course material. This important aspect must be built into any competent machinery for correspondence education;
- (c) The postal tutoring of individual students;
- (d) Marking and assessing of students' work.

Also in constructing a good correspondence course the educator should bear in mind the following:

- (a) Encouragement of learning through self-check exercises and interim revision tests;
- (b) The provision of written assignments for correction and comment;
- (c) Detailed advice on background reading, note-taking and study habits;
- (d) The printing of good visual material. Thus the style of presentation should seek to stimulate and preserve interest;
- (e) It will also be borne in mind that a method which relies primarily on communication by the written word will give emphasis to clarity of expression, the identification of the fundamentals of the subject, special explanation of difficult concepts and the logical presentation of the learning sequences.

(iv) THE "MULTI-MEDIA" OR "SYSTEMS" APPROACH

There is an increasing awareness, as has been already mentioned, that "learning at a distance" can be best promoted by the combination of the various available media together with, where possible, the use of conventional face-to-face methods. It has already been mentioned that such an integrated provision of teaching material requires a high degree of organisation and precision. This cannot be over-emphasised. But the advantages to be gained far outweigh the difficulties which present themselves.

Thus, as PROSSER reminds us, while correspondence courses are very impersonal and demand a high degree of self-discipline, regular T.V. and radio broadcasting can inject a more human element and provide a stimulus to regular student study when built into a multi-media instructional system. It should be noted that such an integrated system forms the core of the courses to be offered by the OPEN UNIVERSITY in the United Kingdom. This will be discussed in more detail elsewhere in this study. But it should be mentioned that in addition to the use of the various media the Open University is establishing a structure of local counselling and tutorial arrangements in study centres in order, among other things, to overcome some of the feeling of isolation which is implicit in home study.

In sparsely populated areas especially in developing countries or wherever for other reasons, such as lack of qualified teachers, it may be difficult to organise frequent face-to-face classes, regular monthly weekend sessions may be all that is possible or, even worse, regular summer courses. In the meantime educational radio or television broadcasts can be used to provide continuity during the long periods when teacher and student cannot meet.

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6. THE INCIDENCE OF "LEARNING AT A DISTANCE" IN THE UNITED KINGDOM

(i) CORRESPONDENCE STUDIES

Of the various media being discussed here the one which has been most intensely studied is that of correspondence education and most of these studies have been done quite recently. The educational authorities have, until recently, considered correspondence education a last resort

for those who for economic or geographical reasons could not obtain effective face-to-face tuition and that the demand for correspondence education would diminish as more adequate provision was made for conventional education. But contrary to these expectations the number of students registering for correspondence education seems to be increasing. Thus it has been estimated that the annual enrolment for correspondence study in Britain is about 284,000 and that the total number taking correspondence courses at any one time is approximately 500,000. However, until the recent establishment of the Correspondence Colleges Accreditation Council has meant that those colleges who so desire may have the support of a public body. On the other hand in some countries notably Scandinavia, Australia, France, Russia and Holland Correspondence Colleges are under some public supervision and even in some cases, public sponsorship.

Thus it is not surprising that most of the agencies offering correspondence studies in the United Kingdom are commercial institutions run for profit.

But the best of these institutions are highly responsible and have recently founded the Association of British Correspondence Colleges which is designed to maintain academic standards and to prevent sharp practices. The older of the Correspondence Colleges were all started during the last two decades of the 19th century.

Although some of these institutions have now discontinued their work in this field it is worth noting that there have been non-profit making institutions which have made correspondence courses available in institutions where the traditional forms of education were unavailable or inappropriate. These agencies are all characterised by their awareness of the educational and social aspirations of the working man and woman. Example of these are the Trades Union Congress which now provides the postal courses previously arranged by the National Council of Labour Colleges and Ruskin College, College Harlech, the Cooperative College, the College of the Sea, also the Institute of Army Education and the Prison Services and most recently the National Extension College of Cambridge.

(ii) TELEVISION

In regard to broadcasting (both radio and television) the British Broadcasting Corporation as well as the Independent Television Authority maintain the distinction between educative and educational programmes mentioned above.

In discussing these matters it is worth noting that it has been estimated that during each day some 30,000,000 people watch television and over 18,000,000 people listen to the radio.

In April 1964 the B.B.C. launched a second television channel (B.B.C. 2) which complements the offering of B.B.C. 1, and enables the Corporation to give more explicit attention to its educational function.

Among its "educative" provisions the B.B.C. Television offers weekly programmes such as PANORAMA with an estimated weekly audience of 6,000,000 and special documentary programmes. On B.B.C. 2 there are generally programmes such as discussions, reviews and edited versions of political and scientific conferences. Also each evening there is a programme explaining and interpreting the day's news. It is considered that these programmes have made millions of people aware of world events, personalities and policies.

It is with the programmes designed to be primarily educational that we are particularly concerned in this account. Into this category falls a number of programmes which are also meant to entertain although primarily educational. Also there are those programmes which are implicitly under the heading Further Education and Adult Education. Thus the B.B.C. offers such programmes on Channels 1 and 2 usually on Sunday mornings with repeats on week nights or the following Saturday morning. In addition there are Further Education programmes on B.B.C. 2 on weekday evenings. I.L.V. also has an adults education programme on Sunday mornings with repeats on

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Finally in this category are educational programmes which have been developed in association with learned bodies and adult education organisations.

(iii) RADIO

Careful observations in this field have revealed that despite the competition from television, sound

broadcasting still commands a surprisingly large audience especially during the day. Also that for a number of reasons sound broadcasting offers more facilities for educative programmes than does television. Such educative programmes include news and current affairs features, musical programmes, Drama, lectures and discussions and school broadcasts which attract large adult audiences.

In the strictly educational category sound broadcasting has been doing much. For example there are special instructional programmes for students in technical colleges and other vocational groups including agriculturalists.

Also prominent in the field are educational programmes offered on Network III. This is on the air between 13 and 15 hours per week, and of this four or five hours are occupied by strictly educational programmes. Included in these sessions are modern languages, historical and current affairs, discussions and musical appreciation. These programmes are supplemented with explanatory leaflets. These sessions are controlled by the B.B.C. ^{Further Education} Education Unit which has regional educational officers and a small section which lines with the principal educational agencies especially those in the field of adult education.

It has been considered that the opening of B.B.C. local broadcasting stations first begun in 1967 will make more time available for educational purposes. But now that the recently elected Conservative Government has announced its intention of introducing local commercial broadcasting stations one wonders whether these hopes will be realised.

Among the conclusions which can be drawn from a review of educational broadcasting in Britain is that such media are able to reach audiences far greater than those currently being reached by conventional adult educational

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Among the conclusions which can be drawn from a review of educational broadcasting in Britain is that such media are able to reach audiences far greater than those currently being touched by conventional adult educational organisations. Also that such broadcasting is helping to change the nature of contemporary society, a fact which adult educators have to bear in mind.

(iv) THE OPEN UNIVERSITY

By far the most exciting recent advance in our area of study in the United Kingdom has been the development of the idea of the Open University which will begin teaching in January 1971.

This Open University which received its Royal Charter in May 1969 will introduce many novel features into University education in the United Kingdom. Perhaps the two most striking of these will be:

- (a) The "Openness of its policy" - meaning that there will be no entrance requirements and students, with few limitations, will be free to take any courses they wish regardless of into which traditional discipline they may be ^{regarded} required as falling;
- (b) The utilisation of the various media discussed above as the main methods of instruction.

Not that this idea is new to higher education as several Universities outside Britain have utilised these methods to some degree in providing academic instruction. For example, the University of New England at Armidale in New South Wales, Australia, has for some time conducted most of its extension work in this way as do a number of Universities in Canada and the U.S.A.

In the University the chief method of instruction will be correspondence studies around which will be offered an integrated set of radio and television programmes, summer schools and a regionally organised counselling and tutorial system.

It is planned that the "Correspondence Study material" will be issued to the student in ten monthly units and the students will in turn submit written work weekly to part-time correspondence tutors. It is estimated that during the first few years the Open University will need approximately 5,000 such tutors to cope with the 25,000 students who will be accepted to begin work in January 1971.

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The present plans are for one (1) half hour broadcast on television and radio on each course each week which will be repeated at the weekends. Broadcasting will be

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handled by the B.B.C. working closely with the academic and technical staff of the University.

Television programmes will appear on B.B.C. 2 and the radio part of the courses will be broadcast on the VHF waveband on B.B.C. Radio 3 ~~3~~ 4.

It has been estimated that each television broadcast will cost ten times the cost of one equivalent radio broadcast.

Linked to these media will be a minimum of face-to-face tuition in which the student will be expected to participate unless alternative arrangements have been made beforehand. This conventional tuition will take place during summer schools which will last from one to four weeks. It is considered that this will provide an "intensive period of study in a different kind of learning situation and for this reason it is regarded as an extremely important part of the education process".

It is also worth noting that the Open University intends setting up study centres in particular parts of the country wherever the numbers of registered students warrant it. These study centres will be equipped with radio and television sets and provisions for discussion among students. The University is also examining the possibility of arranging a certain number of conventional tutorial classes at the study centres. The study centres will also serve as the focal point of the University's counselling service. Each student will be assigned to a counsellor in his geographical area whose responsibility it will be to establish personal contact with the student and to guide, help and encourage the student in his studies. Counsellors will not be expected to provide subject tuition.

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Apart from the techniques of instruction which are to be employed it is worth noting some of the other features which are being planned for the Open University. For administrative purposes six faculties are being planned - Arts, Mathematics, Social Sciences, Educational Studies, Science and Technology but unlike most conventional Universities the students here will be free to choose courses from any faculty. In fact some courses will embrace a wide range of subjects disciplines. But it will be possible for a student who wishes to study one subject in depth to do so. There will be four levels of academic study. The first level will consist

of certain "FOUNDATION COURSES" two of which must be included in the six courses in which a student must earn credits in order to qualify for the undergraduate degree of B.A. without honours. In a B.A. with Honours eight such credits are required of which the last two must be at the third and fourth level. The four foundation courses which are being offered in 1971 are Mathematics, Science, Humanities and Understanding Society.

Credits will be awarded as a result of continuous evaluation on all work done for the University plus a terminal examination an important feature of which will be the "identification" of students thereby ensuring that the course work was done by the student and not by an impersonator.

The Open University also intends to offer High Degrees and Diplomas. Graduates or persons with equivalent qualifications will be allowed to take courses by part-time study leading to the degrees of Bachelor of Philosophy, Master of Philosophy and Doctor of Philosophy. Some courses for postgraduate degrees will be organised similar to the undergraduate courses but there will also be "research credits" which will be required.

There will be no need to complete a degree with a fixed period but for all postgraduate students initial registration remains operative for a period of one year and registration for further periods "require certification by the supervisor(s) that satisfactory progress is being made".

The University also intends to offer Diplomas for those who seek the up-grading of skills in the fields of industry, commerce or the professions. Details of these are not yet available at the time of writing.

It is worth noting that the Open University intends primarily to meet the needs of adults who were unable to make use of earlier opportunities for educational advance

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It is worth noting that the Open University intends primarily to meet the needs of adults who were unable to make use of earlier opportunities for educational advance and therefore does not intend with a few exceptions, to admit as a student anyone under the age of twentyone years of age.

At the time of writing there are certain interesting features of the applicants to the Open University which are worth noting. Quite unexpectedly, two-thirds of the applicants are men. Also it has been estimated that four-fifths of the applicants could, on the strength of their qualifications gain entrance to conventional universities. Thus

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the uneducated manual worker or the otherwise educationally deprived have not yet been attracted to the Open University in large numbers.

But there are early days yet. A number of teachers have applied for admission to the University and it seems that educational studies will be one of the largest faculties.

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