UNDERSTANDING TEE

A Course Outline and Handbook for Students and Tutors in Residential Theological Institutions in Africa

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ANITEPAM – the African Network of Institutions of Theological Education Preparing Anglicans for Ministry – is an African-governed and African-led network which seeks to strengthen the ministry of theological education throughout Africa.

INTRODUCTION

From its inception a decade ago, The African Network of Institutions of Theological Education Preparing Anglicans for Ministry – ANITEPAM – has sought to serve the ministry of theological education throughout the continent, supporting and nurturing programmes and institutions of all forms and at all levels, from Theological Education by Extension (TEE) to residential colleges, from Anglican to ecumenical initiatives, and from ordination to lay training programmes.

With the generous and patient support of the Trinity Grants Program of Trinity Church, Wall Street, in the U.S.A., ANITEPAM has undertaken here to strengthen the awareness of the contribution TEE can make to the life of the church in Africa among students at theological colleges and among Anglican bishops.

It has been the view of our Governing Council that TEE is a creative, relevant, contextually-appropriate programme of theological education for Africa. It is capable of providing training for laity and ordinands that is efficient, cost-sensitive and broad-based. Nevertheless, the reality is that in many parts of Africa TEE is seen not merely by the traditional three-year residential colleges but also by many Anglican bishops and church leaders as a programme in theological education that is lacking in depth, inconsistent in its administration and unable to sustain itself effectively. It is merely tolerated by some for the simple reason that what they see as 'true' theological education is unaffordable.

Paradoxically, a second reality is that TEE is sufficiently widespread that almost all graduates of residential theological colleges will sooner or later – probably sooner – find themselves involved in TEE. This may take a variety of forms: The institution of a parish-level programme; an invitation to lead a TEE group; encouragement of a parishioner to participate in diploma- or degree-level TEE study elsewhere; or service on a diocesan or provincial board of theological education. And yet, at the present time, a large proportion of theological college graduates lack awareness of the essential philosophy, principles and methodology of TEE. As a result, residential students in their future ministry may find themselves transforming TEE group discussions for which they may be responsible into lectures, reflections upon local experience may yield to a mastery of 'facts', personal goals in ministry may fall prey to rigid curricula, and a programme which affirms the calling of all people of God may become an avenue to a particular status in the church. This is a distortion of TEE.

Similarly, many bishops around the continent have not been exposed at any depth to the principles and methods of TEE, nor have they been encouraged to reflect upon the contribution of TEE toward advancing the faith understandings of communicants and ultimately the witness of the church in their own dioceses.

Thus there is, to our mind, a great need for acceptance by residential theological colleges and their graduates, and by our bishops, not only of the validity of TEE but also of its key importance in strengthening the life of the church in Africa, and this can only come through a more thorough understanding of the very nature of TEE.

There is obviously much to be done by TEE programmes themselves, from the promotion of greater levels of co-operation between TEE programmes to the development (and sharing) of stronger TEE materials. But unless we move beyond the practitioners of TEE – the 'converts' to this form of theological education – to the broader church, and there seek to inform church leaders of the gift that TEE can make to the entire church, then the struggles that TEE programmes often find themselves facing – from issues of simple acceptance to those of adequate financial support – will undoubtedly continue.

To help to address these issues, ANITEPAM has undertaken to develop a course outline and resources on TEE for use in Christian education courses at theological colleges where Anglicans are prepared in Africa. This workbook, accompanied by supporting materials and further information for tutors, is the result.

This workbook, then, is meant to conscientise and educate residential theological students to the principles, theories and practice of distance education and TEE. Our intent is not for residential institutions to do TEE itself, but to help their students to learn about TEE and what happens in TEE programmes. Many of our institutions may have an education course, but may do little about TEE in it. We hope that this course outline may be especially helpful to them. Others may include a section on TEE, but may be inexperienced in TEE's principles and methodology. For them we hope this course outline may build confidence about teaching TEE effectively.

We need to be clear that ANITEPAM has no wish to prescribe a syllabus for use throughout the whole continent. Rather we are offering to our colleagues a start, for the respective theological institutions to adapt to more fully meet their local

needs. ANITEPAM is also not addressing issues of accreditation and provincial syllabi. We are only making ourselves available to institutions without an established TEE program of their own, and perhaps, providing some help to the more established efforts. For the latter, this could be a resource manual, either as part of an existing syllabus or as a supplement to it.

This workbook is a direct outcome of a working group of TEE/distance education experts held at the Amani Conference Centre in Nairobi in April 1999. The group consisted of the Revd Canon John Simalenga of the TEE Department of the Anglican Church of Tanzania; and Mr. Kiranga Gatimu and Mrs. Lucy Kithome of the Open and Distance Learning Trust in Nairobi, together with the Revd Fareth Sendegeya, ANITEPAM's Corresponding Secretary.

The four apportioned responsibilities for various topics, or chapters, in this workbook, and while there has been substantial editing, we wish to acknowledge the excellent work done by our consultants by topic.

Mr. Gatimu originally wrote on Curriculum planning and management, Management and administration of TEE programmes, and Monitoring and evaluation of TEE programmes; Mrs. Kithome, on Theoretical perspectives on TEE, Material development, and Student support; and Canon Simalenga, on Introduction to the history and development of TEE in Africa, Understanding the distance learner, and Tutoring in TEE.

Following editing, the contributions named above now appear as follows:

- *Topic 1,* Understanding distance education; *topic 2,* the learning characteristics of adults; and *topic 4,* Introduction to the history and development of TEE in Africa, are drawn from the work of Canon Simalenga.
- *Topic 3,* The basics of TEE; *topic 8,* Planning and administering TEE programmes; and *Topic 10,* Monitoring and evaluating TEE programmes, draw especially from the work of Mr. Gatimu.
- *Topic 5,* Methodology of TEE; *topic 7,* Providing support for TEE students; and *topic 9,* The development of TEE materials, draw from the writings of Mrs. Kithome.

We at ANITEPAM are immensely grateful for the invaluable contribution that Canon Simalenga, Mr. Gatimu and Mrs. Kithome have made to our effort. We do note once again, however, that in order to serve our purposes focused upon Anglican ordinands at African residential theological colleges, their work has been substantially adapted, and ANITEPAM takes full and final responsibility for this publication.

We also acknowledge with gratitude the very fine contribution of the Revd Dr. Adrian Chatfield of TEE College (Southern Africa), whose thoughtful contribution on "successes and challenges of TEE in Christian ministry in Africa" (topic 12) draws our workbook to its conclusion.

COURSE OUTLINE

TOPIC 1
UNDERSTANDING DISTANCE EDUCATION

Objectives

At the end of this topic, you should be able to:

1. *Distinguish between traditional education
   and distance education.*
2. *Understand the motivation for
   distance education programmes.*

Introduction

In any education system there are two groups of people: Teachers and learners. The teacher (or tutor, instructor, educator or lecturer) leads or guides the learning process, while the learner (or student or pupil) is the person being educated.

Distance learning, of which TEE is a part, takes place through active participation of all members through discussion, interaction, and the sharing of ideas, thoughts, discoveries and beliefs.

Moreover, since the target group in distance learning is normally the training of adults, it is important to understand how adults learn, and how they approach learning.

Traditional approach to education

Traditionally, a class has been thought of as a place in which a teacher gives information, and the students take it all in. The students may be present in class but they do not speak much. It is as if they are empty containers, lacking ideas, experiences, and skills of their own, and waiting to be filled. The teacher is expected to fill them with new information and skills. The teacher gives out knowledge and information and often does not allow much opportunity for the learner to ask questions or think for himself or herself.

Today, this approach to education is changing. It is now recognised by many that people are not just vessels waiting to be filled. They have minds of their own. It has been recognised that the traditional approach has not always been the most effective approach. This is true both in traditional classroom settings and in distance learning, but…

distance learning especially emphasises active participation of all members through discussion, interaction, and the sharing of ideas, thoughts, discoveries and beliefs.

Open learning and distance education

Many people tend to use the terms 'open learning' and 'distance education' interchangeably. In reality the two terms are quite different. In this section we are going to show the relationship between these two terms.

Open learning: Its principles and practices

Open learning refers to a situation where individuals are able to enrol in a programme regardless of age, their ability to attend a class, their status in respect of employment (in or out of work), the extent to which they are tied to their environment (homemakers, seamen, the long-term institutionalised in hospital or prison), their financial status and ability to meet the cost of fees and other incidental costs of study, and their previous educational qualifications and attainment.

In open learning systems, students are able to study in a place of their own choosing (at home or in a group or class setting); begin courses when they choose rather than when the institution chooses; study at a time of their own choice (note that time-tabled events that may force the learner to attend at set times affects openness); and work at their own pace during the course of their studies.

In an open learning system students choose the means of study. This implies that a variety of media exists and the learners can choose which one to pay more attention to, without their choice affecting their mastery of the subject matter. In such a system the learner is able to decide whether to follow a particular course or a section of it. It also enables the learner to skip some parts of a course or programme of study depending on past qualifications.

In an open system the learner is able to define his or her learning objectives, determine the content to study, and participate in making decisions on the method of assessment to be used. Assessment tends to be module-based rather than based on end-of-course examinations.

In such a system there is need to have support services, which will counsel and advise the student on what to study and on his or her progress during study. Such support comes from a variety of sources, including professionals (tutors) and peers (mentors, family, and friends). This support is made available at a variety of places and times and though various means – for example, in face-to-face encounters or by letter, telephone or electronic means (Rumble).

Distance education: Its principles and practices

At its simplest, distance education means that the learner and the teacher are not, most of the time, face-to-face. It is a mode of education in which the learner and tutor are separated in time or space, and where two-way communication takes place through multi-media methods such as postal or electronic mail, audio tapes, or two-way radio.

Distance education systems have been established to deal with increasing educational needs that cannot be met by traditional school systems. Hence local needs and local environments have influenced distance education systems.

Over the years there has been a number of definitions for distance education. We now analyse a few of these:

- **Correspondence studies:** This is the most commonly used term for distance education. It is a term that has existed for about a hundred years (Holmberg). This term describes the mode of instructional materials rather than what is entailed in learning at a distance. This term may not be applicable today because distance education relies on different media; for example, printed materials may be supported by radio, television, short face-to-face sessions, tape recordings, telephone, video, and computer use.

- **Home study:** This is a term used in North America and Australia to describe distance education. It emphasises the home, yet the student may not necessarily study at home at all. Hence the term is inadequate to explain the meaning of this mode of teaching.

- **'School of the Air' or School broadcasts:** These terms are common in Mauritius and England and many parts of the Commonwealth. These terms are restricted to programmes from radio and television.

- **Independent studies:** This is a popular term in North America and Europe, but it leaves as vague and confusing the nature of the independence. What is it independent of?

- **Distance teaching or Distance learning:** Both terms are confining. One is teacher-oriented and the other is student-biased. The term 'distance education' resolves this problem, for it takes care of both the teacher and the students and other support staff.

What then characterises 'distance education'?

- *It gives access to educational opportunities to people who are unable to benefit from conventional education systems at different levels.*

- *It uses innovative theories of teaching and learning.*

- *It uses specially produced learning materials that are learner-friendly (meant to sustain the learners' interest from the beginning to the end).*

- *It takes into serious consideration the needs of the learners.*

- *It has effective administrative models that are responsive to the learners' needs.*

- *It uses the most effective medium or a multi-media approach.*

- *It uses two-way communication to support and facilitate student learning and assesses students' progress.*

- *It can be more economical than the traditional forms of education.*

- *The teacher can reach many more students in distance education than in conventional education system*

It would be inappropriate if we were to conclude this topic of 'Understanding distance education' without expressing our conviction that the strength of any model of education is built upon what it contributes toward meeting the desire for learning embraced by people all over the world, rather than being built upon a foundation of criticism of alternatives. Residential theological colleges throughout Africa have struggled with contextualisation, with active participation among students, with varied media, with innovative teaching, and so on, just as has theological education by extension – a form of distance education. Our task in this workbook is to hold up TEE as an effective and important alternative to traditional residential education, deserving our respect, and to challenge us to understand it, use it, and see it as a partner in the preparation for ministry of the people of God.

? **ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS**

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1. *What are the key differences between the traditional approach to education and distance education?*
2. *What seemingly negative aspects of traditional education does distance education seek to address?*

TOPIC 2
THE LEARNING CHARACTERISTICS
OF ADULTS

Objectives

At the end of this topic, you should be able to:

1. *List characteristics common to adult learners.*
2. *Mention ways of motivating distance learners.*

Reflecting upon both traditional and distance education in Topic 1 brings us to the need to understand the learning characteristics of adults in order to determine the most effective approach to adult learning. The following characteristics are not exhaustive, but they highlight some of the key characteristics that affect the learning and teaching process.

Learners' backgrounds

Our own backgrounds deeply influence our approach to education, especially as adults. Effective tutoring involves a deep understanding of learners and their characteristics. This is because there are different factors which influence both learners and the teacher in the learning process. Some of these factors include:

- **Age**: Are your learners old or young adults? Since adults come with a lot of experience, understanding this factor helps tutors to use their experience as a resource.
- **Gender**: Different sexes react differently to certain teaching methods and certain learning environments.
- **Marital status**: Marriage presents students with special responsibilities and commitments. This factor affects greatly the pace of study of those concerned.
- **Social setting**: Urban learners face differing situations from those in rural areas, and hence affect the examples to be used in teaching. If learners are in a refugee camp, then examples must be relevant to their life in the camp. Similarly, a rural learner who has never had the opportunity to see a computer will certainly not benefit from computer-based illustrations and examples.
- **Academic background**: The academic background of the learner will affect what activities are most appropriate for his or her education.

Willingness to change, resistance to change

Effective adult education requires an environment that allows us both to respect our heritage and experience and to open ourselves to new knowledge and new understandings, of ourselves, our world, and our faith.

Adults are generally more resistant to change than a child or youth. Over the years, our beliefs and world views have become part of our lives. The gripping power of tradition has taken a firm hold over the way we think, speak and behave. Everything is seen through the eyeglasses of traditional beliefs. This is true in every culture.

Peer pressure continues into adult lives. One fears to be different. To be or act differently brings the risk of ridicule, scorn, embarrassment, rejection and even punishment. It can be a painful experience to appear to be different from others.

Consider the following examples from Scripture:

- Numbers 13:1-33; Caleb standing out from the rest of the community
- 1 Samuel 8:1-10: Samuel standing out from the congregation of Israel
- Daniel 1:8-21, 3:1-30: Daniel, Meshack, Shadrach, and Abednego standing out from all other people of Babylon

Our habits as adults are more fixed, and how we think or behave is often based on the fact that 'it has always been done this way; therefore, why should I change?' There is often an intolerant attitude towards new ideas or practices, no matter how good they may appear. The reason for this intolerance or non-acceptance often may not even be known or can be explained by the adult. He will tell you, 'I don't know why we act this way, but that is just the way we are!' What, then, motivates us to experience, and grow from, adult education?

Motivation

Whether adults are motivated to learn depends upon a variety of factors. Let's consider first the factors that contribute to high motivation:

- Adults who enter any educational programme have voluntarily chosen to learn. They are not being forced to learn as when a youth attends school.
- They have given of their own financial resources, time and effort.
- They may be currently facing real life problem in daily life, and want solutions to them.
- They want respect, both within the classroom, and through further education, in their community.

Now, second, let's look at the opposite, namely factors that hinder or suppress motivation:

- Because of the many experiences and knowledge that adults have acquired over the years, they have definite opinions that they want to express. Thus, if there is a lack of freedom to express these opinions, motivation to learn decreases.
- Adults may have definite ideas about what they want to learn. Therefore if these felt needs are not considered to their satisfaction, their motivation to learn drops.

Third, our feelings about ourselves, our skills and our abilities, influence our openness to learning. Many of us may feel inadequate, others may feel complacent, and some of us may feel both, depending on the circumstances. Church leaders especially need to be attuned to the feelings that may underlie people's decisions about any educational endeavour.

- Adults may feel incapable of learning, and fear they will show their ignorance, hence their sense of inadequacy.
- Conversely, adults may feel they have nothing more to learn, hence their attitude of complacency.

Finally, adults in our churches may be motivated by the degree to which they experience social acceptance within the Christian community. Ideally in the body of Christ there is acceptance of one another as brothers and sisters. There is open sharing and freedom. However, the reality often is not so. As a result, adults may hesitate to share deeply and instead become self-centred.

How adults learn

- Adult learners are self-directed. That is, we know what we want to study.
- Adults want to relate what we learn to our pressing needs. We want to use what we have learned in distance learning programmes to solve our problems.
- Adults learn in the context of social norms and culture. Our ideas, beliefs and customs must be respected. If, for example, a teacher begins to condemn African beliefs and practices wholesale, he or she may not succeed in leading the class. Effective education shows sensitivity to people's daily realities and environment.

1.   What is the importance of understanding characteristics of learners?

2.   Which characteristics of adults are you most familiar with ?

3.   Are adults in your society resistant to change?
If so, why do you think that is so?
If not, what do you think has made them more open to change?

4.   Discuss the reasons you think adults want to learn.

TOPIC 3
THE BASICS OF TEE

Objectives

At the end of this topic, you should be able to describe:

1.   *The basic nature of TEE.*
2.   *The basic elements of TEE method.*
3.   *Different types of TEE study materials.*

So what is TEE ?

TEE, writes Sister Carol Mouat of the TEE College (Southern Africa), 'is a method of training for ministry in the church (lay and ordained). The philosophy is concerned with the method of theory and praxis. While the students study for the ministry in their home environment they continue to serve their congregation. The theory is an academic process which the student translates immediately into action in his or her pastoral ministry within the church. Reflection takes place in small discussion groups. This spiral of knowledge – being and doing – enables the student to reflect critically on theological issues which are directly related to life situations. (Mouat)

- **TEE is <u>theological</u>:** It teaches about God, what God is like and what God does, and how to serve God. It gives training in all the basic foundations of the Christian faith, with textbooks that help students to study the Bible, theology and ministry.

- **TEE is <u>educational</u>:** It is built on sound principles of training that make for effective learning by reaching students in their own environment with quality education.

- **TEE is <u>extensional</u>:** It extends to where people are, without their leaving their homes, jobs, communities and local congregations.

Learning through TEE

TEE has three main learning components:

- **Regular seminars or meetings:** Each week learners meet together with a leader at a chosen centre. The meeting provide fellowship, motivation, clarification and confirmation of their studies. The purpose is to provide an opportunity for expression, discussion, and sharing of ideas among the learners with a view to developing the practical application of the topic under study to their lives and ministries in the church.

- **Self-instructional materials:** A student spends about five days in guided self study, often in daily one-hour sessions.

- **Activities and practical assignments:** This is an opportunity for a student to put what he or she has learned into practice.

TEE study materials

There are many types of TEE materials. Here are five key ones. We will return to talk about them in more detail in Topic 5:

- **Study guides:** These often go together with one or more textbooks and are companion to those texts. They may just provide assigned readings for the learner (daily or weekly), or give reading assignments and then ask questions to be answered in the guide itself or in an extra notebook.

- **Workbook:** This is a combination of textbook and notebook where students write their answers. A workbook may give teaching information and give tasks, or it may refer partly to other different sources.

- **Programmed instruction (PI):** This is self-teaching material which uses a special way of presenting teaching in a series of steps called 'sequence'. This type applies to materials which are clearly sequenced in nature, have clearly stated objectives, and are tested.

- **Semi-programmed materials (SPM):** This term refers to materials which apply the criteria of PI only in a partial way. They may be 'mixed', in other words, some parts may be programmed and others not, or they may be 'open', in other words, have the form of PI but without real sequencing.

- **Audio or video materials:** These may be used alone or in combination with written materials, and include audio cassettes, videos, slides, and movies.

1. Define TEE.

2. Discuss the basic components of the TEE mode of education.

3. Explain the different types of TEE materials.

4. Drawing upon Topic 2 on 'The learning characteristics of adults' as well as drawing upon this topic, discuss the various factors that influence learning and show how they apply to the TEE mode of education.

TOPIC 4
INTRODUCTION TO THE HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT OF TEE IN AFRICA

Objectives

1. *At the end of this chapter, you should be able to trace how Theological Education by Extension (TEE) started and how it spread to different parts of Africa.*

2. *You will also be able to know the current status of TEE in Africa viewed as a sub-system of distance education.*

Introduction

Theological education by extension is a distance education programme whose subject area is theology. The history of distance education shows that educators turned to the mode in order to overcome certain problems that hindered the majority from getting access to conventional education institutions. In the same way, TEE was begun to meet theological education needs of Christians who could not be served by the existing theological colleges and seminaries. It was seen as an ideal method of training clergy and church workers without uprooting them from their culture and environment. The pioneers of TEE noticed that although there was shortage of trained clergy, at the same time there was a pool of capable leaders with proven experience in the ministry. However, they

lacked theological education. And, they could not be accommodated in the traditional seminary (Kinsler 1999:5).

What are the origins of TEE?

TEE has a very long history. There is evidence that some of the ingredients of what was later to be popularly known as distance education can be traced from Plato, the Apostle Paul and Erasmus, among others. (Gatimu et, al. 1997:9). The writings of Saint Paul are very striking in their use of didactic techniques that are now popular in self-instructional materials. Consider, for example, 2 Corinthians 13:10, Galatians 6:11 and Ephesians 3:3-4.

From the 18th century, 'correspondence' education emerged with the improvement of printing and postal services. Thus Isaac Pitman was able to offer shorthand courses by correspondence. The most significant event in the history of 'correspondence' was when the University of London launched its external degree programme in 1858. Proprietary institutions emerged in order to profit from offering tuition to students studying for University of London's 'external' programmes.

The Guatemala experiment

TEE developed in Guatemala, in South America, in the 1960s. A Presbyterian seminary called Seminario Evangelico Presbitariano de Guatemala was experiencing problems related to the preparation of church ministers. In its first twenty-five years, the seminary had prepared only 10 pastors, and in 1962

there were only six students. These were hardly sufficient to care for 200 growing churches.

Those church leaders who were serving in the rural congregations had no training, yet most could not leave their families to come to the residential college. Even if they could leave their families, the seminary could only train a few people at very expensive costs.
The seminary was also finding something else: Those who did come to them for training seemed to change their attitudes and theology, often in ways that made it difficult for them and their congregations when they returned to the countryside.

To address these issues, the seminary sought an alternative means of training. Tutors from the seminary began to prepare courses and go out to where the people were and establish centres of learning.
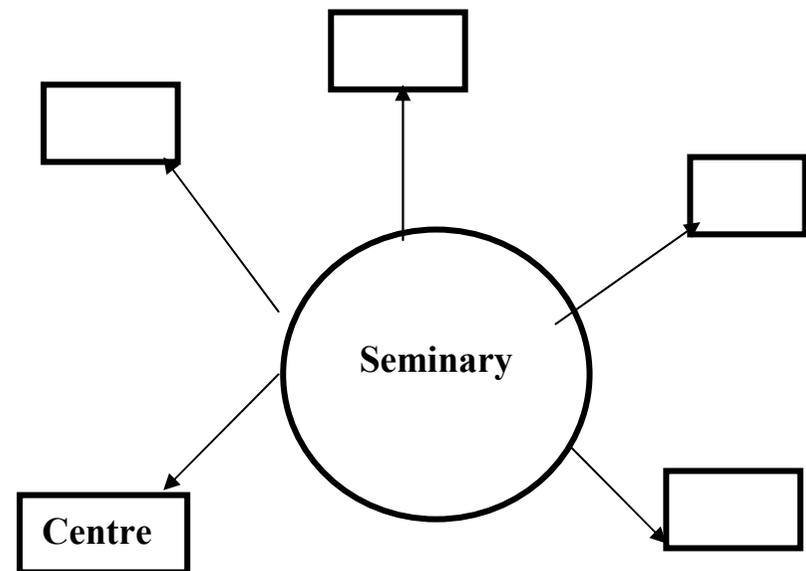
TEE pioneers

This step moved the seminary toward a radical solution: literally, to decentralise the seminary. The pioneers of this venture were Ralph Winter, James Emery and Ross Kinsler. Several regional centres were set up, where students could meet once a week with a tutor from the seminary, receive help on his studies of the previous week, and take home assignments for the coming week. The same text books used in the residence programme were also used in this extension programme. The results of this new structure were great. Enrolment immediately increased to 50 students.

From Guatemala to other Latin American countries

Other churches in Latin America (Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Columbia and Honduras) found the idea to be promising. They began to share experiences and organise workshops. This sparked a number of workshops in Asia and Africa, where churches were struggling to cope with the large number of new Christians on the one hand, and lack of opportunities for training the work force for ministry in the church on the other. Thus in time, the radical departure from the traditional residential structure of theological education, born in one tiny country, spread to other Latin America countries and eventually around the world.

From Latin America to Africa

In 1969 church leaders and theological educators came together in Limuru, Kenya, for a conference on TEE. Ross Kinsler, then with the World Council of Churches (WCC), led

the crusade to start TEE programmes in both ecumenical and evangelical churches in Africa. Within a year the first TEE programmes in Africa were started simultaneously in Ethiopia and Zambia.

From 1970 onwards, the Committee to Assist Missionary Education Overseas (CAMEO) – under the leadership of Fred and Grace Holland (many in the first generation of TEE workers in the Global South came from Europe and North America) – collaborated with the Association of Evangelical Bible Institutes and Colleges of Africa and Madagascar (AEBICAM) to produce TEE materials. The Hollands co-ordinated the writing by designating teams throughout Africa, then edited and produced all the TEE textbooks. Later on, their initiative led to collaboration with the Association of Evangelicals in Africa (AEM). The project has produced more than 37 TEE titles.

By 1983, there were more than 100 TEE programmes in Africa, and by 1995, there were 341. This should not imply, however, continuous growth. Many programmes, in fact, died, while new ones came into existence. Paradoxically, most of the programmes which never became institutionalised remained most vulnerable and susceptible to collapse.

The mission of most TEE programmes has been to enhance personal and spiritual development.

African instituted churches and TEE

Most of the early African initiatives in TEE came from the historic "mission" churches, but in November 1978, 20 leaders from eleven African instituted churches (known also as African independent churches) in eight countries across the

continent met in Cairo, convened by Bishop Antonious Markos of the Coptic Orthodox Church of Egypt.

The meeting established the Organisation of Africa Independent Churches (OAIC) to support and nurture these churches in a variety of ways. In 1980, they initiated a TEE programme under the leadership of Rev. Agustin and Rosalio Battle. The programme, continental in nature, has produced more than 60 TEE texts in Swahili, English and French.

Ecumenical collaboration in TEE

There is, at present, no common forum for ecumenical cooperation on TEE in Africa. However, there exist some institutions and associations which bring together TEE programmes from various churches. A sample includes:

- **Unisa:** The University of South Africa is the oldest distance education institution in Africa. It was established in 1873 as the University of Good Hope, functioning as an agency of the University of London examinations. Unisa has a Faculty of Theology and Religious Studies offering diploma and degree course at all levels using the distance education mode of delivery. In the last four years there have been initiatives to launch post-secondary courses through TEE.

- **TEE College (Southern Africa):** Founded in 1976 in Johannesburg, it was committed from the outset to serve the breadth of denominational groups in southern Africa, TEE College expanded its enrolment from 376 in 1977 to over 1,300 by 1997. In recent years its leadership has provided guidance and support to new TEE initiatives in central and east Africa.

- **Kgolagano College:** Another early ecumenical initiative in TEE, this Botswana-based programme has included Anglicans, Lutherans, Congregationalists, and students from the African instituted churches.

- **The TEE Programme in Zambia:** Founded in 1979, this ecumenical effort now annually reaches over 3,000 students and issues over 2,000 certificates. Interestingly, it even seeks to reach out to people in prison.

- **Formation Biblique et Theologique Maurice:** Anglicans, Catholics and Presbyterians came together in Mauritius to initiate this ecumenical TEE programme. It has made an important effort recently to share its French-language TEE materials with partners on the continent.

- **Uganda Christian University:** The Uganda Christian University – formerly Bishop Tucker Theological College – established a distance education department in 2000. It will offer a diploma course in theology through distance education.

A few ecumenical associations intended to support TEE have sprung up. One example is the Eastern Africa Association for TEE, designed to promote fellowship and provide training programmes to TEE personnel in Eastern Africa.

Challenges facing TEE in Africa

Many churches in Africa have seemingly remained indifferent to the contribution TEE can make to ministerial formation, both for clergy and laity, and many church leaders are not well informed about TEE. In fact, this lack of awareness is one of

the reasons for this workbook, and this is why ANITEPAM briefs new bishops at their Conference of Anglican Provinces in Africa workshops.

At the same time, some bishops and other church leaders have embraced TEE for, perhaps, the wrong reasons. Decisions about the most appropriate form of theological education for particular persons in particular settings need to be made based upon a wide-range of considerations, not simply upon, say, costs and efficiency. As we examine, in this workbook, the invaluable contributions TEE can make to the life of the Church, we acknowledge the important role residential theological colleges also play. Learning which method is most appropriate for whom and when is a skill all church leaders should cultivate.

In 1994 Fremont and Sara Regier released their report from their African Nonformal Theological Education Research Project, a project supported by the Pew Charitable Trust. (By 'nonformal education' they meant organised educational programmes conducted outside the formal school and higher education system, and by their definition, this included many TEE initiatives.) They offered these critiques, not to condemn TEE efforts, but to name challenges to TEE in Africa today. Their comments included:

- Most of what is called TEE is a far cry from the classical… model. TEE originally came out of an era of popular liberation movements in Central and Latin America stressing bottom-up theology. Much of the TEE training content in Africa is more top-down.
- What is called contextualization… is too often little more than putting African wraps onto Western thought.
- In too many cases the local TEE program is not really owned by the local church.

- Some TEE programs are so strongly focused on evangelism that equipping [God's people for ministry] hardly occurs.

This may seem harsh, but the Regier's report was, in its critical honesty, actually quite hopeful. Theirs was a call for African church leaders to reflect upon the strengths of TEE, to accept it as a meaningful alternative to formal residential studies, and to work to address the challenges and difficulties TEE programmes sometimes face.

The Regiers concluded with a prayer, that 'the vision for nonformal theological education become an increasingly powerful part of the life and work of the Kingdom of God.' TEE is certainly one of the answers to preparing God's people for service. (Ephesians 4:12)

? **ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS**

1. *Outline the origin and development of TEE in Africa.*

2. *What challenges does TEE face in Africa?*

3. *In what ways could you imagine TEE programmes and theological colleges being in partnership?*

Objectives

1. *At the end of this chapter, you should be able to identify the essential methodological components of TEE.*

2. *You will also be able to explain more fully the nature and purpose of TEE learning materials.*

TEE learning materials

It is an important reminder, at this stage in our study, that distance learning materials need to be different from other textbooks in that they have to be self-contained. They must carry all the activities that a teacher performs in an ordinary classroom. They are in a sense a substitute for the teacher because the learner spends most of the time interacting with the materials in the absence of the teacher. This is why they are called self-instructional materials. Rowntree calls them 'tutorial-in print' (Rowntree:41).

A variety of self-instructional materials are used. We listed them briefly in Topic 3, and we will explain more about them now. There are study guides for both the tutor and the students, and there are workbooks, which are a combination of textbooks and notebooks. Using these materials students search for answers and then write them down (Holland 1975:15, Thornton ed. 1990:43).

One of the most popular types of learning materials in TEE has been the 'Programmed instruction' format. In this format students are led through carefully planned steps towards the achievement of a predetermined and specific objective (Holland 1975:15). These materials carry all the activities and directions that the student is expected to perform in order to learn and apply new knowledge. Through them the teacher gives small bits of information; the student has to discover this information through performing specified activities. In this way the student is fully involved in the learning process.

There are also other texts that are more condensed and are written in essay form. Such materials are meant for learners who have basic knowledge in theology and can read long paragraphs and grasp more detailed knowledge.

For many years a number of TEE programmes in Africa have used 'Text-Africa' materials produced and published centrally by Evangel Publishing House in Nairobi. In southern Africa, materials from TEE College (Southern Africa) have been distributed widely. In addition, denominations and individual programmes have been producing their own TEE materials. One good example is the Presbyterian Church of East Africa, which develops and prints its own materials.

Apart from printed materials, TEE programmes have frequently used audiocassettes. These contain recorded lectures and discussions. They provide clarification to topics that seem more challenging than others. For some students, however, audiocassettes prove unhelpful, especially in rural areas where there is no electricity, and where the price of batteries is not within reach by the majority. This problem is sometimes mitigated by having the cassette played in a central place, especially during seminar meetings (Kithome).

The seminar

A TEE seminar involves a regular encounter between students and their tutor. This normally takes place at a study centre. The term *seminar* is used here instead of 'tutorial meeting' so as to emphasise the fact that they are meant for discussions, sharing problems, and raising questions (Hogarth et.al.:34). In some TEE programmes the seminars are held on a weekly basis, while for others it is bi-weekly and others on various intervals throughout the course, depending on the convenience of the learners and the availability of resources to meet tutor and other running costs. Through these seminar meetings the student is kept motivated. When he or she meets with other students and listens to their problems there is the sense that no one is alone in the academic struggle and that problems encountered are not unique but common to other learners scattered in different areas.

The seminar provides fellowship and inspiration. It can be an opportunity for students to receive clarification and confirmation of their studies (Winter 1983:34). Through discussions students are able to integrate course content with direct practical experience from their service in their own congregations. Seminars foster peer group learning and provide personal encouragement. Indeed the pioneers of TEE saw the seminar as the 'heart of the programme' (Winter1983:34). The TEE fathers and mothers believed that the effectiveness of the other two elements (self-study materials and practical work) was to some extent determined by what went on in the seminar. Without the seminar TEE becomes a mere correspondence study where the ability to encourage growth, stimulation and application is reduced (Hogarth et. al. 1983:34)

The seminar leader

The seminar leader is also called 'enabler', 'group leader', 'facilitator', and 'tutor'. We need to realise that he or she is not a teacher but one who facilitates the discussions, helping to continue it in an appropriate way. The work of the leader is to 'initiate discussions, stimulate interest, encourage discussion through questioning and to guide the learners to explore further the lesson they have learned' (Thornton ed. 1990:38). He or she plays the role of a counsellor both on academic and social issues.

What are the qualities of a good TEE seminar leader?
Thornton (ed. 1990) has given the following as the necessary qualities expected of a TEE seminar leader. He or she should have:

- A broad knowledge of the Bible
- Good knowledge of the basic principles of TEE
- Good knowledge of group dynamics
- Experience
- Maturity
- Flexibility
- An ability to work with people
- Humility, and…
- Faith and commitment in all aspects of his or her life.

The practicum

This is the third component of the TEE method, often-called 'Practical experience.' It involves the placement of TEE students into some form of church ministry, whether that be pastoral, Sunday school, youth ministry, women ministries, and so on. A successful TEE student is the one who can balance the three: Be good at academics, seminar discussions and the practicum. Throughout a course a student is attached to a church congregation, thus able to put into practice what she or he has learned both in the study materials and seminar discussions. In some cases the students are supervised while doing the work and awarded marks. In other cases they are not supervised.

? ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

1. How do TEE study materials differ from other textbooks?

2. What is the chief task of the seminar leader?

3. What is the special contribution of the practicum to TEE?

4. Are the benefits of a TEE seminar as expressed here similar to your experience in residential college? In what ways do they seem to differ?

5. Do you agree that all three of these essential methodological components are essential to TEE?

Objectives

1. *At the end of this topic, you should be able to feel what it is like to be a participant in a TEE seminar.*

2. *Because of this experience, you should also be able to identify key issues in facilitating and participating in successful TEE seminars.*

Participating in a TEE group

At this point in our course you will have been sufficiently orientated to the philosophy and methodology of TEE for it to be helpful for you to experience TEE more fully. This session involves the class forming itself into a TEE group, using the sample TEE material we have

TEE role-play is one of the key methods to help the Church see residential theological education and TEE as belonging together, complementing one other.

provided, or should your tutor prefer, sample materials from a local TEE programme.

It is not essential for purposes here that the class begin with the first topic and seminar from the TEE materials you are using. Rather we encourage your tutor and the class to select a session of special interest to the class or one that complements other studies the class may have undertaken at your theological college.

We suggest that – depending upon the size of your class – it may be desirable to have a group of perhaps 8-10 students formed into the TEE seminar, with the remainder of the class as observers. The observers may then critique the TEE session, and then students may exchange roles and repeat the exercise. These are matters for your tutor to decide, but however it is done, we do urge that students at residential institutions actually experience a TEE seminar, and that students have an opportunity to discuss that experience. TEE's philosophy and methodology attaches great importance to participation and contextualisation, and to study TEE without experiencing it violates the entire concept.

This *experiencing* of TEE is a form of role playing or simulation. Now, role-play is not a skit or drama, although it has elements of both. Role-play is a matter of identifying oneself as much as possible with characters in a situation. The value of simulation comes in acting out *and* discussing the situation. In this particular case, we envision a residential theological class in which students are temporarily turned into a TEE class, with several people taking turns being tutor, and with several being designated as observers. After the TEE class, all students and tutor discuss their experiences and feelings, and critically point out what was well done, what issues they faced, and whether or not the tutors respected TEE principles and methods.

How to prepare and carry out the TEE role-play

We have outlined briefly the framework for this role-play above. In particular, we suggest that the class

- Prepare for the role-play using some TEE materials chosen in advance.
- Assign roles such as group leader, TEE class and observers.
- Let the group leader lead the TEE class without interference. Remember that graduates of residential colleges may well find themselves leading such groups in the Church without necessarily being closely supervised.
- Leave the role-plays open-ended to give room for contributions through group discussions and evaluations. At the conclusion of the TEE session, a discussion should be carried out to summarise, analyse, and evaluate the proceedings and results.

The task of the TEE leader

Remember that a TEE leader – and this is true of role-play as it is in actuality – is not a teacher, lecturer or chairperson. He or she guides and directs the role-play as though leading a real TEE session in the Church. The role-play leader initiates discussion and lesson topics. He or she helps to stimulate interest, encourage discussion, and enable the TEE class to explore further the subject lesson of the day. The TEE leader does not provide answers to problems but guides the class to discover their own answers together.

Potential problems connected with TEE role-play

It is possible that some students will approach the TEE role-play negatively, especially by those who see TEE as a threat to residential theological education. We urge students to approach this experience openly, so that you will not only understand the practice of TEE more fully but also find an opportunity to test your own assumptions.

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?●  ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS
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1. *How did you **feel** about the experience of a TEE seminar? What did you find that was positive? What questions do you now have about TEE as a method in theological education?*

2. *In what ways did the facilitator(s) seem to actually facilitate discussion, vis-à-vis to teach the subject?*

3. *In what ways did the seminar engage in contextualisation during its discussion?*

TOPIC 7
PROVIDING SUPPORT
FOR TEE STUDENTS

Objectives

At the end of this chapter, you should be able to

1. *Identify the importance of dialogue in TEE programmes.*
2. *Name various ways to provide opportunities for dialogue.*

Learning through dialogue

We have now experienced the specially-prepared TEE materials as they draw TEE students into dialogue1 with one another, and with their tutor, through TEE seminars. The seminar is meant to mitigate the isolation that is the reality of most TEE students throughout their study. Dialogue is crucial, and it can be provided not only through face-to-face contact but also through correspondence and other media. Let us outline how this can be done in order to bridge the gap of isolation between students and between student and tutor.

Rationale for providing support: Meeting the needs of students

We have already noted that the distance learner is isolated. Distance learners are isolated in three ways:

- from the TEE institution and its facilities;
- from tutors; and
- from other students.

Isolation from the institution means that it will be harder for the students to know and understand administrative procedure and rules. It will be difficult for them to get registration forms or even ask directions about how to fill forms out.

Isolation from tutors may mean that every small problem or misunderstanding could have lengthy and obstructive consequences. TEE students often lack the opportunity to knock at a tutor's office when they encounter an academic problem.

Isolation from other students may mean that students lack opportunities for peer learning and encouragement. For this reason students may draw the wrong conclusions about their own abilities. They may easily get discouraged, unaware that the same problems that they encounter individually may be experienced by other students.

It is therefore necessary to give intellectual, organizational and emotional support to students.

Dialogue implies communication, the exchange of insights and ideas. No matter the quality, TEE materials are limited in what they can achieve on their own. Therefore there is a need to advance the value of those materials with other forms of communication between the tutor and the student. Such dialogue accomplishes the following:

- It provides reinforcement, thus encouraging students
- It records work done, thus measuring progress
- It offers academic help, thus providing guidance from the tutor
- It serves to maintain morale, thus motivating students
- It provides incentive for revision in courses, which becomes necessary when students point out parts of a course which is especially difficult

Face-to-face dialogue

This is the most effective form of dialogue because there are visual clues that enable the parties involved in the communication to understand each other more fully and more immediately. In face-to-face dialogue the tutor stimulates, motivates and enriches student experience of the course itself, but it also helps students to overcome the problems associated with distance learning. It also helps students to develop group learning skills.

As we have already seen and experienced in topic 6, TEE caters to face-to-face support through the seminar. It provides an opportunity for learners to interact with each other and with the tutor. Before, after or during the seminar, tutors can also seek individual clarification about the subject matter and about the programme itself.

But face-to-face dialogue need not be restricted to the seminar. TEE students should be encouraged to have dialogue between themselves without the tutors. This can be in the form of self-help groups or study groups. Such learner groups can be of great help and encouragement to the students.

Dialogue through correspondence

We find dialogue through correspondence in the following ways:

- Tutor-marked assignments, including critical comments on assignments, which are aimed at correcting, motivating and reinforcing students in their work
- Correspondence originating from students seeking academic help, perhaps to clarify administrative issues or make other queries about grades or tutor comments
- Correspondence originating from the tutor or the institution, perhaps to follow up on inactive students or to circulate student newsletters and brochures – all meant to keep the student informed about events in the institution, examination deadlines, fees payment procedures, residential sessions, and so on (Leech and Lewis).

Dialogue through other media

Instead of using print to send comments to students, tutors can record and send their comments on audio cassettes. They can respond to complex questions from students, summarise issues arising from tutor-marked assignments, and also give full feedback on a piece of work. The student can also record comments or queries and send the cassette to the tutor.

For those with access to computers, there is also computer-generated feedback. Electronic mail, or e-mail, is an especially useful option for computer-based dialogue, as comments can be typed into an e-mail message and sent immediately by

phone lines to a receiving computer, thus blending written communications with the immediacy that postal services cannot provide. TEE programmes – where the global computer network known as the internet is readily available – can also develop what are called websites, which provide both resources for TEE students and ways to enter into dialogue.

Dialogue can also be done through the telephone, either on a one-to-one basis or through group telephone dialogue, known as teleconferencing. Telephones, of course, can be expensive, and inaccessible to most rural parts of Africa. However, we need to keep in mind that it can be a helpful tool for student support in distance education.

Supporting the distance educator: Who will watch over the watchman?

We use other terms to refer to the distance educator, terms such as tutor, tutor-counsellor, academic counsellor, or mentor. Whatever the term, we need to note the isolation of some distance educators as well as the isolation of students. This factor is often overlooked. However, it is a reality that distance educators may be isolated from TEE institutions (especially if they are part-timers working in different regions or countries) as well as from students.

Face-to face dialogue is good for supporting the tutors. Such dialogue can take the form of seminars, conferences, or departmental and faculty board meetings. There they may interact with one other and get new ideas for coping not only with student problems but also with their own frustrations. They may be given further training and updating on new techniques of teaching at a distance.

Another method of availing support to distance educators is through newsletters and magazines. Tutors may be encouraged to share their experiences in such printed materials. It is valuable for every TEE programme to have its own newsletter. Where available, computer-mediated communication noted above could also be worthwhile here.

Conclusion

Support for both students and staff in TEE is necessary in order to overcome the problem of distance that exists between the student and the institution, between student and student, and sometimes between tutor and institution and fellow tutors.

? **ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS**

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1. *What are the advantages of dialogue in the TEE mode of education?*
2. *Describe ways in which distance learners are isolated.*
3. *Describe ways in which distance educators may be isolated.*
4. *How does one do dialogue through correspondence?*
5. *What is involved in dialogue through other media?*

TOPIC 8
PLANNING AND ADMINISTERING
TEE PROGRAMMES

Objectives

Under this topic we provide a general overview of management and administrative styles of TEE, noting their diversity and similarities by region, level, and tradition. At the end of this chapter you should be able to outline the general management and administration of TEE programmes at both the non-formal and formal level.

Introduction

The purpose of this draft course outline is not to produce theological students skilled in planning, establishing, and administering TEE programmes. There is much to learn about TEE in all of its dimensions, there is now a substantial literature about TEE, and there is considerable experience gained throughout Africa. What we offer here is but an introduction to TEE for residential theological students. Thus as we move into topics about administration, the development of TEE materials, and other subjects, it needs to be emphasised that our intent is not to provide sufficient knowledge to take on these responsibilities. Rather it is, once again, to deepen an understanding of the nature and practice of TEE, so that as residential theological students move into

their own ministries within the Church, you will have sufficient sensitivity to the challenges and strengths of TEE programmes to find your own supportive place.

It is worthwhile here to remind students as well that the growth and contribution of TEE to the life of the Church is so significant that it is unlikely that any theological student from residential colleges will not be engaged in TEE is some manner during your ministry. Thus to have some understanding of issues such as administration is of value now.

> *New methods, equipment and materials*
> *are now available that make the old*
> *classroom procedures an*
> *anachronism…*
> *Field-based education and on-the-job*
> *training are now feasible as schooling…*
> *and far less expensive…*
>
> ❧ *F. Ross Kinsler (1981:17)*

Management and administration of TEE in a formal institution

The management and administration of TEE at a *formal* level falls into the following two categories:

- Specialised distance education formal institutions such as TEE College (Southern Africa); and

- TEE departments attached to Bible schools and colleges or to universities, such as Mekane Yesus Seminary in Ethiopia, the diploma level programme of the Church of Christ in Nigeria, and programmes that prepare students for certificate examinations awarded by the University of Malawi.

The TEE College (Southern Africa) is an example of an institution that operates under guidelines set by a government agency. This agency provides services to institutions wishing to offer validated certificates, that is, certificates that are accredited. Such agencies typically must satisfy themselves that a school's management and administrative structures are appropriate to guarantee quality education.

Typically, such concerns include the following points:

- What is the mission of the institutions (often expressed through a 'mission statement')?
- How well are the goals and objectives articulated? Are these goals and objectives capable of being measured and evaluated?
- What infrastructure is in place to ensure that the programme objectives are capable of being implemented?
- In case of a Bible college seeking affiliation to a state university, the university in question will want to certify for itself that the course objectives are acceptable to the university.
- Instructional objectives inevitably come into sharp focus because the accrediting institutions insist on mechanisms to ensure quality teaching.

The reason some theological institutions seek affiliation with public universities is the desire to have certificates that carry

an academic recognition acceptable beyond their own, often unaccredited, programme.

However, few TEE programmes in Africa have sought such affiliation with public universities. The exception has been found in an agreement that a particular university will examine and award certificates to students from either theological colleges or TEE. In such instances, the theological college or TEE programme typically undertakes the day-to-day responsibilities for teaching, while the examining university largely confines itself to the evaluation of educational quality by setting and marking examinations in order to award certificates. For example, between 1971 and 1985 the former Council of Higher Education on Religion of the University of Nairobi offered such a service to students of residential institutions as well as TEE.

A university that accredits or awards certifications for a TEE programme generally limits it administrative role to issues related to examinations. The TEE programme is left to undertake the following:

- Recruitment and registration of students
- Methods for the payment of fees
- Production of self-introductory materials
- Distribution of study materials
- Face-to-face components, sometimes in residence, including sessions with tutorial groups and tutors
- Student support services in regional centres, including providing co-ordinators
- Tutor-marked assignments
- Arrangement for entry to examinations
- Examination centres
- Graduation

Organisation and structures

The figure below is an imitation of one in Desmond Keegan's (1993) article **'A typology of distance teaching systems'** *to help you appreciate the significance of a structure in the TEE movement [Taken from Harry et.al:64]*
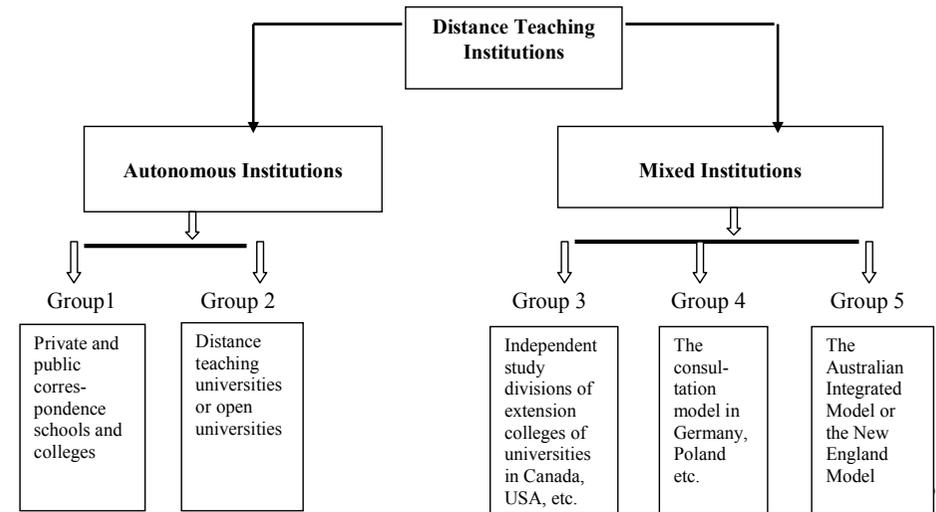
Management and administration of non-formal TEE programmes

These efforts at establishing and administering *formal* TEE programmes are obviously important, yet interestingly, nearly all TEE programmes in Africa, whether associated with the Association of Evangelicals in Africa and Madagascar or affiliated with ecumenical theological education initiatives of the World Council of Churches, can be characterised as being at a *non-formal* level, meaning that these are organised educational programmes conducted outside the formal school and higher education system.

This does not necessarily mean that the non-formal TEE programmes that dominate the African landscape are disorganised. It is true that the informal structures of TEE programmes often emerge from energetic and creative leadership – sometimes missionaries, sometimes Africans – but their evolution should not imply the absence of structure. All that it implies are that these TEE programmes emerged from an immediate and often local commitment to address a felt need for theological studies, with priorities other than accreditation and certification.

TEE needs no buildings or campus;
it can rise up fast and collapse even faster.

❧ *comment by Mark Lundstedt in Regier*

There are, for example, cases of denominations attempting to structure and administer their TEE programmes on a broader and more co-ordinated scale than was found in local initiatives. These include the Anglican Church of Kenya (see Thornton ed. 1990:65 for theoretical discussion) and the TEE programme in Mauritius, among many others. TEE programmes under the Association of Evangelicals in Africa and Madagascar have also revealed broader co-ordination, with denominational and doctrinal nuances, using the TEXT-Africa programmed TEE materials published by Evangel Publishing House. (Snook, chs. 6-11 contain case studies in Africa.) But it deserves emphasis here that there is no clearly defined profile of the administration of TEE programmes at the non-formal level.

When, however, we look again at the responsibilities and tasks noted under the section on the formal level above, we can readily see that most of these items apply to non-formal as well as formal levels. TEE programmes operating on the non-formal level eventually have to create an infrastructure.

The role of government in the administration of TEE programmes

We mentioned above that the TEE College (Southern Africa) operated under guidelines established by a government agency. This is not unusual in the history of formal education in Africa (as elsewhere). Governments, colonial and independent, have assumed a significant role in setting educational objectives for a society and that has led particularly to their influencing the intended learning experiences and content presentation and, of course, evaluation of a wide range of educational endeavours.

This sometimes comes as a surprise to students in a denominational Bible school or college or even in a TEE programme. Surely, some of us ask, the government cannot, or should not, be involved in designing a curriculum for a Bible school!

The extent of governmental involvement varies from one country to the next. But governments are increasingly setting up regulatory agencies to oversee the planning and development of denominational educational institutions. This was found to be true in the transition of Bishop Tucker Theological College into the Uganda Christian University. And, whenever an accredited public university – by definition operating under governmental guidelines – validates a programme such as a diploma theology course, as does the University of Malawi, structures are established by which the university department of theology or religious studies assumes responsibility for moderating the academic standards of the programme. Theological institutions thus yield some of their control over their curriculum and programme to gain greater official recognition of the diploma.

In some countries, some Bible schools and colleges have internal operational autonomy to formulate their curriculum under the particular denomination without government control, but as interest in accreditation and certification standards grow, the trend tends to be away from such autonomy in Africa.

Government concerns in education centre on these aspects of educational policy:

- National curriculum development
- National syllabus
- Course development.

This is sometimes in marked contract to church concerns. The significance of a theological curriculum at denominational level, for example, is to maintain the mission of the Church as interpreted by the denomination. If historically ecumenical endeavours in theological education have foundered on differing interpretations of the mission of the Church, it is natural to expect challenges when a government is intent upon, say, a national syllabus.

Distance education adds to these challenges. This is not merely because TEE syllabi and study materials need to be understood by TEE students lacking the face-to-face experience of residential institutions. The TEE concern with local context – with contextualisation – raises questions about national curricula, and the very richness of distance learning raises challenges about academic standards.

Differences between distance education and on-site-teaching: Implications for the administration of a TEE programme

Let's return to some of the distinctions between distance education and traditional residential education. Given the characteristics that J. Kamau and K. Barasa have identified in the chart below, try to imagine the demands that distance education makes upon administration. It is this complexity in organisation and administration that deserves our reflection as we seek to be supportive of and engaged in TEE programmes during our ministry.

Comparison and contrast of face-to-face and distance modes of teaching:
Adapted from Kamau and Barasa's Tutors Handbook

FACE-TO-FACE	DISTANCE
Immediate personal contact between learner and teacher	Contact mainly though media
Teacher can readily adapt to learner's immediate behaviour	Adaptation is delayed
Learner's environment is primarily designed to support learners activities	Learner's environment serves other purposes which may distract from study
Many forms of communication between teacher and learner are possible	Forms of communication are limited
Personal relationship can influence learning	Personal relationship is limited
Direct 'control' of learner by teacher is possible	Tutor's ability to influence learner is distant and comparatively limited
Learner experiences limited degree of freedom	Learner experiences substantial degree of freedom
Wide opportunities exist for imitation/identification learning	Few opportunities exist for imitation/identification learning
Communication need not be planned in detail	Communication is mainly planned in great detail
Information is provided by a mixture of cues (personal counter-related, organization related)	Information is usually provided by content and organization
A high degree of evaluation and feedback from the teacher	A comparatively low degree of evaluation feedback from teacher is possible
Internal motivation, self-direction, self-evaluation, and ability to plan may be low	Internal motivation, self-direction, self-evaluation, and ability to plan must be and usually is high
Willingness and ability of the learner to work without direct supervision may be low	Willingness and ability of learner to work without direct supervision must be very high.

! ● **ACTIVITY**

Read the statement attributed to Mark Lundstedt on page 60 again. Consider the management and administration expectations, listed above, that a TEE programme would need to have in place in order to offer a formal accredited certificates. How can suitable organisational structures for TEE be created?

? ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

1. What are the general characteristics of TEE programmes operating on non-formal basis?

2. Is accreditation and proper certification of TEE programmes and their diplomas or certificates a priority? If so, why? If not, why not?

3. To what extent do you think the government should be involved in designing a curriculum for a Bible school or theological education or TEE program?

Objectives

At the end of this topic, you should be able to

1. Outline the process by which TEE materials are designed.

2. Reflect upon issues related to the local development of TEE materials, especially in terms of contextualisation.

Introduction

As we noted in the preceding topic, we are concerned here not with preparing students at residential colleges to design TEE materials, but rather to provide sufficient knowledge to deepen an understanding of issues facing those engaged in TEE.

In this topic we want to expand on our discussion of the forms of TEE materials, and also to speak of the process by which TEE materials are developed, often locally.

TEE seeks to be, indeed claims to be, contextual in nature. According to the Institute for Contextual Theology (ICT) in South Africa, 'contextual theology could be defined quite simply as the conscious attempt to do theology from within the context of real life in the world.'

Contextual theologians in South Africa are usually identified with the liberation theology tradition. Moreover, the ICT

argues that all theology is contextual in nature; it's just that practitioners of some theological traditions do not acknowledge that as so. Certainly the ICT would neither see itself nor be seen as a TEE programme, so as we turn to the subject of the development of TEE materials, and these developments as an expression of contextualisation, it is worth a reminder that the subject of contextual theology has a breadth to it that is not covered under this topic.

That said, there is a strong identification with participatory study and reflection among contextual theologians that TEE philosophy and practice shares. As we have seen earlier, TEE goes to where the students are living, where they are continuing in their work and in their ministry. TEE materials themselves are meant to stimulate questions from that local context, so that all theological studies are connected to the context in which students serve the Church.

The question immediately arises, therefore, as to whether TEE materials, in order to be effective in the local context, need to emerge from the local context. To put it another way, how transferable are TEE materials? Setting aside linguistic issues, would TEE materials developed in Nigeria be suitable in, say, Zambia? Could, even, materials by a Kikuyu TEE programme be suitable if they were translated for the Kamba, only a short distance away in Kenya?

There continues to be some debate on these issues, but for our purpose here it is important to note that many TEE materials have emerged from quite local initiatives. There is, perhaps, greater movement toward co-ordination and sharing of resources these days, but there seems little doubt that many students engaged in the study of TEE at residential colleges will be exposed to, be consulted about, or be a participant in TEE writers' workshops leading to the development of new

TEE materials. For that reason alone, this topic deserves attention, so that there can be a better understanding of the evolution of TEE materials.

Why is print most commonly used for TEE materials?

Distance education uses a wide range of media to transmit knowledge from the teacher to the student. However, some media are not easily accessible in many parts of Africa, and because of this most institutions have tended to use print.

In distance education print is considered as a good substitute for conventional teaching because it has a combination of written symbols (mainly words and numbers) and a wide range of illustrations (such as charts, diagrams, tables, maps, photographs and drawings). This combination can express knowledge in a clear and precise way. When print is used skilfully it allows the teacher to communicate effectively on a wide range of subjects.

Print is accessible, in that it is familiar to students; it is authoritative, and it is *seemingly* trustworthy (remember the power of the written word). The technologies of producing print (stencil duplicating, photocopying, offset-litho and letterpress printing) are fairly widely available. Print production can also be relatively cheap. And, while initial development costs tend to be high (especially capital expenditure on equipment, the need to buy paper, and commissioning writers, illustrators, designers and editors), unit costs come down fairly quickly if sufficient copies are produced. Print is also fairly cheap to store and distribute.

Another reason why print is favoured is the fact that both learners and teachers have a fairly high level of control over the use of print. Learners can use the material when and where they want to; they can also control the pace at which it is used. They can read it quickly or slowly; and they can also re-read difficult passages until they master the content. Learners can return to it when they need to for revision. The tutor can also control the content and presentation of print. They can also build in activities to test and reinforce student learning.

Characteristics of print

John Thomas grouped characteristics of media into three:

- Symbolic
- Access, and
- Control.

In the **symbolic category** Thomas referred to the range and type of 'symbols' used in a medium: For instance, written language and visual images, which the medium uses to represent and communicate knowledge.

Thomas used **access** to refer to the extent to which teachers and students are in a position to use, and have the capacity to use, particular media for teaching and learning. Included here are the skills and knowledge necessary to use the medium effectively, and the resources and costs involved in its production and use.

The **control** characteristic refers to the extent to which both students and teachers are able to exercise individual influence and choice over the way in which they make use of the

medium. It also includes the degree to which the medium allows active learning on the part of the student and individualised interaction between teachers and learners (Thomas:57).

These characteristics are helpful as we reflect upon print as a particular medium.

How do you organise for the development of printed self-instructional materials?

Print can be availed in different forms. In distance education the most familiar is the specially prepared printed correspondence text. We have named others in topic 3 and 5. Here we focus upon printed self-instructional materials, as these are normally the ones which take the place of the teacher because they carry all the activities that a teacher is expected to perform in a residential classroom.

In varying settings those instituting a TEE programme will identify the essence of the curriculum to be followed. The curriculum may look remarkably similar to that followed in residential colleges, or depending up the challenges of a particular context and the intent of the overall mission and purpose of the study, may develop some unique units of study. Remember that the distinctive element of TEE is not that the subject of its courses differs from residential colleges – both are quite likely to study, say, the Gospel of Luke – but that it handles the study following TEE principles and practice.

Once the curriculum has been designed, those developing the TEE programme will identify writers to prepare the materials. They look for people not only who are content specialists –

who know the subject – but who also have the following qualities:

- interest in innovative educational methods
- familiarity with current approaches to the curriculum
- experience in writing of self-study materials
- good experience in the subject area
- enthusiasm for the endeavour, and
- maturity.

Even with these qualities, writers need training. A variety of methods are available for doing training, but one of the commonest is the workshop method. This is where writers come together, are introduced to or reminded of distance education principles and the characteristics of self-instructional materials. These training workshops will also cover the following topics:

- formulating a syllabus
- preparing course outlines
- writing observable and measurable objectives
- structuring a TEE lesson
- use of illustrations in the TEE text
- writing plainly
- evaluation and assessment of TEE units (Gatimu et.al. 1997).

The potential writers are then given a chance to do practical assignments so that by the time all the topics are covered, they are already developing their lessons. Aside from training, the workshop period is also used for intensive writing, because such a focused environment with few interruptions can make for an especially productive time, with many lessons produced.

Many TEE programmes have found that outside the workshop setting writing tends to be slow and projects delayed. This is understandable because writers are busy people and have to combine writing with other activities.

The role of the course developer

A course developer brings skills and expertise in the design of instruction. He or she is an adult educator who makes key decisions on choice and use of media. The course developer establishes common ground with writers, meeting with content specialists, introducing content writers to the whole concept of distance education, and training the content specialists on how to prepare self-instructional materials.

The course developer also performs administrative duties during the material development and course delivery and evaluation stages.

Pre-testing TEE materials

Pre-testing is part and parcel of material development and production. It helps writers and TEE leaders to identify what needs to be improved so that the materials meet the desired objectives for which they were developed. Through pre-testing TEE programmes are able to:

- determine how suitable the materials are
- tell whether they meet the needs of learners
- tell whether they meet course objectives
- tell whether they are relevant to the social context in which the learners are living

- determine whether materials have up-to-date and accurate information
- find out whether they are interesting and motivating

It is not our purpose here to train students in pre-testing methodology. However, to make the concept of pre-testing clear, we will simply note that any pre-testing effort will include an examination of the *visual elements* – such things affecting the appearance of the materials as the format and layout of the materials, the illustrations, the way headings and sections are displayed, the typeface and type sizes, and the general attractiveness of the materials. (Gachuhi and Matiru).

Those engaged in TEE should seek to evaluate materials carefully, and avoid use and distribution of sub-standard material for their own sake, and that of the whole movement.

↬ *Hugh Rough, Principles and Practices of Theological Education by Extension (Zambia)*

Pre-testing will also check the soundness of the *verbal element,* seeking for example to determine how difficult the text is, looking at the vocabulary, sentence, and paragraph length, and sentence structure. Those engaged in pre-testing will look at the way one unit links to previous units and consider if the content is well-sequenced. They will consider whether good examples are given.

In this pre-testing phase, those designing TEE materials will seek comment from**:**

- *Subject-content specialists:*. They will provide information on the accuracy of content and whether it follows the set syllabus.
- *Distance education experts:* They will tell whether the unit is properly in a distance education format.
- *Peers:* They can give feedback on the language level, relevance of examples, the difficulty of the concepts and the general presentation of the material.
- *Learners:* Since learners are the target group, it is important that they have an opportunity to comment on the materials.

With someone from each of these categories, there are a variety of methods used in pre-testing. These include
- interviews
- questionnaires
- tests, and
- work and discussion groups.

When the "tests" method noted above is restricted to learners alone, it can measure how well they have understood the content. If the test is well-designed, clear and precise, and the students nevertheless consistently fail to respond correctly, then as a pre-test method the test will draw those who have designed the materials back to reconsider how well the material has been presented.

In the final method named above, that of "work and discussion groups," essentially a group of peers or learners are placed together in a discussion group, provided a set of questions, and asked to discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the unit.

Whatever method is used, it is *essential* to draw upon the feedback given to improve the unit and make it suitable for learning in isolation. It simply makes no sense to get critical comments on the materials and then ignore them. This is an important opportunity to improve TEE materials, and thus enhance the TEE experience itself.

Editing

Based upon the pre-testing results, the final stage before publication is editing. Of course an editor has been at work before, concerned with a variety of issues that lead to the design of effective TEE materials. Now he or she takes one more look at *structure, substance* and *symbols.*

The editor has been concerned throughout with the *structure* of the materials. Does the unit fit in with the rest of the course? Are the objectives stated clearly? (This is an especially important issue, for objectives should suggest to the editor and later the student what is expected in the lesson and the study skills to be taught.) Are there activities related to each objective? Does the text teach well?

The editor will also be concerned with *substance*. Is the material the original work of the writer? Is full acknowledgement for materials from other sources given? The editor will also want to ensure that the level of discussion is appropriate to the abilities of learners.

The editor, finally, will be concerned about *symbols*. Are tables and graphs drawn correctly? Do sentences and paragraphs have enough information to stimulate thinking and promote analysis and inference on the part of the reader? Is there logic in the sequence of clauses in sentences and among

sentences? Is there uniform format in the presentation of examples?

Some TEE programmes use group editing to carry out the whole process of editing their materials. This takes place when writers come together in small groups with a resource person and edit materials on the terms named above, of structure, substance and symbols.

The term *copy-editing* applies to the final stage of preparing the unit for printing. It involves such things as laying out the material with instructions for the typist and proof-reading the unit to make sure that final corrections have been made.

The printing process

This is that final moment, when ink is transferred to paper, materials are bound, and the TEE study materials come into being, ready to be used by tutors and students.

There are different methods of printing, and what a programme may choose depends on local conditions, the equipment available, the number of copies required, the objectives and nature of the content and the resources at a programme's disposal. These methods may include

- mimeographing (stencil duplicating – still a useful inexpensive way to print, and working well for up to 500 copies)
- photocopying (also useful for small numbers)
- small offset printing (popular for in-house printing, it uses small printing machines), and
- sheet-fed offset printing (it uses larger printing machines found especially with commercial printers).

Using other media In TEE

As we have noted earlier, it is possible to use other than print media, such as audiocassettes, radio, television and the computer in TEE programmes. We have focused here upon print media, since print dominates TEE material in Africa, but we do want to acknowledge the possibilities, for other media can enrich TEE programmes.

The possibilities, however, vary from country to country, region to region and even programme to programme. This is because the facilities necessary for use of any of the above may be available in one area and not in another. Indeed, some TEE programmes are able to use a method as technically sophisticated as teleconferencing, while others may not be able to use a simple technology such as audiocassettes. TEE programmes through television and radio also have potential, although since they are aired at a specific time they may not be convenient for the distance learner, for many distance learners chose to study through this method because of its flexibility.

Therefore there is no rule as to whether to use any of these alternative media. It all depends on whether the technology is affordable by both institution and students, and whether the media are accessible and controllable by the student.

? ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

1. *What is your reaction to the argument that TEE materials, in order to be effective in the local context, need to emerge from the local context?*

2. *Why is 'print' most used in distance education?*

3. *How does the specially prepared printed correspondence text take the place of the teacher in the TEE mode of education?*

4. *Assess the advantages and disadvantages of the workshop method for designing and writing TEE materials.*

5. *Is pre-testing TEE course materials essential? Why or why not?*

6. *In the place where you envision serving in your ministry, is it possible to use other mass media for TEE? If so, what type? How important would you consider its use to be to the success of a TEE programme?*

TOPIC 10
MONITORING AND EVALUATING
TEE PROGRAMMES

Objectives

At the end of this topic, you should be able to

1. *Explain the theoretical concepts of monitoring and evaluation.*
2. *Outline how monitoring and evaluation of non-formal and formal TEE programmes is undertaken.*

Defining monitoring

The word 'monitoring' is loosely associated with many varied activities such as 'continuous assessment,' 'accountability,' 'testing and grading' and 'record keeping.' At times the term monitoring has been used interchangeably with 'formative evaluation.'

Whatever the terminology, *monitoring* may be seen as a way to manage and supply information so that those responsible for and engaged in TEE can know whether or not the programme activities are on schedule and being implemented as planned. The rationale for monitoring any educational institution is not only to keep the education institution in line with its own plans but also to provide continuing feedback that may lead to changing and adjusting these plans and objectives.

Using our last topic on preparing TEE materials as an example, any number of things could go wrong at any stage of that process. Course production could be hampered by the inability of some writers to complete their assignments. Without an effective monitoring process, it would be difficult to take timely action to recruit equally suitable writer to coordinate writing the study unit so that the course production could be kept on schedule.

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Turn back to topic 7 of this manual and read the section entitled 'supporting the distance educator: who will watch over the watchman?' What is the significance of raising this issue for TEE programmes which are, by definition, concerned with the welfare of its students?

Monitoring, of course, is not restricted to the process by which a TEE programme is established. Monitoring also applies to the ongoing programme. Whether TEE is at the non-formal or formal level, monitoring takes place at all levels and in many forms. It includes – but certainly is not restricted to – simply recording

- attendance
- punctuality
- ability to complete assignments, or
- enrolment trends over a given period of time.

Whatever information is secured, the rationale for monitoring is to detect problems (if any) early enough so that timely actions can prevent them from becoming crises.

Defining evaluation

Monitoring forestalls the incidence of the likelihood of things going wrong. Sometimes monitoring is reduced to the circumstance of putting things right when they have obviously gone wrong. Even if this may be true in some cases, the incidence of monitoring is not invariably occasioned by distress. In any case, monitoring does make it possible for those guiding a TEE programme to recognise danger signs and possible problems that are likely to occur in the future, thus enabling preventative steps to be taken on time.

Evaluation is the collection, analysis and interpretation of information about any aspect of a programme of education and training, as a part of a recognised process of judging its effectiveness, its efficiency and any other outcomes it may have.

≈ *Mary Thorpe*

Programme *evaluation* steps back and analyses virtually any component of TEE, for the purposes expressed in the quote on this page. It may be done of individual courses or entire programmes, or of multiple programmes within an Anglican

province or among various churches within your country. Evaluation is a serious undertaking that can influence the direction of TEE, sometimes for years. You may well, during your ministry, be asked to be a part of an evaluation effort.

If an evaluation is to be successful, its essential purpose needs to be defined. For example, in 1990 the Pew Charitable Trusts commissioned a study of non-formal theological training in Sub-Saharan Africa. It set these as its basic purposes:

(1) To study the state-of-the-art in non-formal education in general and of Theological Education by Extension (TEE) in particular in Sub-Saharan Africa examining the problems issues and lessons to be learned.

(2) To suggest implications of these findings for Church, missions, para-church agencies, funding agencies, training institutions and encourage others committed to encourage the development of theological study and leadership in the local church…

The design of evaluation objectives and scope can range from fairly straightforward to complex. Indeed, in certain instances it becomes very difficult to draw a distinction between evaluation and research. But without a clear definition of purpose – and the Pew statement is an excellent example – any evaluation effort will founder.

There appears to be a general consensus that evaluation is good for the development of a programme. Those who benefit from evaluation include

- adult learners

- writers of self-instructional materials
- tutors
- those who administer and manage TEE programmes, and
- church leaders who make policy decisions about theological education and the mission of the church.

Research on evaluation of TEE programmes in Africa: A brief overview

Published evaluations of TEE programmes or some of their components operating of non-formal level tend to be spasmodic and largely dominated by the interests of practitioners. Here are some examples of TEE evaluations that demonstrate that truth:

- The Pew research noted above was largely commissioned by the researchers' and the funding agency's interests.
- Grace Holland's publication on TEE study materials arose out of her and her husband's long involvement in TEE in Africa. The research was submitted to Trinity Evangelical Divinity School for a doctor of missiology degree.
- Stewart Snook's research on TEE at the non-formal level arose 'out of a personal concern' (p.vii) but also because he was convinced that 'theological and church educators also need to be alerted to ways TEE may become de-functional, so adjustments can be made for continued effectiveness through revision of their programme or initiation of something new….' (p. viii)
- There are a number of dissertations on many aspects of TEE in Africa that are unpublished. Motivation varies.

It is important to note Kinsley and Emery's 1990 handbook on TEE evaluation. This guide was occasioned, at least in part, by

a world-wide consultation organised by the World Council of Churches held in Costa Rica. Out of the many papers that were presented, Kinsler and Emery undertook the task of producing a handbook for evaluation of TEE that is comprehensive and functional.

! ACTIVITY

Outline the reasons for incorporating an evaluation component in the design of a TEE programme.
Give examples from what you have read as well as from other sources known to you.

The continuing values of a TEE programme

The mission statement, policy aims and objectives that express the values held by any programme are affected by the external environment within which the programme exists. For example, how can the mission statement of a TEE programme that was started to create access to theological education thirty years ago be assessed unless it is constantly revisited? At some point, for example, a TEE programme established to give equal access to men and women, lay or ordained, at a non-formal level could well be extended to the tertiary level to cater for disadvantaged working adults, both lay or ordained, men and women. Ongoing evaluation is crucial.

! ACTIVITY

Reflect on the importance of monitoring the controlling values of an educational institution.

Curriculum development

A theological curriculum can never be passive. If a curriculum remains 'heavily constrained by traditional agendas' (Chick:8), the institution cannot adjust to constantly changing training needs. Failing to adjust is a disservice to both learners and the Church.

! ACTIVITY

As a means toward your appreciating the changing nature of theological education, write a memorandum to your school's Governing Council on possible areas of curriculum reform.

Programme infrastructure

The most frequently observed point about TEE programmes in Africa is their vulnerability and un-sustainability, usually ascribed to the fact that these programmes have not become 'institutionalised.' One explanation for the reason why many TEE programmes that were started in the 1970s and 1980s ended up closing down prematurely is for this very reason.

Arguably, we are at a point at which TEE programmes can continue operating *only* by having a firmly established infrastructure. Two key avenues toward such an infrastructure are (a) by creating a specialist distance education institution such as the TEE College (Southern Africa) and (b) by creating a distance education unit attached to a residential institution. The latter allows our own Church's Bible schools, colleges and universities to make the transition from a single residential mode to a dual residential-distance education mode.

Such a transition is certainly not without problems. TEE is still viewed as a step-daughter of residential training in some quarters. But then attitudes do not change overnight! (See the Raggat and Tight studies). When Kinsler and his colleagues introduced TEE theory and practice in Guatemala they met both resistance and open hostility. By the time Kinsler left the programme he noted that, while there was still strong opposition to the idea of TEE in Guatemala among some church leaders, 'they no longer attack the extensions programme directly; they have to concede what it has achieved.'

In our ministries how can we overcome resistance to an innovation? What can you deduce from the statement by Kinsler's experience in overcoming initial hostility, resistance and in some instances, outright rejection?

Summary

Both monitoring and evaluation are essential components of educational management and are forward-looking in their intention. The rationale for incorporating a monitoring system is preventative. Evaluation, on the other had, is a broader concept, and can be undertaken on any aspect of an educational institution.

(For further reading on this subject, see the handbook on evaluation and planning of TEE programmes edited by Kinsler and Emery.)

! ACTIVITY

TOPIC 11
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Objectives

At the end of this topic, you should be able to

1. *Recognise the value of research about TEE.*
2. *Identify a thoughtful research topic on TEE.*
3. *Outline the essentials of research methodology.*

Introduction

This topic may, or may not, be for you.

It is generally assumed that most theological institutions across the continent will already have a research project as a requirement. As such, research methodology will in most cases be a taught course. This section is not designed for such institutions; rather it is designed for those in which a research project is not a binding requirement.

Here we recommend that a residential theological student be encouraged to write a research project, report, extended assignment, or field work on TEE methodology as part of his or her academic requirement. The findings should be presented in a form to be determined by the institution concerned. This section is simply written to give guidance to such a student. It is not intended to lay down detailed research regulations.

Information theory

Why do we recommend that a student in this course write a research project as part of his or her academic requirement?

- First, to do an intensive and extensive study of the subject. It is an academic exercise to teach the student the depth and breadth of a given subject. We do in-depth research and study to educate ourselves in the field under consideration.
- But writing is not meant only for personal education and edification. It is an attempt to communicate to our readers and the Church: To educate, provoke, inspire and even change the reader and the Christian community either by deepening their life, or by transforming it. In the case of TEE, research helps to demonstrate that residential theological education and TEE complement and supplement one another.

African TEE has been instinctively wary of lofty and abstract terminology. TEE practitioners value writing characterised by directness, human interest, action, simplicity and brevity. St. Paul put it for us more clearly when he wrote, 'Seeing that we have such hope, we use great plainness of speech' (2 Corinthians 3:12).

Choosing a research problem

A clear statement of the topic, or subject or problem to be investigated should precede all other research considerations. If you have research requirements, consult with your tutor to select a subject for inquiry.

The following are examples of research topics.

- The rise and growth of TEE in your own country
- Strengths and limitations of TEE as a mode of training in Africa in the 21st century
- TEE as a challenge or a blessing for traditional church leadership
- TEE and lay leadership in your diocese
- Gender and TEE programmes in your Anglican province

These are but examples, of course, but they may be helpful in focusing your own priorities, Once you have formulated your research topic, consult the library catalogue not only under the immediate subject but also under all the topics more or less closely related. Read the articles on the subject in question in standard books, encyclopaedias, and dictionaries. From these readings, additional data, bibliography, and other relevant materials can be secured. Scan several books on the subject and identify helpful materials. Once you find useful materials, study the subject more carefully, taking careful notes. In so doing try to avoid two major pitfalls.

- Guard against forming a premature judgement concerning the 'solution' to the research problem.
- Guard against limiting your attention to sources that will support your own ideas, neglecting adverse material, or failing to weigh its value.

Hypothesis formulation

Although students will choose to write on something regarding TEE consistent with their own interest, this TEE research project is not a sermon or essay. The topic or theme can be old

in the sense that it is has found a long-established acceptance but now requires further investigation to establish its continued validity. The topic or theme can also as original and creative, contributing meaningful new knowledge to the world of TEE methodology. Many quality research papers and theses are the result of intensive investigation in one area of study dealing with a specific problem not yet studied in the same way by any one else. A quality research paper or thesis should be an original contribution to scholarship or a significant reinterpretation of previous investigations in its area of specialization.

Research methods and techniques

Research techniques require attention to the methodology of gathering data, things such as the use of notebooks, index cards, bibliography and the library itself – things sometimes identified as the 'mechanical element.' Research techniques also require attention to getting one's facts right, interpreting the date acquired with honesty, accuracy, and intellectual logic – features sometimes identified as the 'intellectual element.'

Research requires decisions about research methodology, whether data can and should be acquired in libraries or through field research, for example. Students need to be quite clear as to the methods essential for the success of their research.

There are essentially two types of data sources:

- *Primary sources*: Data that reflects first-hand knowledge of the subject. Examples include interviews, manuscripts, archaeological discoveries, archive materials, questionnaires, letters and official correspondences,

statistics, and so on. The distinction is not whether the source is published or not. A published autobiography, for example, is a primary source; an unpublished research paper is not.

- *Secondary sources*: Data that reflects second-hand knowledge of the subject, which of course is what a research paper is. Examples frequently include periodicals, journals, bulletins, dissertations, encyclopaedias, dictionaries, newspaper articles, atlases and biographies.

A student undertakes to examine sources, primary and secondary, and to interpret them within the framework of his or her hypothesis. Note that neither type of source is intrinsically more accurate or reliable than the other. An interview with an elderly man about the church of his youth may reveal a failing memory, while a carefully-executed research project that has examined a wide range of materials may capture the subject with remarkable accuracy. Whether the sources are primary or secondary, the main principle is to seek and collect materials with care and accuracy so that you can analyse them with integrity and insight.

Both in the interpretation of primary sources and in the evaluation of secondary sources, the TEE research student should prove his or her ability to be critical and scholarly. In data collection, one asks oneself:

- Am I reading wisely, intelligently, and purposefully?
- Do I have a reliable and flexible system of note taking?
- Are my notes easily accessible and verifiable?
- Have I gathered enough data about the background and setting of problems raised in my thesis or research paper?
- Is it unique information?

- Is it representative information found also in other sources?
- Have I acknowledged my sources of information?
- Do I give exact quotation of my reading?

As researchers collect material, they should focus attention on the centre of their research. Are the facts in your notes pertinent to the study? Have you spent time only on details of relevance? Have you gathered all data important to the solution of my thesis? There is always the temptation to be distracted by other issues, which may be interesting but are not central to the subject under investigation.

Statistical data, such as that secured through some types of questionnaires, offer both meaningful information and dangerous pitfalls for misinterpretation. It is not the purpose of this workbook to provide detailed guidance. Students should seek resources and tutors to strengthen their methodology.

Interpretation and presentation of research findings

During data collection, the primary task is on gathering factual information. Now the researcher turns toward value judgements about the data he or she has collected.   Each type of data offers its own peculiar challenges for interpretation. The researcher must therefore exercise great care in the use of findings if you are to make accurate interpretation and draw valid conclusions.

When the research problem has been adequately defined, the hypothesis carefully formulated, relevant information collected and analysed and interpreted judiciously, the researcher will often discover not only areas of significant relationships which

shed light on the problem being studied, but will also observe unanticipated relationships which will suggest promising areas for further research.

As we have tried to suggest in this topic, research about TEE is not distinctive from other research. It offers special challenges, but all research does that. What we have sought to do here is to emphasise the value of TEE research both for the life of the Church and for a deepening understanding of TEE's contribution to theological education. And, we have highlighted some of the fundamental aspects of the research process, aware that in order for students to be effective in their research, there are many details about methodology and presentation that need to be mastered and that have not been covered here.

We conclude with our central point, that research on some aspect of TEE can not only be beneficial to you but can also enhance the ministry of your Church, and we therefore commend the endeavour to you.

● ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

1. *How would you go about choosing a theme for a TEE research paper?*

2. *What would you consider to be the best and most practicable way to gather your TEE research data?*

3. *In what ways do you consider TEE data analysis and interpretation to be unique from other research, and in what ways do you think it shares common characteristics with other research?*

TOPIC 12
SUCCESSES AND CHALLENGES OF TEE IN CHRISTIAN MINISTRY IN AFRICA: A PRACTITIONER OF TEE'S REFLECTIONS

Objectives

This topic should prove useful for revision, and should provide a final challenge for reflection about the place of TEE in the ministry of theological education in Africa.

Introduction

What better way to end this workbook on TEE for students in residential colleges in Africa than to permit a valued 'practitioner' of TEE to reflect upon the successes and challenges of TEE on the continent? The Revd Dr. Adrian Chatfield is Subject Co-ordinator for Systematic Theology and Church History at the TEE College (Southern Africa). In this topic – which he has written for ANITEPAM – he highlights many of the points made throughout this workbook. What Dr. Chatfield has to say here deserves careful thought, but as in all writing about theology and the Church, we need to approach his points critically. They are not presented here for your agreement but for your serious reflection. As in previous topics, questions appear at the end as a stimulus to discussion.

Clarifications

Theological Education by Extension has come a long way since its early beginnings in Latin America in the 1960s, but there are still many misconceptions about its strengths and weaknesses, as well as about what it actually is. Let us begin with some clarifications.

- TEE **extends** beyond the normal boundaries of residential theological education, though it often rides on the back of some kind of residential institution. It contains the element of distance.

- The **distance** is often thought of simply as the distance of correspondence, the space between the student [in the bush!] and the course providers [in the ivory tower!] The reality is much more complex. TEE is in the business of breaking down boundaries between the academic institution, the church, the individual students and the communities in which they live, work, play and minister. So the distance element of TEE is better thought of as a process by which the different constituencies in theological and ministerial formation are **drawn closer together**.

- TEE is **subversive**, breaking down the traditional barriers between the academics, the clerics and the people. This makes it an uncomfortable exercise, and is perhaps one of the reasons why some academics think it is *second-best*, and some bishops won't have anything to do with it. TEE and all forms of distance education challenge the power base on which the church and education so often depend.

- TEE is not exactly the same as **Open Learning**, but it grew out of a similar philosophy, and shares many of its

elements. Open Learning relies on the assumption that the learner should have a large say in the choices about what is to be learnt, when, at what speed, and in what order. This too challenges the church, which always wants to tell its ordinands and its trainee ministers what they must study. But more of that later….

- In South Africa in particular, where the government has been working towards transformation by education, TEE shares its philosophy with Outcomes Based Learning. This is – simply put – an approach to education which constantly tests itself by asking '**What is it for?**' 'If I study this, what will I be able to do, think, produce, better than before?' TEE was originally conceived as a means to equip people effectively for ministry in their own locality, or location. TEE abhors the common assumption that education makes me superior to someone else. Education – especially theological education – should never become a status symbol or a tool of power. It should be a tool for training, a tool for liberation.

This is not meant to be a comprehensive account of the philosophy. Books have been written about that. But it underlines the fact that TEE is a radical approach to theological training with strong potential for challenge and transformation.

Misconceptions

In the same brief vein, we need to touch on some common misconceptions.

- **TEE is the cheapest option for a cash strapped church**. TEE can be cheap, but when it is cheap, it is usually poor

in quality. The writing of courses of quality is very expensive. A course in Christian Education which we commissioned recently cost R30,000, or about £1,725, to produce. If a course or programme is already in existence, and if it is merely a correspondence course, it will be cheap. But many TEE courses on the continent are heavily subsidised by foreign or denominational agencies. TEE is not cheap, but a church which is driven solely by financial considerations will soon lose its vision of the gospel.

- **TEE provides the complete training for a deacon or priest**. Some dioceses and provinces tend to use TEE in this way, but again, this leads to a poor quality training. To be most effective, TEE needs course writers, course providers, tutors, placement supervisors, small group enablers and peer interaction. Only with all these features will such a programme be complete. You can't complete training for ministry locked in a study.

- **TEE is an inferior educational option**. Very often, the people who study through TEE are the disadvantaged members of a Christian community. They may be those who can't afford the time or the money to move away from home, or they don't have the educational qualifications to study at university or a university-linked college. Some clergy in particular have a snobbish approach to those with 'inferior qualifications.'

Let me argue against this attitude at greater length. First of all, there is little correlation between educational qualifications and strength of intellect. My father was a fine priest with a fine mind for nearly 60 years, but because he came from a working-class background, he never gained any paper qualification. Yet his theological and mental capacity was second to none. Conversely, there are many people with paper qualifications whose logical thinking, theological competence and ability to communicate truth are entirely mediocre. My Ph.D. may have less academic strength than your evangelistic sermon! Think about it.

Secondly, there are many TEE students who go all the way up the educational ladder the hard way, starting with a basic certificate, and in some cases, ending with a postgraduate degree. This is another strength of TEE. People learn when they are ready to, in their mature adulthood. The teenage years are the worst years for education. Very few people in their 40s and 50s fail, because they are highly motivated.

Thirdly, I have found that there is actually little difference between a certificate and a diploma and a degree when it comes to the competent application of Christian theology to the lives of those to whom we minister. I think that some of our weak diploma students are less theologically competent than our stronger certificate students. If only people would study at their appropriate level, they would be better educated. And so, I wish that trainers and bishops wouldn't push people educationally above their level of competence.

- **TEE is useful for non-stipendiary clergy but stipendiary ones should be trained in residence**. This is a variant of the above argument, which shows the same attitude of superior-inferior training/clergy. I work in a diocese in which all the clergy of whatever educational background are trained through TEE, and it is as effective a form of training as the residential form. The division of clergy into 1st and 2nd class lies in our perceptions. Sometimes, because we treat TEE as a 2nd class

programme, those who study through it behave as if they were 2nd class.

But now I want to move on to talk about the three elements of the title of this topic in a more focused ways, about the successes and challenges of TEE to African Anglicanism in the 21st century.

Successes

Scholars often discuss the reasons for the success of the 16th century Protestant Reformation in England. Why was Mary I not able to take the Church of England back to its pre-Reformation ways? Part of the answer is that the Protestant Reformers provided training and education for their leaders *appropriate to the context*, something that Mary's bishops failed to do. The point of the story should not be forgotten today. How can the Christian church in Africa provide training appropriate to today's context in the face of today's challenges? A large part of the answer should be: through Theological Education by Extension.

The most obvious success is the ability of TEE programmes to train much *larger numbers* of ordinands. Currently, in TEE College (Southern Africa), we have something in the region of 600 Anglican women and men studying towards some form of Christian ministry. The majority of these will one day become deacons or priests in the Church of the Province of Southern Africa. No college in the region is capable of training such numbers.

Secondly, these people are at many *different stages* in their spiritual formation. Some are already active evangelists or catechists or lay ministers. Some are exploring vocation. Some

are building on a wide knowledge and experience of theology. Others are beginning to lay the foundations. Training through TEE can accommodate the whole range, and many of these people – belonging to a Diocesan Fellowship of Vocation – are studying before they are formally accepted as candidates for possible ordination. It is easier to ask someone to start studying with TEE before their vocation is fully tested, than it is to send them to a residential college, with all the implications of that move. The success of this lies in the fact that with TEE. the training comes before selection, continues during it and through the formation process. *And it does not stop at ordination!*

Thirdly, many people are priests – and some are bishops – in the Anglican Church today because TEE does not see a lack of formal education as an obstacle to training for ministry. So many residential programmes make it almost impossible for people without pieces of paper to proceed. But – to use TEE College (Southern Africa) as an example again – students can step up slowly from basic literacy in their own local language with the award programme, through the Certificate in Theology to the Joint Board Diploma in Theology, and now to a degree. It may take years, but then education is lifelong anyway!

The scarcity of library resources is the bane of any teacher's life in the Global South. The new *History of the Church in Africa* by Bengt Sundkler is £95, more than a month's salary for many clergy in South Africa, and far more months elsewhere on the continent. Who can buy it? One of the great successes of TEE is that the writing of courses provides students and clergy with library resources that they can constantly refer back to. Certainly students who go to seminary will have access to reasonably well stocked libraries, but they

have to leave those libraries when they return home. Those who train through TEE keep their libraries all their lives.

And because Distance Education allows people to 'stay at home' in the 'College in your living room,' study on the meaning of scripture remains deeply rooted in the local culture. Study on systematic theology is faced with the inter-cultural questions of the street corner. Practical theology addresses the issues of the local community. It is true that placements offer a way of contextualising study in residential programmes, but placements are a substitute for real contexts. They are not, in the end, the real thing.

The Worker-Priest movement in French Catholicism in the 1930s through to the 1950s spoke of *engagement* as the key to proper Christian ministry and mission. In English, we might more easily say *involvement*. But engagement is deeper than this, and reminds us of the need to be buried in the world in which we are placed by God, incarnated in it. If I were ever a bishop, which God forbid, I would invest heavily in a programme of properly supported TEE training, so that the diocese would have a locally trained, deeply engaged, well equipped team of ministers appropriate to that context.

Challenges

So far, this topic has painted a glowing report of TEE, because I believe passionately in it. But there are – there always are! – challenges and problems for the future. I want to discuss some of them, in the hope that the discussion will prompt some readers to respond in their own settings.

The first challenge is that of **cost**. As I said above, good Distance Education does not come cheap, but it is rare to find a diocese whose budget prioritises training. We at the TEE College depend to a significant extent on foreign donors, in order to keep our courses affordable. But foreign donors will no longer contribute if the local institution is not making a significant contribution as well. With all the constraints of church funding, it is a short-sighted saving to cut back on educational budgets, and it sends out the wrong signal to our supporters.

Other ways of keeping costs down include collaboration across the continent, both within the Anglican Communion and ecumenically. Anglicans have not always been willing to use the resources of other denominations even when these resources were offered free or cheap. The fear of 'contamination' by other Christian traditions is often cited. In fact, a well designed ecumenical programme of distance theological education can be supplemented by the addition of specifically Anglican elements in the fields of liturgics and of practice.

There is in fact much confusion on the continent about what 'real Anglicanism' is, with debates raging between evangelicals, catholics and charismatics. Anglicanism is a broad church, and we share far more in common with Catholics, Methodists, Lutherans, Presbyterians and Congregationalists than separates us. We need to be challenged to share more ecumenically in our educational programmes. In addition, a diocese wanting to ground its ministers in Anglican principles can use the distance learning course sponsored by Centre for Anglican Communion Studies (CEFACS) that I wrote on the subject called *Something in Common*.

The second challenge is that of **staffing**. TEE programmes are often run by people who are already over-busy, and with no concessions from their parochial or other diocesan roles. As an

educator, I value a role as a self-supporting priest in my Diocese, but it is quite clear that my first call is as an educator. This is where my strengths lie, and where I can be best used. The problem is that parishes pay for parish priests, but stretched diocesan budgets have to pay for educators. Maybe the challenge to the donor agencies is to fund local African educators rather than constantly sending foreign educators as their funding contribution?

We need to ask the question whether we always use scholarships available to us in the most appropriate way. If a diocese is offered a bursary for a trainer to obtain a degree,

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God's mission, evangelism and social action, personal spiritual formation and ethical integrity, the coming of the Kingdom on earth as in heaven – these are our key emphases in training.

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who chooses who should be sent? The bishop? And if so, does the bishop choose a family member, or a favoured priest? Might it not sometimes be better to train a lay educator by providing her or him with a theological qualification. We squander our few scholarships at our peril.

The third challenge relates to what I said earlier about TEE being in the business of **breaking down boundaries** between the academic institution, the church, the individual students and the communities. If TEE is to fulfil its potential as a strong – even ideal – form of training, it needs to have strong official approval, support and regulation. Unless the training

programme has clear episcopal approval, some ordinands at least will find excuses for not attending the group sessions and placement exercises that are so creative in this form of education. And all parish priests think that they are much too busy to run training groups for ordinands that will be placed in other parishes – unless it becomes part of the priest's job description. A little creative pressure from a bishop in favour of education works wonders.

But the converse is also true. The fourth challenge relates to the idea of **flexibility**. From time to time, a person of profound spirituality and clear pastoral gifts emerges *for whom the normal processes of training are inappropriate*. Examples are difficult to give, because individuals might be identified. But age, health, and family circumstances need to be taken into consideration. And my dream is for a diocesan training programme in which the trainers and the trainees discuss collaboratively the programme of work and study which is appropriate *in each case*. Not *everybody* has to study Medieval European Church History. Not *everybody* has to study Healing and Counselling. Not *everybody* has to start with the same subject or at the same level. There is a basic core, but it is easy enough to identify this.

I want to end with a more general reflection, because the way in which Anglicans view and use training has much to do with Anglican insecurities. We need to address those insecurities and uncertainties, so that we can choose methods of training which are right for the place and time. It seems to me that Anglicans are congenitally obsessed with Anglican identity. This leads to training programmes that make sure our clergy celebrate the Eucharist 'in the right way', whatever that is, understand canon law, and run their church councils or vestries according to regulation. We are in danger of obsession with church at the expense of gospel.

And this obsession may mean that we undermine what ought to be our key emphases in training: God's mission, evangelism and social action, personal spiritual formation and ethical integrity, the coming of the Kingdom on earth as in heaven. My prayer for this new century, and for an Anglican role in it, is that we get our priorities right: the first priority in faithfulness to God rather than the Church; the second priority in commitment to radical transforming education, rather than to the morbid maintenance of the *status quo*.

? ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

1. *In what way does Dr. Chatfield argue that TEE is subversive? Do you agree that TEE does break down the traditional barriers between the academics, the clerics and the people? How?*

2. *Have you felt TEE to be 'inferior' to residential study? Has this course altered your thinking? If yes, how? If no, what is the basis for your argument?*

3. *In what way does the cost argument influence your thinking about TEE?*

4. *Do you agree with Dr. Chatfield's observations about our 'obsession' with Anglican identity? How does his point, and your understanding, relate to your vision for the ministry of theological education?*

A PRAYER FOR AFRICAN THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION

Almighty God, our heavenly father,
the only source of light and life;
send down upon our theological education
programmes in Africa the rich gift of the good spirit,
that in them your truth may be sincerely sought,
effectually received and obediently followed, and that
in growing measure they may become
centres of inspiration.
Endue their teachers with wisdom, zeal and patience,
inspire their scholars with the spirit of truth,
honour and humility;
and grant that they may receive willing support from
the Church which they serve,
for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

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