

# A Capability Approach to Open and Distance Learning for In-Service Teacher Education

*R.E. (Bobby) Harreveld*

## Abstract

Throughout the world, open and distance learning (ODL) has been used for in-service teacher education (INSET) over many years, in different education systems and in diverse social and cultural contexts. While ODL provides wider access to INSET, it is not without its challenges in terms of its effectiveness of impact and efficiency in delivery. In this chapter, Amartya Sen's (1999) concept of capabilities generates both a theoretical framework and an interpretive lens through which to explore the complexities of ODL design and delivery for INSET. Methodologically, the chapter uses a case study approach with evidence sourced from research literature, policy and programme-specific documents of the developed and developing world to identify emerging trends in the use of ODL for INSET. The proposition that a capability approach has much to offer both the design and delivery of ODL for INSET is examined through analysis of a programme for generalist primary, special education and discipline-specific teachers who are transitioning into the teaching of industrial technology and design in secondary schooling in regional, rural and remote communities of Queensland, Australia. Findings are speculative and aimed to provoke ongoing consideration of the capability approach as a potentially powerful paradigm for interrogating ODL for INSET.

## Introduction

Open and distance learning (ODL) contributes substantively to the provision of in-service teacher education (INSET) that is responsive to social, cultural and economic forces affecting employment, community development and citizenship. Global economic discourses, changing socio-political milieus and emerging technologies and their innovative uses continue to influence ODL

(Spronk 2008). Debates about the impact of national curriculum and redrafted educational goals for all (OECD 2005; MCEETYA 2008; UNESCO 2009) reflect concern that education for the common good, the common wealth, may be diminished as competitive individualism is championed (McMaugh et al. 2009). The contentiousness of ODL as a Westernised developed world concept remains significant as its technologies and pedagogies are deployed among diverse social, cultural, political and economic frameworks of the developing world (Runfang 2008).

In response to the challenges posed by what appears to be a now unattainable goal of Education for All by 2015, this chapter proposes both conceptual and contextual engagement with the “wider disparities in the distribution of power, wealth and opportunity” that reflect policy-driven “unfair distribution of life chances” (UNESCO 2009, p. 6). Amartya Sen’s (1992, 1999, 2006) premise that we are “diversely different” (2006, p. xiv) advances the argument that “the role of reasoning and choice in the determination of priorities need not take that either-or form” (2006, p. 182). Precisely because we are diverse in our differences, developing accessible, equitable and efficient INSET does not mean that choices are confined by constructions of either face-to-face or distance learning options, or that meeting the needs of education systems must be at the expense of individual teachers. A capability approach provokes an examination of ways to achieve teachers’ freedom to achieve diversely different work/lifestyles and make different choices throughout their professional lives (Sen 1999).

This argument extends Craig and Perraton’s (2003) earlier work in the field to a proposed new theoretical resource in the field of ODL for INSET. First, the ways in which ODL for INSET is used in the developed and the developing world are examined through analysis of the emerging trends of ODL for INSET among diverse, nationally framed contexts. A critical viewpoint is developed in the second section through conceptualising a capability approach (Sen 1992, 1999, 2006) to ODL for INSET. The chapter then engages with issues of ODL for INSET beyond that of the primary school. It moves into the technical and vocational education (TVE) of teachers in secondary schools as a problematical case for the provision of ODL. In what ways can ODL facilitate innovative and potentially transformative in-service professional development for TVE teachers in secondary schools? This contextual question is significant because the latest report monitoring progress toward the Dakar Framework of Action and the Millennium Development Goals finds that while enrolment in secondary education is rising, inter- and intra-regional enrolment ratios and attainment rates vary markedly. Furthermore, the curriculum in “post-primary education is often too academic and removed from social and economic realities” (UNESCO 2009, p. 84). The chapter concludes with a synthesis of achievements and challenges highlighted.

## **Open and Distance Learning for In-Service Teacher Education (ODL for INSET)**

In the developing world, national governments actively drive in-service education for teachers through ODL courses and programmes because it is perceived to be a cost-effective solution to address problems of up-skilling scarce

teacher resources – especially in regional, rural and remote communities. In the developed world, similar reasoning underpins decisions around the use of a range of ODL options for INSET. In both contexts, ODL enables large numbers of teachers to participate in specifically targeted in-service professional education within relatively short periods of time (Sikwibele and Mungoo 2009).

Present and emerging trends of ODL suggest that the many social networking tools (such as Facebook, blogs, wikis and Second Life virtual realities), e-mail, web-conferencing and mobile phone technologies are complementary to earlier modes of instructional delivery such as CDs and print media (Sikwibele and Mungoo 2009). Fundamentally though, ODL for INSET continues to be challenged by the need for education workplaces (such as schools, colleges and universities) to support ongoing teacher learning via the timely management of appropriate information and communication technologies (ICTs) that are modelled *in situ* by qualified staff such that participatory and collaborative approaches to INSET overcome the problems of: access to the technologies; time constraints on their use together; and socio-cultural structures and processes of the dominant teaching-learning models that are not always reflective of policy intentions (Boitshwarelo 2009). This means that previous curriculum design and teaching strategies using ODL for INSET may be challenged by the potential for the enhanced personalisation of lifelong learning, as well as for collaborative learning that provides opportunities for teachers to transform their perspectives of themselves as learners through recognising and respecting one another's differences.

INSET is often used synonymously with the notion of professional development. Craig and Perraton (2003) differentiated between two types of professional development:

1. Structured – formal enrolment in a course with expected progression to an outcome that (a) may or may not award a formal qualification, (b) may be both supply- and demand-driven, and (c) may use a variety of different technologies.
2. Unstructured – in this type, (a) there is no formal course to be followed, (b) resources are made available via diverse technologies, and (c) demand is driven by teachers choosing from resources to suit individual professional learning needs.

Supply-driven professional development is constructed as employer-mandated participation in learning that is intended to meet the system's strategic goals. Diverse combinations of both structured and unstructured approaches provide learning opportunities for individual teachers, collegial communities and employer groups. Significantly, “effective open and distance learning often demands cooperation between a number of different institutional actors and stakeholders” (Craig and Perraton 2003, p. 99).

For ODL programme design and delivery, effective co-operation among partners requires negotiated decision-making in relation to:

- purpose of programme, its consequent participation and delivery modes;
- organisation and infrastructure needed to make it work (e.g., location of learning sites, communications, transport, consumables and library resources);

- funding arrangements (e.g., sources of funding, numbers of students, effort and time to be expended, human and physical resourcing costs);
- technology choices (i.e., availability, sustainability, acceptability and cost);
- curriculum and pedagogical choices related to content, learning and teaching methods, assessment activities and criteria;
- in-built evaluation framework for ongoing individual and collective decision-making; and
- management of strategic partnerships among all stakeholders.

(Adapted from Craig and Perraton 2003; OECD 2005)

Of the formal types of professional development, there are notionally four categories of ODL for INSET available:

1. certification programmes for unqualified teachers that lead to registration with a professional authorising body;
2. programmes that upgrade teachers' qualifications (e.g., from a Certificate to Diploma or Diploma to Bachelor degree or specialised postgraduate level qualifications);
3. programmes that prepare teachers for promotion to new roles such as principal, head of department, regional director or policy-maker; and
4. curriculum-specific programmes addressing systems' mandated curriculum changes or targets to be met (e.g., Universal Primary Education [UPE]; literacy and numeracy results) or shortfalls in curriculum specialists.

Bayrakci's (2009) distinction between "*teacher training and teacher development*" (p. 10, italics in original) is instructive. It reminds programme planners to include training aimed at building specific technical skill sets, and thus confidence to teach in a particular vocationally oriented subject, as well as at encouraging teachers for futures-oriented professional growth as educators. In a comparative analysis of INSET in Japan and Turkey, Bayrakci (2009) concluded that providing professional staff who could respond systematically to, and collegially with, teachers as their peers to co-design specific professional learning opportunities is essential in all countries. Accordingly, so long as INSET is used to deliver national and regional education policies within a conceptual framework determined solely by economic imperatives, its effectiveness for long-term benefit to teachers, their students and their communities will be diminished unless that conceptual framework facilitates practices that *include*:

- both on- and off-site school dimensions;
- active engagement of teachers in design and delivery;
- teacher peers as facilitators, team leaders or direct trainers;
- collaborative, interactive learning techniques;
- outcomes-oriented project work to motivate both field and desk research; and
- development and adaptation of assessment and teaching materials for local learners and conditions.

(Adapted from OECD 2005)

ODL for INSET becomes even more problematic at the secondary school level because “there is little likelihood that governments facing the challenges of meeting the UPE target will be able to meet a further challenge of providing vastly increased access to opportunities for secondary education” (Rumble and Koul 2007, p. 1). One means of furthering access has been the use of mobile telephones and digitised global networks. These have found particular favour in Asia and Africa where they are “more affordable” and learners are familiar with them. Says Motlik (2008, p. 1) of such access: “[W]ith proper instructional design it promises educational opportunities with an increased flexibility for learners.”

Traxler and Dearden (2005) examined the potential for using “mobile learning” (or m-learning) as part of INSET in Sub-Saharan Africa. They identified four key areas for future work into the use of mobile technologies integrated into ODL:

- *Inclusion* – enhanced inclusivity for teachers in rural and remote areas, across diverse cultures, gendered and tribal differences;
- *New paradigm for development* – disruption to power of centralised static and expensive technologies and infrastructures;
- *Pedagogy* – blended and multi-modal learning and teaching strategies that using m-learning will continue to influence; and
- *Evaluation* – ongoing development of efficient, appropriate, authentic and effective evaluation frameworks.

Unfortunately, there is a dearth of large scale, empirical studies into the efficacy of mobile cellphone technologies for INSET even though communities in both the developed and the developing world are embracing wireless, mobile electronic technologies (Zawacki-Richter et al. 2009).

Over the last decade, curriculum design and delivery of INSET using 21<sup>st</sup> century communication technologies continue to be problematic. Contrarily, in the transfer of Internet-mediated ODL from developed to developing countries and among those countries themselves, “the multifaceted, globalised tapestry of educational choices and consequences can rapidly unravel” if not accompanied by an educational paradigm shift (Carter 2009, pp. 2–3). Such a shift would accommodate social, economic, cultural and political differences among diverse communities of learners while at the same time recognising our common humanity.

## **A Capability Approach to ODL for INSET**

Economist and philosopher Amartya Sen’s concerns with inequality (1992), freedom (1999) and identity (2006) provide fresh insights into conceptualising relations between INSET’s policy-driven system-level reform on the one hand and socio-economic processes implicated in individuals’ utilisation of ODL to further their professional development on the other. His work is especially relevant in this context, given that “education is one of the critical dimensions through which public policies for economic growth and human development can be assessed and analysed” (Lanzi 2007, p. 424).

Sen’s capability approach provides fresh perspectives to debates about equality in education, educational choice and education reform (Reid 2005; Flores-Crespo 2007). In moving beyond a consideration of inputs and outputs that positions

education as a commodity and educated people as resources, Sen (1999) argues for an understanding of human capabilities that takes into account their direct relevance to the well-being and freedom of people, and their indirect role in influencing social change and economic production.

A capability approach focuses on people's well-being, taking people to be "reasoning agents with the right to make choices" (Gasper 2007, p. 337). In this reasoning, economic and social policies should focus on what people are able to do and be in life, and those policies should be judged according to the individual advantages they make possible (Sen 1999). In the case of INSET, this means realising the potential that ODL may provide for removing obstacles in teachers' lives so that they can engage in professional development that is meaningful and valuable to them.

A capability approach is variously defined as "a broad normative framework for the evaluation and assessment of individual well-being and social arrangements, the design of policies and proposals about social change in society" (Robeyns 2005, p. 94). As such, a capability approach provides a theoretical tool for conceptualising and evaluating phenomena such as poverty, inequality and/or well-being (Robeyns 2005). Thus, in its focus on valued actions and ways of being in the world, a capability approach incorporates both what individuals actually manage to achieve *and* the conditions of choice in which they make their decisions (Gasper 2007).

When considering in-service teachers' opportunities for gaining an additional income, establishing and maintaining social relations with professional peer groups, and having the ability to exercise freedom of choice regarding future work/life options, a capability approach challenges the notion that "opportunities of choice" can be constructed "only as means to acquiring preferred bundles of commodities" (Sen 1992, p. 35). Because of pre-existing conditions over which they may have little control, some teachers may lack the capacity (economic and/or social) to gain access to appropriate professional development opportunities. In these instances, their professional and personal well-being is "influenced by not only economic inputs (money and things directly obtainable with money), but also 'non-economic' factors such as family relations, friendships, beliefs, purposeful activity, exercise and health and so on" (Gasper 2007, p. 338).

Accordingly, for individual teachers, using ODL for in-service professional development depends not only on economic factors, but also on social relations and freedom of choice that enables people to exercise their capabilities for knowledge and skill generation and regeneration. For policy-makers and those charged with its implementation, considering in-service initiatives from a capability perspective would obviate short-term, potentially ill-considered reactions to longer term, systemic problems.

Nonetheless, Sen's (1999) capability approach can be problematic when used in the field of education (Flores-Crespo 2007; Gasper 2007). Its practical possibilities require further exploration. Sen (1999) leaves such operational considerations to others, arguing that capability is the freedom people have to achieve different lifestyles and make different choices throughout their lives. Whether it is necessary to name and operationalise capabilities or not is a contested issue.

Nussbaum (2003) views it as fundamental to protecting a pluralism of rights, freedoms and responsibilities. However, Robeyns (2003) is content with the “under-specified nature of the capability approach, because it is a framework of thought, a normative tool” (p. 64). For Qizilbash (2007), naming specific capabilities would facilitate the use of this approach in education, creating new possibilities for responding to the narrow constructions of human capital and singular claims about economics that drive education. Alkire (2005), however, is confident that “operational specifications are both possible and vital to the further development of the approach” (p. 115).

It is timely to examine the potential freedom that teachers have for forming and reforming their capabilities – that is, their valued ways of *doing* professional development and of *being* 21<sup>st</sup> century learners and knowledge workers. The freedom that teachers have to convert their aspirations into valued achievements is central to Sen’s (1999) capability approach, which does not value education just because it is instrumental for achieving some socio-economic good but also because normatively it is important for humans to flourish. Such reasoning demands a richer means of evaluation and accountability for INSET via ODL than human capital theory does (Saito 2003). With its emphasis on the development of teachers’ reasoned choices and a return to the centrality of people, a capability approach recognises “plural identities” (Sen 2006, p. 17).

For teachers currently working in education systems, their sense of identity is already characterised according to level (e.g., early childhood, primary, lower or upper secondary, tertiary); location (e.g., urban, rural, remote); subject or discipline expertise (e.g., Special Education, History, Mathematics, Science, Music, Mechanical, Construction); and employer (e.g., grammar, public, denominational, private, community). In both their professional and their personal lives, these people have diversity in the different categories to which they belong, reflecting their cultural histories, backgrounds and affiliations.

In his thinking on *Identity and Violence*, Sen (2006, p. 19) identifies two distinct issues of importance in this regard: (1) identities are “robustly plural” and can accommodate simultaneous importance; and (2) people make choices, either explicitly or implicitly, “about what relative importance to attach, in a particular context to the divergent loyalties and priorities that may compete for precedence.” Sen is concerned that silences and implicit assumptions in the texts of both social and economic analyses regarding these issues lead to “two different types of reductionism” (Sen 2006, p. 20). First, identity is disregarded as an influence on people’s values, beliefs and behaviours. Second, in contrast, a singular affiliation with one identity reduces the plurality of group memberships and multiple loyalties such that people are situated in only one collective identity. Consequently, flawed socio-economic analyses and decisions flow from this reductionism of identity (Sen 2006).

In the field of concern in this chapter – ODL for INSET – such a reconceptualisation of programme design and delivery would have much to offer countries seeking to attain Education for All goals through enhanced quality teacher supply. Despite advances in the spread of mobile and electronic learning and the growth of open courseware and open education resources (OERs), ICTs remain but one part of the equation. It is with and through teachers that progress will be made at community and country levels.

## The Role of ODL for Teachers in Transition

Of the four types of INSET already identified, a combination of two is now chosen for closer study because it illustrates both conceptually and contextually some very real challenges that are faced in both developed and developing countries. A case of teachers in transition in Australia extends understandings of the use of INSET to provide a postgraduate level qualification and to prepare teachers for new roles – not just as principals or heads of departments, but also as different types of teachers. During 2007 and 2008, a cohort of teachers in Queensland accepted employer-funded scholarships to undertake a university Graduate Diploma programme that would accredit them to teach junior and senior secondary TVE subjects. The employer’s workforce planning team had identified a major shortage of TVE teachers throughout the state. Of the 17 teachers who began the programme, 15 continued on toward completion at the end of 2009.

While the full findings of this case are yet to be analysed, at this stage of implementation some challenges and opportunities are emerging. These teachers are transitioning from being generalist primary teachers to special education and secondary English, History, Geography, Science and Mathematics teachers. For some, teaching TVE will give them a third or fourth secondary teaching area; for others, it is their first foray into secondary school teaching. Teaching experience varies from 5 to 30 years. Ages range from mid-20s to late 40s. Gender balance shows 4 women to 11 men. Geographically, they are teaching in small remote schools, medium-sized rural schools and large urban centres. Culturally and linguistically, schools range from Indigenous communities to mining towns, agricultural districts and regional centres with mixed industries. Participation is voluntary, with the employer funding all programme-related costs. Table 5.1 illustrates some initial strengths and weaknesses distilled from a preliminary content analysis of programme documents, including course websites, enrolment data (including that for retention and progression), assessment tasks and assignments, timetables and publicly available school details.

### Implications for ODL

- *Mentoring*

The literature is replete with examples of good practices for beginning primary and secondary teachers (Jonson 2008), but there is little research into mentoring for INSET via ODL (Lai 2006). There is no evidence to date of systematic, sustainable mentoring programmes for teachers transitioning from one level or type of teaching to another. For teachers in smaller rural or remote schools, access to mentoring from an experienced, empathic head of department is essential. A mentor training programme could also be beneficial for the teachers delivering the six residential workshop sessions to their INSET and PRESET colleagues. These teachers were provided with rudimentary on-the-job experiences of adults as learners and university procedures. However, they had not participated in an INSET programme for teaching teachers their professional knowledge and skill sets in



**Table 5.1: Strengths and weaknesses of an ODL model for INSET.**

Delivery model	Strengths (S) and weaknesses (W)
Multi-model ODL: 1. on-the-job (i.e., at school); 2. off-the-job (i.e., residential workshops); 3. university external (own study and research via e-learning) work-integrated learning	<p><b>S:</b> direct, immediate relevance to new teaching area; interdisciplinary teams of practitioners, university lecturers and employer representatives</p> <p><b>W:</b> in small schools, teacher is only TVE teacher with full teaching load; intensive programme management</p>
On-site mentors in larger schools and “roving” mentors to cover schools in particular district or region. Mentors to be at head of department (HOD) level with experience in this teaching area	<p><b>S:</b> HODs in larger schools can make time to mentor; incidental mentoring from other staff</p> <p><b>W:</b> funding for roving mentors not always forthcoming at local level; mentor training not provided beforehand</p>
Residential workshops (off-the-job; six workshops, each of five days’ duration) provide hand skills, safety knowledge, technical expertise with plant and equipment; undertaken with pre-service teachers (PRESET); taught and assessed by practising secondary school teachers in actual school workshops	<p><b>S:</b> immediate membership of discipline-specific community; location in different types of schools provides knowledge of diverse workshop layouts, resources and teaching practices; mix of experienced and new teachers</p> <p><b>W:</b> workshops timetabled for school holidays; effects on family time; employer costs higher to cover travel and accommodation</p>
Project-based curriculum around three study areas: Junior (Years 8–10) Senior (Years 11–12) Self-study in area of interest	<p><b>S:</b> content immediately relevant to syllabus and studies authority requirements; assessment practical and directly applicable to teaching; opportunity to develop knowledge in areas of interest</p> <p><b>W:</b> so much to learn and so little time to spend doing it when carrying a teaching load as well</p>
Assessment tasks directly related to teaching and learning issues in this subject area	<p><b>S:</b> development of unit plans, assessment criteria for teaching subjects; self-study in areas of own interest</p> <p><b>W:</b> still have to meet university grading requirements</p>
Time frame for completion over two years, with assignment submission dates negotiable	<p><b>S:</b> qualified for teaching all junior and some senior subjects; experience with different workshops, school procedures; opportunity to establish professional relationships</p> <p><b>W:</b> too long when having duties as staff member (e.g., sporting teams); personal life affected; some community commitments affected; too costly for employer; university procedures and timelines different.</p>

particular subjects. Future development of this specialised INSET area using ODL could perhaps emerge from work already underway for tutors of learning centres in open schools, especially vocational education through ODL (e.g., Rumble and Koul 2007; Mitra 2008).

- *Relationships and resilience*

When teachers are employed in large bureaucracies, ongoing effective communication between local schools and regional and central offices is always going to be an issue. In addition, if the employer is funding either fully or partially the programme costs for staff participation in INSET, then cost-benefit analysis in both economic and social terms should inform evaluation outcomes. Relationships among all stakeholders require ongoing maintenance for programme stability and sustainability throughout the funding period. Here the responsiveness of employers and university staff is integral to teachers' resilience in managing the complexities of their plural identities among the multiple groups in their personal and professional lives.

### **Contribution of a Capability Approach to ODL for INSET**

A capability approach could identify inequities in resources across the cohort's teaching sites – inequities in both infrastructure and staffing mix, inclusive of university resources and residential schools' workshops. Parallel to this process could be a profiling of individual participants' previous work histories to: (1) elicit what they are able to do and wish to be in their professional lives; and (2) identify, and then ameliorate, the potential obstacles that would prevent them engaging in learning options that are meaningful and valuable to them. A capability approach would consider in-service teachers' opportunities for gaining an additional income or promotion or transfer, establishing and maintaining social relations with new professional peer groups, and having the ability to exercise freedom of choice regarding future work/life options.

If a capability approach was to be operationalised in contexts such as this, then another conceptual issue remains to be considered: the relationship between notions of “functionings” and capabilities. This relationship is fundamental to the notion of capability. Conceptually, functionings are “the various things a person may value doing or being” while “a person's capability refers to the alternative combinations of functionings that are feasible for her to achieve” (Sen 1999, p. 75). Now, while functionings include the basics of life such as being nourished, healthy and literate, they also include more complex aspects of human well-being and fulfilment such as being respected, being able to work and being part of a community (Robeyns 2005). Sen (1999) reasons that “capability is thus a kind of freedom: the substantive freedom to achieve alternative functioning combinations” (p. 75).

If various combinations of functionings are used to develop the capability to achieve valued ways of being in the world (e.g., as a TVE teacher in a secondary school), then the educational focus would initially be on functionings. For, without functionings – that is, both the basic and the more complex aspects of human well-being – these teachers would not be physically, socially, emotionally

or intellectually able to learn. Nor would they have the resilience to make decisions about their learning journeys now and in the future.

## Conclusion

ODL models for INSET emerged in an era in which university-accredited professional development programmes were in their infancy. Moreover, ODL for INSET at that time in the mid- to late 20<sup>th</sup> century did not have access to individualised Internet-mediated social networking technologies accessed via computers and mobile telephones. Twenty-first century ODL presents both challenges and opportunities for INSET, several of which have been identified in this chapter. However, there remains a need for experimentation with ODL practices that provide for teachers' learning to develop their capabilities to consolidate current knowledge and develop new discipline-specific and trans-disciplinary curriculum knowledge and pedagogical strategies. Technologies will continue to evolve.

Increasing access to those best suited to achieving improved learning outcomes for teachers is but one part of the challenge. Consistent, timely research is required to provide empirical data on the ways in which the developing world may “leapfrog” or transcend current practices of ODL that are at risk of technological seduction by the developed world’s infrastructures and delivery models.

Throughout all cultures, ODL for INSET is on the threshold of addressing such challenges to engage innovative ways of knowledge-production so as to recognise a cosmopolitan world that “tempers a respect for difference with a respect for actual human beings” (Appiah 2006, p. 113). Sen’s (1999) thinking adds weight to conceptual and practical considerations of the use of ODL to enhance teachers’ capabilities. In terms of policy development, a capability approach would be “not only job-oriented, but also life-oriented” (Lanzi 2007, p. 424). All teachers have the potential to develop capabilities and they have the right to in-service education that fosters positively their abilities to do so. Effective ODL requires communication and co-operation among all participants with a stake in equitable outcomes for teachers and, by implication, their students.

In proposing a conceptual framework for generating in-service teachers’ capabilities, the value of Sen’s (1999) capability approach has been explored, followed by an account of its complexities when used in ODL. There is still conceptual and contextual work to be done. Individually, committed teachers can use ODL to seek out opportunities for professional development as they respond to the changing needs of their students, economic and socio-cultural changes in their local communities, knowledge developments in their respective teaching areas, and the ways in which they are continually challenged to stay up-to-date with pedagogical skills and technological developments. Collectively, they continue to participate in employer-mandated INSET as a consequence of government policy initiatives or organisational restructuring. However, as Aderinoye et al. (2009, p. 2) put it:

“[P]rogress is being made and will continue to be made as long as leaders and educators can envision a better future for their people, educational resources are provided from limited national and international development budgets, and educators are willing to break

away from ineffective instructional methods and embrace methods and technology that can address the real needs and aspirations of their learners.”

The capability approach is a potentially powerful paradigm for breaking new ground in the field of ODL for INSET. It provides an alternative theoretical framework for thinking about and engaging with the contribution that ODL can make to INSET throughout the world.

## References

- Aderinoye, R., Siaciwena, R. and Wright, C.R. (2009). Regional focus issue editorial: “A Snapshot of Distance Education in Africa.” *International Review of Research in Open and Distance Learning* 10(4).
- Alkire, S. (2005). “Why the Capability Approach?” *Journal of Human Development* 6(1): 115–135.
- Appiah, K.A. (2006). *Cosmopolitanism: Ethics in a World of Strangers*. Norton: New York.
- Bayrakci, M. (2009). “In-Service Teacher Training in Japan and Turkey: A Comparative Analysis of Institutions and Practices.” *Australian Journal of Teacher Education* 31(2): 10–22.
- Boitshwarelo, B. (2009). “Exploring Blended Learning for Science Teacher Professional Development in an African Context.” *International Review of Research in Open and Distance Learning* 10(4).
- Carter, D.J. (2009). “The Global Internet Pandemic.” *International Review of Research in Open and Distance Learning* 10(4).
- Craig, H. and Perraton, H. (2003). “Open and Distance Education for Teachers’ Continuing Professional Development.” In *Higher Education through Open and Distance Learning. World Review of Distance Education and Open Learning*. Vol. 3. Robinson, B. and Latchem, C. (eds.). Routledge/Falmer: London, pp. 91–111.
- Flores-Crespo, P. (2007). “Education, Employment and Human Development: Illustrations from Mexico.” *Journal of Education and Work* 20(1): 45–66.
- Gasper, D. (2007). “What Is the Capability Approach? Its Core, Rationale, Partners and Dangers.” *Journal of Socio-Economics* 36(3): 335–359.
- Jonson, K.F. (2008). *Being an Effective Mentor: How to Help Beginning Teachers Succeed* (2nd ed.). Corwin Press/Sage Publications: Thousand Oaks, CA.
- Lai, E. (2006). “Mentoring for In-Service Teachers in a Distance Teacher Education Programme: Views of Mentors, Mentees and University Teachers.” In 2005 Australian Association for Research in Education conference proceedings, Parramatta. Jeffery, P. (ed.). Retrieved March 19, 2009, from: [www.aare.edu.au/05pap/alpha.htm#1](http://www.aare.edu.au/05pap/alpha.htm#1)
- Lanzi, D. (2007). “Capabilities, Human Capital and Education.” *Journal of Socio-Economics* 36(3): 424–435.
- McMaugh, A., Saltmarsh, D., White, S., Reid, J-A., Santoro, N. and Bahr, N. (2009). “Reflecting on the Work of Preparing Teachers.” *Asia-Pacific Journal of Teacher Education* 37(1): 1–4.

- Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA). (2008). *The Draft National Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians*. Retrieved March 17, 2009, from: [www.curriculum.edu.au/verve/\\_resources/Draft\\_National\\_Declaration\\_on\\_Educational\\_Goals\\_for\\_Young\\_Australians.pdf](http://www.curriculum.edu.au/verve/_resources/Draft_National_Declaration_on_Educational_Goals_for_Young_Australians.pdf)
- Mitra, S. (2008). *Manual for the Tutors of Learning Centers in Open Schools*. Commonwealth of Learning: Vancouver.
- Motlik, S. (2008). "Mobile Learning in Developing Nations." *International Review of Research in Open and Distance Learning* 9(2): 1–10.
- Nussbaum, M. (2003). "Capabilities as Fundamental Entitlements: Sen and Social Justice." *Feminist Economics* 9(2/3): 33–59.
- Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) (2005). *The Challenges for Education in a Global Economy*. A conference report from the Global Forum on Education, October 24–25, 2005, Santiago, Chile. Retrieved March 17, 2009, from: [www.oecd.org/eduforum2005](http://www.oecd.org/eduforum2005)
- Qizilbash, M. (2007). "Introduction: Challenges and Debates." *Journal of Human Development* 8(3): 327–335.
- Reid, A. (2005). *Rethinking National Curriculum Collaboration: Towards an Australian Curriculum*. A report funded under the Research Fellowship Scheme of the Department of Education, Science and Training. Department of Education, Science and Training: Canberra.
- Robeyns, I. (2003). "Sen's Capability Approach and Gender Inequality: Selecting Relevant Capabilities." *Feminist Economics* 9(2): 61–92.
- Robeyns, I. (2005). "The Capability Approach: A Theoretical Survey." *The Journal of Human Development* 6(1): 93–71.
- Rumble, G. and Koul, B.N. (2007). *Open Schooling for Secondary and Higher Education: Costs and Effectiveness in India and Namibia*. Commonwealth of Learning: Vancouver.
- Runfang, W. (2008). *China's Radio and TV Universities and the British Open University: A Comparative Study*. Yilin Press: Nanjin, China.
- Saito, M. (2003). "Amartya Sen's Capability Approach to Education: A Critical Exploration." *Journal of Philosophy of Education* 37(1): 17–31.
- Sen, A. (1992). *Inequality Re-examined*. Russell Sage Foundation: New York.
- Sen, A. (1999). *Development as Freedom*. Random House: New York and Toronto.
- Sen, A. (2006). *Identity and Violence: The Illusion of Destiny*. W.W. Norton and Company: New York /London.
- Sikwibele, A.L. and Mungoo, J.K. (2009). "Distance Learning and Teacher Education in Botswana: Opportunities and Challenges." *International Review of Research in Open and Distance Learning* 10(4): 1–16.
- Spronk, B. (2008). Editorial: "Technology, Policy and the Right to Education." *International Review of Research in Open and Distance Learning* 9(1): 1–4.
- Traxler, J. and Dearden, P. (2005). "The Potential for Using SMS to Support Learning and Organisation in Sub-Saharan Africa." Retrieved March 19, 2009, from: [www.wlv.ac.uk/PDF/cidt-article20.pdf](http://www.wlv.ac.uk/PDF/cidt-article20.pdf)

UNESCO (2009). *Overcoming Inequality: Why Governance Matters. Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2009*. Retrieved March 17, 2009, from: [www.unesco.org/en/education/efareport](http://www.unesco.org/en/education/efareport)

Zawacki-Richter, O., Brown, T. and Delpont, R. (2009). "Mobile Learning: From Single Project Status into the Mainstream?" *European Journal of Open, Distance and E-Learning* (1 January to June). Retrieved October 17, 2009, from: [www.eurodl.org](http://www.eurodl.org)