# Exploring Teaching Strategies in Open Distance and eLearning: Addressing Challenges, Embracing Innovations, and Identifying Best Practices

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## Abstract

This conceptual article delves into the multifaceted landscape of teaching strategies within the context of open distance and e-learning (ODeL), aiming to identify challenges, explore innovations, and delineate best practices towards higher education transformation. ODeL is an educational approach that enables students to engage in their studies through online platforms. With the pervasive integration of technology in education and the growing popularity of online learning platforms, understanding effective teaching methodologies in ODeL environments is paramount. The study synthesises the best practices gleaned from successful ODeL initiatives worldwide, encompassing pedagogical strategies, learner-centred approaches, technology-enhanced strategies, and scaffolded and adaptive learning. Grounded in conceptual and theoretical arguments, this study examines the myriad challenges faced by educators in applying ODeL, including issues related to learner engagement, assessment, and the digital divide. The article reveals challenges faced by practitioners, including technological barriers, learner engagement issues, and pedagogical adaptability constraints. However, amidst these challenges, innovative strategies emerge, such as the integration of gamification elements and interactive simulations to enhance student participation and comprehension. The study recommends, among others, the need to strengthen learner support structures and leveraging research insights to promote inclusive and effective ODeL practices globally. By integrating these insights, the study offers practical guidance to educators, administrators, and policymakers seeking to enhance teaching effectiveness and optimise learning outcomes in ODeL settings. The study therefore contributes to the ongoing conversation on pedagogical innovation in ODeL and underscores the imperative for continuous adaptation and improvement in response to evolving educational landscapes.

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## Introduction

In recent years, the landscape of education has undergone a significant transformation, driven by advancements in technology and the increasing demand for flexible learning options (Haleem et al. 2022; Johnson et al. 2016). Open distance and e-learning (ODeL) have emerged as viable alternatives to traditional face-to-face instruction, offering learners the flexibility to engage with educational content remotely. This shift, according to Wilson-Strydom and Okkolin (2016), has been particularly pronounced in countries like South Africa, where access to quality education remains a challenge for many due to geographical, financial, and infrastructural constraints.

The transition to ODeL presents both opportunities and challenges for educators, requiring innovative teaching practices to effectively engage learners in virtual environments. Thornton et al. (2020) emphasise that while the benefits of ODeL are numerous, including increased accessibility and flexibility, there is a need for educators to navigate various challenges to ensure the efficacy of teaching strategies in this context. Thus, with the pervasive integration of technology in education and the promising popularity of online learning platforms, understanding effective teaching methodologies in ODeL environments is paramount. This research, which addresses three main questions, made use of the words “students” and “learners” concurrently to accommodate international readers. My main questions are:

1. What challenges arise in the implementation of teaching strategies in ODeL, and how do these challenges affect the teaching and learning process?

2. What innovative teaching strategies are being adopted in ODeL to enhance learner engagement, interaction, and academic success?

3. What are the best practices in teaching for ODeL, and how can these practices be standardised to promote effective and inclusive education across diverse contexts?

## Teaching Strategies in ODeL within the Context of Higher Education Transformation

Teaching strategies in open distance and e-learning are critical in addressing the unique challenges posed by this mode of education. These strategies, according to Haleem et al. (2022), are designed to foster student engagement, improve learning outcomes, and create inclusive and flexible learning environments for the purpose of transformation. The transformation of higher education globally has necessitated the adoption of innovative teaching strategies in ODeL. This further explains why Bitar and Davidovich (2024) and Mthembu, Gachie, and Govender (2023) argue that the transition to more inclusive, technology-driven pedagogical models is driven by shifts in societal needs,

technological advancements, and the increasing demand for flexible learning environments. This assessment examines existing literature on teaching strategies in ODeL, focusing on their role in higher education transformation, challenges, and emerging best practices.

Higher education systems worldwide are undergoing profound transformations to tackle challenges related to accessibility, equity, and relevance in an increasingly interconnected and rapidly evolving global context (Cloete and Moja 2005). These changes are driven by the growing recognition of education as a catalyst for socio-economic development and the imperative to address disparities in educational opportunities. In South Africa, this transformation takes on a unique urgency, shaped by the country's post-apartheid agenda to rectify historical injustices and extend access to previously marginalised groups (Arendse 2019). Efforts to dismantle systemic inequalities in education have prioritised expanding enrolment while enhancing the quality and relevance of learning experiences.

In this context, ODeL has emerged as a pivotal mechanism, offering flexible and scalable opportunities for diverse student populations. By leveraging technology and innovative pedagogies, Wilson-Strydom and Okkolin (2016) argue that ODeL facilitates access for students who may face geographical, financial, or social barriers to traditional higher education models. Central to the success of ODeL are its teaching strategies, which must be adaptable, inclusive, and responsive to the varied needs of learners (Haleem et al. 2022). These strategies emphasise active engagement, learner support, and context-sensitive design, thereby ensuring that educational experiences are equitable and transformative. The approaches employed are discussed below.

## Learner-Centred Approaches

In this section, I argue that learner-centred approaches are fundamental to ODeL pedagogy, offering strategies that prioritise flexibility, autonomy, and collaboration. These elements, as highlighted by Kerimbayev et al. (2023), are essential for meeting the diverse needs of students in open and distance education contexts. Grounded in constructivist learning theory, learner-centred approaches emphasise the active role of students in constructing their knowledge through meaningful interactions and activities. I further contend that problem-based learning, for instance, encourages students to engage deeply with content, critically analyse information, and apply knowledge to real-world scenarios. This is further embraced by León and Castro (2017) in their opinion that collaborative projects, such as group assignments or peer-feedback exercises, further foster active participation and shared learning experiences, enabling students to refine their understanding through dialogue and diverse perspectives. Such practices are pivotal in higher education transformation through technology, and are integral to academic and professional success.

Additionally, Bakar (2021) claims that ODeL pedagogy leverages flexibility and autonomy to support students navigating complex life circumstances, thereby fostering

inclusivity directly or indirectly. This is important as flexible schedules and asynchronous learning opportunities allow students to manage their education alongside personal and professional responsibilities, reducing barriers to participation. For example, discussion forums featuring case studies enable asynchronous collaboration, where students exchange insights, debate solutions, and develop communication and teamwork skills, which can be further enhanced through e-learning. These soft skills are crucial for career readiness and personal development, demonstrating the multifaceted benefits of learner-centred approaches in ODeL. Moreover, by empowering students to take charge of their learning processes, these strategies align with the overarching goal of fostering independent, lifelong learners prepared to thrive in dynamic environments (Garcia et al. 2020).

## Technology-Enhanced Strategies

The integration of technology is fundamental to ODeL as it enhances access, interaction, and the overall learning experience across diverse contexts. Learning management systems (LMS), video conferencing tools, interactive simulations, and mobile learning platforms empower learners to access educational resources anytime and anywhere, promoting flexibility in learning. Ismail's (2024) connectivism theory underscores the importance of digital tools and networks in facilitating knowledge acquisition and sharing, emphasising the value of connectivity in modern education. For example, Zamiri and Esmaeili (2024) hold that asynchronous platforms such as discussion forums and blogs allow learners to engage in self-paced, meaningful discussions, accommodating their schedules while fostering collaborative learning. Gamification strategies, including badges and leaderboards, are particularly effective in enhancing motivation and engagement, especially among younger learners navigating ODeL environments.

However, successful technology integration in ODeL requires addressing critical challenges such as instructor readiness and infrastructural gaps (Tondeur et al. 2017). This is followed by a call for continuous professional development for educators (Tabe 2024), thereby ensuring that they, among others, effectively utilise digital tools to enhance teaching and learning processes. Furthermore, investments in robust infrastructure are vital to bridging the digital divide and providing equitable access to all learners, regardless of location or socio-economic status. Without these measures, disparities in technology access may undermine the potential of ODeL to offer inclusive and transformative educational opportunities (Tondeur et al. 2017).

## Scaffolded and Adaptive Learning

Scaffolded learning strategies play a pivotal role in ODeL by providing structured support to learners, enabling them to build competence gradually. Rooted in Vygotsky's (1978) concept of the zone of proximal development (ZPD), these strategies emphasise the importance of tailored guidance to help learners reach their potential. Tools such as instructional videos, guided tutorials, and formative feedback mechanisms allow

learners to progress step by step, mastering complex concepts at their own pace (Bada and Olusegun 2015).

Adaptive learning platforms, powered by artificial intelligence (AI) and data analytics, further enhance scaffolded learning by personalising content to align with individual learners' strengths, weaknesses, and preferences (Mutekwe 2014). This approach ensures that students remain appropriately challenged, reducing cognitive overload while providing necessary support. By gradually decreasing assistance as learners gain competence, scaffolded strategies foster autonomy, promote deeper understanding, and create a more inclusive and effective ODeL learning experience.

## Pedagogical Strategies

Pedagogical strategies in ODeL continue to evolve to meet the demands of remote and online learning environments. Collaborative pedagogy, emphasising peer interaction and group work, builds a sense of community, which reduces learner isolation—a common challenge in distance education (Mutekwe 2014). Tools such as virtual breakout rooms and online discussion forums promote teamwork and knowledge sharing, fostering active participation (Garcia et al. 2020). Similarly, constructivist pedagogy supports experiential learning through virtual labs, simulations, and interactive tasks that transform abstract theories into tangible, real-world experiences, enhancing learner comprehension (Garcia et al. 2020).

Additionally, formative assessment plays a vital role in improving learning outcomes. E-portfolios, for example, encourage students to reflect on their progress while enabling instructors to provide ongoing, constructive feedback (León and Castro 2017). These strategies collectively enhance engagement, promote deep learning, and ensure learners in ODeL environments remain supported and connected throughout their educational journey.

## Theoretical and Conceptual Dimensions of Teaching Strategies in ODeL

Various theories and concepts have been used to analyse how open distance and e-learning has emerged as a transformative approach in contemporary education, leveraging technology to overcome geographical, social, and economic barriers. However, the effective implementation of ODeL depends significantly on the teaching strategies employed. The theoretical dimensions of teaching strategies in ODeL involve understanding the interplay between pedagogy, technology, and the learner's context. This analysis explores these dimensions, addressing challenges, embracing innovations, and identifying best practices. At the conceptual level, teaching strategies in ODeL are grounded in the principles of learner-centred education, flexibility, and inclusivity. Unlike traditional face-to-face education, ODeL relies heavily on asynchronous and synchronous methods that prioritise the autonomy and diverse needs of learners. This calls for strategies that foster active engagement and collaboration while accommodating varied learning paces and preferences. One critical conceptual

challenge is maintaining learner engagement in a remote environment. The lack of physical presence can lead to feelings of isolation, reduced motivation, and attrition. To address this, teaching strategies must integrate interactive elements such as discussion forums, live webinars, and collaborative projects. Additionally, they should incorporate universal design for learning (UDL) principles to ensure accessibility and inclusivity for students with diverse needs and abilities.

## Theoretical Framework

This study draws on a theoretical framework grounded in constructivism and sociocultural learning theories, which emphasise the active construction of knowledge through social interaction and collaboration (Mutekwe 2014). In the context of ODeL, these theories highlight the importance of fostering meaningful learner engagement, promoting self-directed learning, and leveraging technology as a tool for knowledge construction. These theories are displayed in Figures 1 and 2 below.

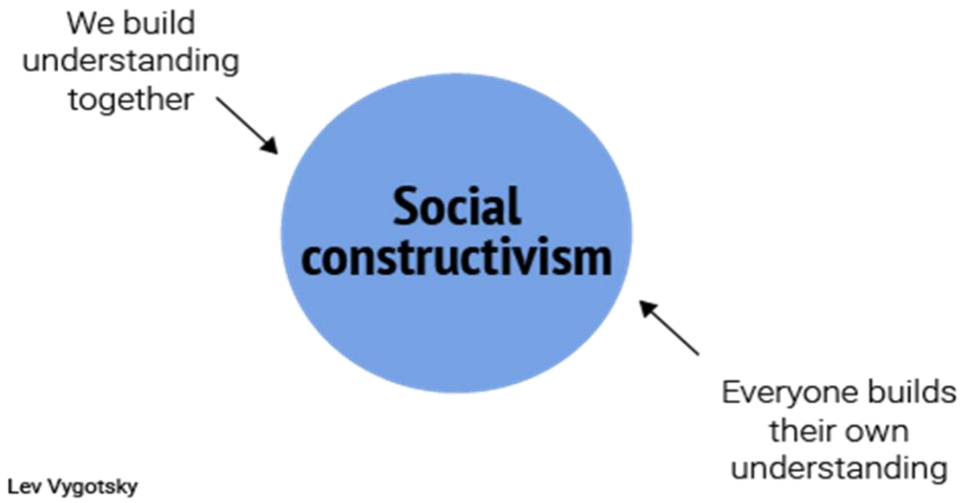


**Figure 1:** Social constructivism theory (adapted from Vygotsky 1978)

Constructivism theory as demonstrated in Figure 1 above suggests that learners build their understanding and knowledge of the world through experiences and reflecting on those experiences (Bada and Olusegun 2015).

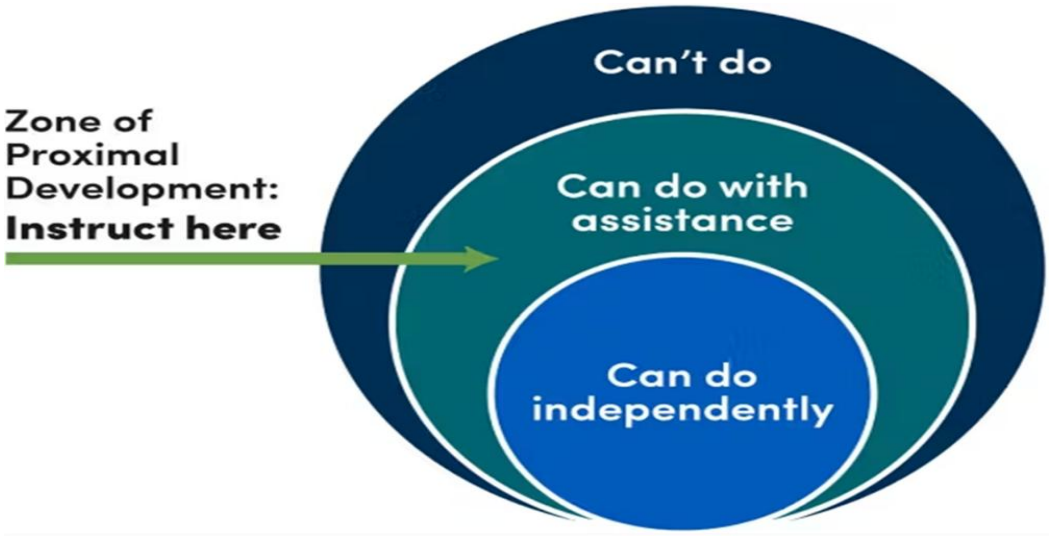


**Figure 2:** Sociocultural learning theory (adapted from Vygotsky 1978)

The sociocultural learning theory suggests that the process of open distance and e-learning is deeply embedded in social contexts, where interaction with peers and instructors is crucial for cognitive development (Mystakidis et al. 2021), and where, through a zone of proximal development, students and educators are able to meet each other at a halfway line.

In the context of ODeL and in relation to this study, constructivism and sociocultural learning theories are intertwined, as they both emphasise active knowledge construction through experiences and social interactions. Collectively, they highlight the importance of engaging learners in collaborative, interactive activities that leverage technology to foster meaningful learning and cognitive development in virtual environments which are conducive to interaction. By integrating these theories, educators can design and implement effective teaching practices that create rich, interactive, and supportive online learning environments (Feyzi Behnagh and Yasrebi 2020). Haneberg, Aaboen, and Middleton (2022) emphasise these strategies, explaining that ODeL does not only address the inherent challenges but also leverages the potential of technology to enhance the learning experience, preparing students for the complexities of the modern world.

## Futures of a Digital Classroom

In ODeL, effective teaching strategies are crucial to overcoming challenges and leveraging innovations to create a dynamic and inclusive educational landscape. The study provides a robust conceptual argument for understanding and enhancing various features of a digital classroom, including collaboration, affordability, upgraded learning, ease of teaching resources, flexible learning, innovative content, interactivity, and accessibility (Haleem et al. 2022).

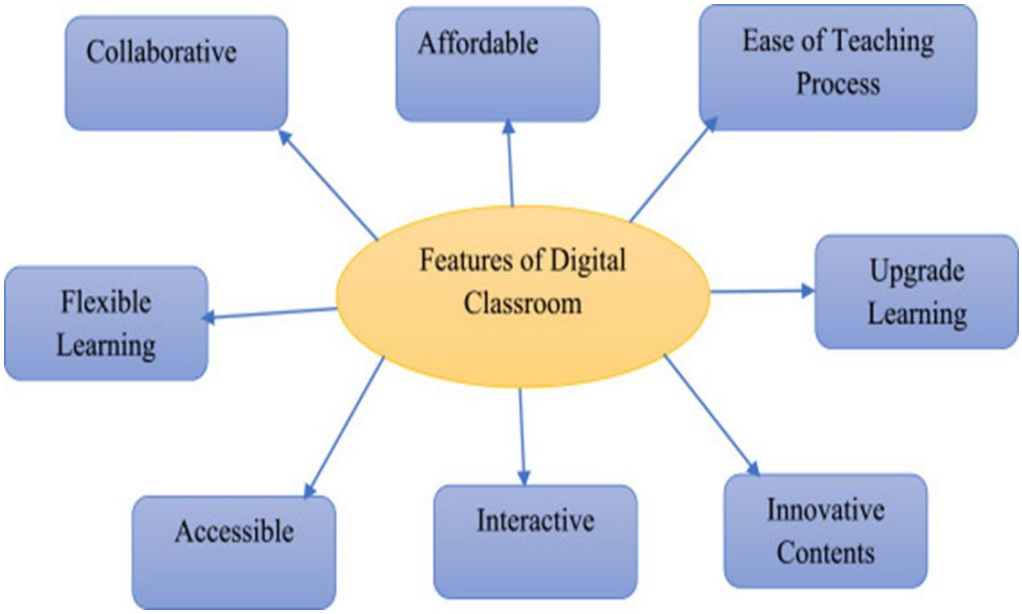


**Figure 3:** Futures of a digital classroom (adapted from Haleem et al. 2022)

In ODeL, effective teaching strategies are crucial to overcoming challenges and leveraging innovations to create a dynamic and inclusive educational environment. The application of constructivism and sociocultural learning theories provides a vigorous framework for understanding and enhancing various features of a digital classroom, including collaboration, affordability, upgraded learning, ease of teaching resources, flexible learning, innovative content, interactivity, and accessibility. These features are further explained in the application of the two main theories of the study, which are constructivism and sociocultural theory (refer to subsequent paragraphs).

Firstly, collaboration is a cornerstone of both constructivist and sociocultural theories, which emphasise the role of social interaction in learning. In a digital classroom, tools like discussion forums, group projects, and peer-review systems foster collaboration, allowing for engagement in meaningful dialogue, sharing perspectives, and co-constructing knowledge (Obi 2023). These collaborative activities simulate the social learning processes that are vital for cognitive development and deeper understanding.

Secondly, affordability is a significant consideration in ODeL, where the cost of education can be a barrier. Digital classrooms can reduce expenses related to physical infrastructure, textbooks, and commuting, making education more accessible (Marey, Goubran, and Tarabieh 2022). From a constructivist perspective, affordability supports inclusive learning environments where all students can participate, while sociocultural theory further emphasises the need to democratise education, ensuring that diverse socio-economic groups have equal opportunities to learn and succeed. However, affordability allows access to the learning environment but does not mean that the environment is “inclusive” or constructive. True inclusivity requires deliberate efforts

to address digital literacy gaps, ensure equitable access to technological resources, and create culturally responsive curricula that cater to the diverse needs of learners.

Thirdly, the ease of teaching resources in a digital classroom is facilitated by the availability of a wide range of online materials, including videos, articles, and interactive content (Haleem et al. 2022). While constructivism advocates for diverse resources that cater to different learning styles and allow students to construct their own understanding, sociocultural theory emphasises the importance of providing resources that are contextually and culturally relevant for the diverse learner population.

Furthermore, flexible learning is a significant advantage of ODeL, allowing students to learn at their own pace and according to their own schedules (Müller and Mildenberger 2021). Constructivist theory supports this flexibility, as it recognises that learners have unique needs and backgrounds that influence their learning trajectories, while sociocultural theory highlights the importance of adapting learning environments to accommodate diverse cultural and social contexts, ensuring that all students can access education in the best possible way.

Also, innovative content in a digital classroom, such as gamified learning modules, virtual reality experiences, and interactive simulations, aligns with constructivist and sociocultural principles by providing engaging and hands-on learning experiences (Obi 2023). These innovations encourage active participation and exploration, crucial for knowledge construction such as the development of content that is relevant to learners' cultural and social contexts.

Again, interactivity is central to both constructivist and sociocultural learning theories. Constructivism emphasises active engagement with content, while sociocultural theory focuses on social interaction and collaboration through activities such as quizzes, discussion boards, and real-time feedback mechanisms in digital classrooms to foster active learning and social engagement (Mohammed and Kinyó 2020). This further creates a vibrant and responsive educational environment.

Moreover, accessibility is crucial for inclusive education. Digital classrooms can offer features like closed captioning, screen readers, and multilingual content to support diverse learners, including those with disabilities. Constructivist theory supports creating accessible learning experiences that allow all students to construct knowledge effectively (Edyburn and Edyburn 2015). Sociocultural theory emphasises the importance of inclusive practices that respect and accommodate the diverse needs of the learner population.

These features of a digital classroom are therefore capable of enhancing the digital classroom experience. The features collectively create a dynamic, inclusive, and effective educational environment that meets the diverse needs of modern learners, preparing them for the complexities of the contemporary world.

# Discussion

This section explores a discussion on teaching strategies in ODeL amidst higher education transformation. It examines the challenges faced, such as ensuring equitable access and fostering engagement as well as innovations like collaborative tools and interactive content. Best practices are highlighted, emphasising the integration of constructivist and sociocultural approaches to enhance learning outcomes.

## Challenges in ODeL Teaching Strategies

In ODeL, navigating effective teaching strategies presents several significant challenges.

Firstly, equitable access to technology is crucial for overcoming the digital divide in ODeL. Constructivism and sociocultural theory highlight that lack of necessary devices or reliable internet hampers students' ability to engage in meaningful, interactive learning experiences. Srivastava and Shainesh (2015) argue that innovative solutions are needed to provide or subsidise technological resources and internet access, ensuring all students can fully participate and benefit from ODeL courses, thus promoting equal learning opportunities. This is related to the conceptual framework in that besides making learning affordable, interactive, and flexible, it equally eases the entire teaching process.

Secondly, fostering engagement and interaction within virtual environments is crucial yet challenging. This is parallel to the selected conceptual framework, which calls for an interactive teaching and learning environment. Constructivism and sociocultural theory emphasise the importance of social interaction and active participation in learning, which is highly related to Nancy Fraser's argument about what social justice entails (Keddie 2020). According to Blaschke (2021), online settings often struggle to replicate traditional classroom dynamics, which facilitate deeper learning. Therefore, educators must create interactive content using tools such as discussion forums, video conferencing, and collaborative projects to stimulate active participation and social presence, ensuring that students can construct knowledge and engage meaningfully with peers.

Another significant challenge in relation to the ODeL system is maintaining a teaching presence. While incorporating the selected conceptual framework, I argue that by maintaining a teaching presence, the teaching and learning process must constantly be upgraded by employing innovative content that enhances the learning process. In ODeL, the absence of physical instructors can make students feel unguided. Constructivism and sociocultural theory emphasise the need for continuous guidance and support in learning as seen in Figure 2, which emphasises that though students can work independently, they do need some form of guidance from time to time (Vygotsky 1978). In affirmation of this view Zhu, Sun, and Riezebos (2016) say that an effective teaching presence

requires ongoing facilitation, interaction, and proactive communication as students might be unguided when left alone.

Lastly, assessment and feedback pose a considerable challenge in ODeL. Educators must provide timely feedback and remain accessible to address concerns, fostering a supportive environment where students can actively construct knowledge and engage socially (Arthur 2017). The relevance of constructivism and sociocultural learning theory in this context is that they emphasise the need for authentic assessments and timely constructive feedback to enhance learning. Traditional examinations, for instance, may be ineffective, requiring innovative methods such as project-based assessments, peer evaluations, and formative assessments for continuous insight into student progress. These approaches are in most cases partially implemented in many ODeL settings. Thus, further integration is needed to fully support these theoretical frameworks. That is, addressing these challenges requires a multifaceted approach, integrating best practices from constructivist and sociocultural learning theories to create rich, interactive, and inclusive ODeL experiences that cater to the diverse needs of all learners.

**Innovations in ODeL Teaching Strategies**

Innovations in ODeL teaching strategies are transforming the educational landscape by addressing the unique challenges of online learning and enhancing the quality of education. One significant innovation is the use of adaptive learning technologies, which tailor educational content to meet the individual needs and learning paces of students (Muñoz et al. 2022). These technologies use data analytics to provide personalised learning experiences, which helps to bridge gaps in understanding and maintain student engagement.

Collaborative tools and platforms revolutionise ODeL by facilitating real-time collaboration and peer-to-peer learning, which is essential for constructivist and sociocultural theories. Tools such as collaborative documents, video conferencing, and social media foster community and collective problem-solving (Reiserer, Ertl, and Mandl 2023). These platforms enable students to work on group projects, participate in discussions, and share resources, enhancing social presence, interaction, and active knowledge construction (Vygotsky 1978).

Moreover, integrating gamification elements into online courses aligns with constructivist and sociocultural theories by enhancing motivation and engagement. Game-like elements such as points, badges, and leader boards create interactive, engaging experiences that encourage active participation and persistence through challenges (Grabner-Hagen and Kingsley 2023). This approach supports knowledge construction and social interaction, fostering a dynamic and collaborative learning environment.

Finally, learning analytics align with constructivist and sociocultural theories by enabling educators to track progress and behaviour in real time, allowing for timely interventions and personalised support. By analysing performance data, instructors can identify at-risk students and provide targeted assistance, enhancing learning outcomes (Choi et al. 2018). These innovations create a dynamic, responsive ODeL environment, fostering active knowledge construction and social interaction, and preparing students for modern complexities.

**Best Practices in ODeL Teaching Strategies**

Emerging best practices in teaching strategies for ODeL underscore the importance of adopting a holistic approach to enhance learning outcomes. In this part of the discussion, I argue that blended learning models, which integrate synchronous and asynchronous delivery methods, provide flexibility for learners while maintaining opportunities for real-time interaction and a sense of community, which are simultaneous with the futures of a digital classroom (Haleem et al. 2022). Synchronous activities, such as live webinars and virtual group discussions, foster immediate engagement, while asynchronous tools like discussion forums and recorded lectures accommodate learners with varied schedules. However, the successful implementation of these strategies depends on fostering digital literacy among students and educators to ensure efficient use of online platforms and tools (Haleem et al. 2022).

Inclusivity is another critical best practice in ODeL, requiring teaching strategies to address diverse learner needs and contexts. For students in resource-constrained environments, low-tech solutions such as mobile-based learning and downloadable resources play a key role in reducing access barriers (Mattheos et al. 2010). I further argue that culturally relevant content further enhances inclusivity by making learning relatable and meaningful across diverse learner groups. Moreover, continuous professional development for educators is essential to build competencies in digital pedagogy and innovative content delivery methods (Mattheos et al. 2010). These best practices ensure that ODeL remains accessible, engaging, and effective for a wide range of learners.

## Recommendations and Contribution of the Study

Based on the findings and discussions, several recommendations are proposed to enhance teaching strategies in ODeL:

- Firstly, investing in infrastructure and digital literacy initiatives is crucial to bridge the digital divide and ensure equitable access to ODeL. This involves providing affordable internet access, distributing devices, and offering training programmes to improve digital literacy among students and educators.

- Secondly, professional development opportunities for educators should be prioritised to develop pedagogical competencies and proficiency in digital tools

and platforms. This can include workshops, courses, and continuous learning opportunities focused on effective online teaching practices and technological integration.

- Additionally, fostering a culture of innovation and experimentation within ODeL institutions is essential. Encouraging faculty to explore new teaching methodologies and technologies can lead to more dynamic and effective educational experiences. This can be supported through grants, incentives, and a collaborative environment that values creativity and continuous improvement.

- Moreover, establishing support structures for learners, such as online tutoring services, academic advising, and technical assistance, is vital to promoting student success in ODeL environments. Providing comprehensive support helps students navigate the challenges of online learning and enhances their overall educational experience.

- This study contributes to the existing literature by offering insights into the challenges, innovations, and best practices associated with teaching strategies in ODeL. The implications of these findings are significant for educators, policymakers, and educational stakeholders globally, guiding them towards more effective and inclusive ODeL practices.

## Conclusion

This study provided a comprehensive examination of teaching strategies in open distance and e-learning, highlighting the multifaceted challenges, innovative practices, and best practices necessary for creating effective and inclusive learning environments. Key challenges, such as equitable access to technology, fostering engagement, maintaining teaching presence, and implementing effective assessment methods, emphasise the need for a multifaceted approach grounded in constructivist and sociocultural learning theories. Innovative practices, including adaptive learning technologies, collaborative tools, gamification, and learning analytics, have shown significant potential to address these challenges by personalising learning, enhancing engagement, and fostering active knowledge construction. Best practices such as blended learning, scaffolded support, gamification, and inclusive design further underscore the importance of flexibility, adaptability, and community-building in ODeL.

To address these challenges, strategic investments in digital infrastructure and literacy initiatives to bridge the digital divide, professional development opportunities for educators to enhance pedagogical and technological competencies, and fostering a culture of innovation and experimentation within ODeL institutions are commendable. Additionally, robust learner support structures must be established to ensure student success in online environments. Ultimately, the insights derived from this study contribute significantly to the discourse on ODeL by offering actionable

recommendations for educators, policymakers, and stakeholders. By addressing challenges, embracing innovations, and implementing best practices, ODeL can fulfil its potential as a transformative approach to providing high-quality, accessible, and inclusive education in the modern era.

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