ICT SUPPORTED DISTANCE TEACHER EDUCATION: CHALLENGES AND PROSPECTS FOR IN-SERVICE STUDENT TEACHERS IN UGANDA

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Background

- Uganda is a developing country East Africa.
- population of 33.4 million
- Uganda has 29 universities, 5 public and 24 private (New Vision, 2011).
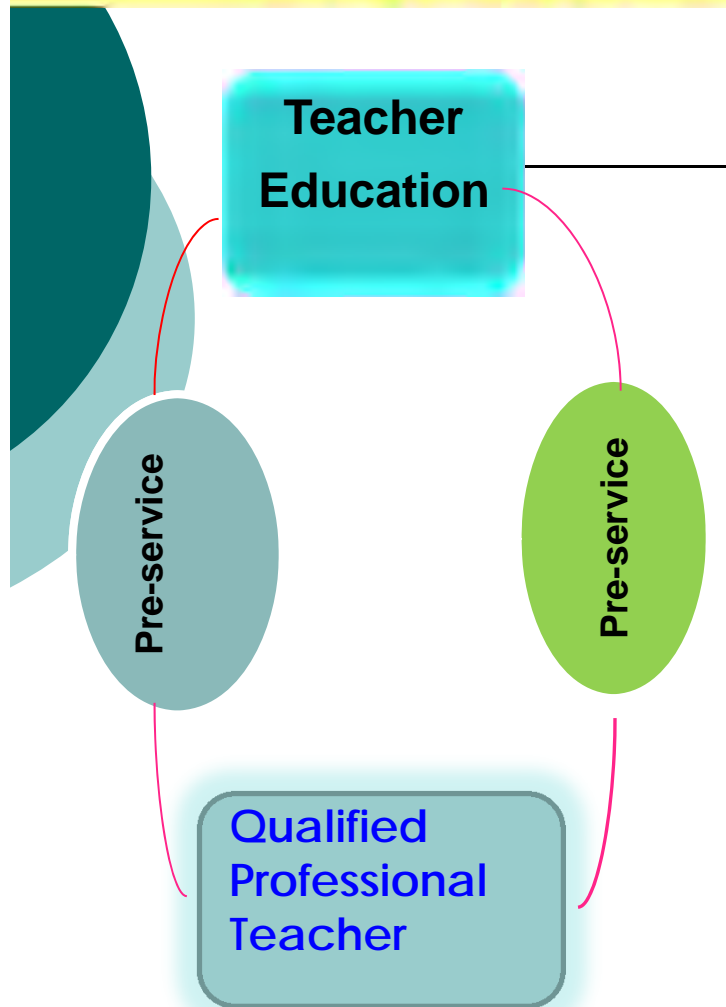
- Teacher education was introduced by the Europeans

Teacher training ranges from

- Grade III certificate
- Diplomas
- Bachelors degree
- Postgraduate qualifications.

The concept of Teacher Education

- Policies and procedures designed to equip prospective teachers with the knowledge, attitudes, behaviors and skills they require to perform their tasks effectively in the classroom, school and wider community (Snoek & Žogla, 2009).

- "All formal and informal activities and experiences that help to qualify a person to assume the responsibility as a member of the educational profession or to discharge his responsibility most effectively, Dictionary of education, as sighted by Sajith (2011).

- In the context of this presentation, teacher education refers to professional education of teachers towards attainment of attitudes, skills and knowledge considered desirable so as to make them efficient and effective in their work in accordance with the need of a society at any point in time (Osuji, 2009).

TEACHER EDUCATION IN UGANDA

Teacher Education

Pre-service

Pre-service

Qualified Professional Teacher

○ **Pre-service teacher education**
  Offered to someone who has joined the course to become an educator but has not yet completed training to be a teacher. Pre-service teacher occurs before teachers enter the profession and/or take up employment in a range of different education institutions (UNESCO, 2011).

○ **In-service teacher education**
  Received by already qualified teacher. It includes all the fields of staff developments training such as, orientation, refresher courses, workshops and seminar pertaining to pedagogy (Nansamba & Nakayenga, 2003)

Distance Teacher Education In Uganda

- Honeyman (1993) describes distance education as a process to create and provide access to learning when the source of information and the learners are separated by time and distance, or both.

- **ICT supported Distance education**

  Where delivery is via computer (online), audio-conferencing, two-way video, or other electronic means. Encompasses a wide spectrum of technologies to reach learners at a distance and is designed to encourage learner interaction and certification of learning (Greenberg, 1998).

Distance education in Kyambogo University

At the moment KYU runs three distance teacher education programs; -

- Bachelor of Education (Bed.)

- Diploma in Primary Education External (DEPE)

- Diploma in Special Needs Education External (DSNEE).

Origin of ICT Supported Education in Uganda

- The adaptation of ICT in Education in Uganda is a result of the United Nations and the Millennium Development Goals MDGs announced at its fifty-fifth general assembly. The developing countries had to reach certain standards by 2015. Target 18 asserts "In co-operation with the private sector, make available the benefits of new technologies, especially information and communications." This is measured by the number of computers, cell phones or telephones per 100 persons (United Nations, 2000 and infoDev & ITU, 2011).

- The 2003 report of the sub-committee on ICT and Governance presented at the Third Meeting of the Committee on Development Information (CODI III) encouraged African countries, to complete their national ICT policies. Uganda being a signatory to the MDG had to abide by putting in place the national ICT policy framework (Torach et. el, 2009), and later the formulation of an educational sector ICT policy in 2005 (Uganda Ministry of Education and Sports, 2005) to contribute to achieving of the Millennium Development Goals. (Wamakote et al, 2010).

About Kyambogo university, Uganda

- Kyambogo University is the second largest University in the country
- 2003 as a Public University by merging three institutes namely;
- Institute of Teacher Education Kyambogo (ITEK)
- Uganda Polytechnic Kyambogo (UPK)
- Uganda National Institute of Special Education (UNISE)
- It is located in Kampala District (KYU, 2006 and www.kyambogo.ac.ug).
- Has a total of six Faculties divided into 27 Departments
- 402 teaching staff and 625 non-teaching staff.
- Students include Postgraduate, Undergraduate, Diploma and Certificate students totaling nearer to 16,547 students (KYU, 2010).
- KYU provides Internet services to students
- Has also developed a Web presence for students
- Digitization of the online curriculum (Connect-ed, 2004).

Kyambogo University and the ICT Policy

- Providing for the development and implementation of a consistent set of training programs

- Provide for ICT knowledge to different levels and users categories.

- The ICT-Based Educational Content for ICT-based teaching resources

- Providing e-teaching resources on a website and Intranet web servers

- Establishment of ICT labs with a considerable number of computers with wireless connections to the Internet e.g. at ODeL

- Acquire equipment for the development of educational CD-ROMs (ODeL, 2010 and AVU, 2010).

The Advent of ICT Supported Distance Teacher Education in Kyambogo University

- Inaugurated in 2007 as an effort of The Open, Distance and e-Learning (ODeL)

- ODeL refers to Open, Distance and e-Learning (ODeL)

- This is a Centre in KYU that manages and administers the Bachelor of Education Degree program through a blended Distance Mode

- There is use of CD-ROM learning materials, e-mail, Telephone (through on-line)

- limited face-to-face, print materials and assignments (www.kyu)

- October 2007 was colorful month in which ODeL was officially commissioned in KYU (The New Vision, October 2007).

National newspaper report

The New Vision
UGANDA'S LEADING WEBSITE

Kampala — A NEW education system, electronic learning, is here. The Open Distance and e-Learning (ODeL) will mainly assist students, who wish to study at home.

Silvano Kibuuka
16 October 2007
Kampala — A NEW education system, electronic learning, is here. The Open Distance and e-Learning (ODeL) will mainly assist students, who wish to study at home.
All a student needs is a computer and Internet connection to access the programme.

Source: New vision

ICT Supported Distance Teacher Education In KYU

The African Virtual University (AVU)

o The African Virtual University (AVU) established in 1997 as a World Bank project for Higher Education in Africa and center of operations in Washington

o AVU has Headquarters in Nairobi, Kenya.

o ODeL is funded by The AVU jointly with the African Development Bank (ADB).

o There are other 10 universities with AVU across Africa, including KYU (Gabona, 2008).

o The subjects taught are Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, Biology and ICT.

o The ODeL centre has set up a satellite station at Kyambogo for on-line communication.
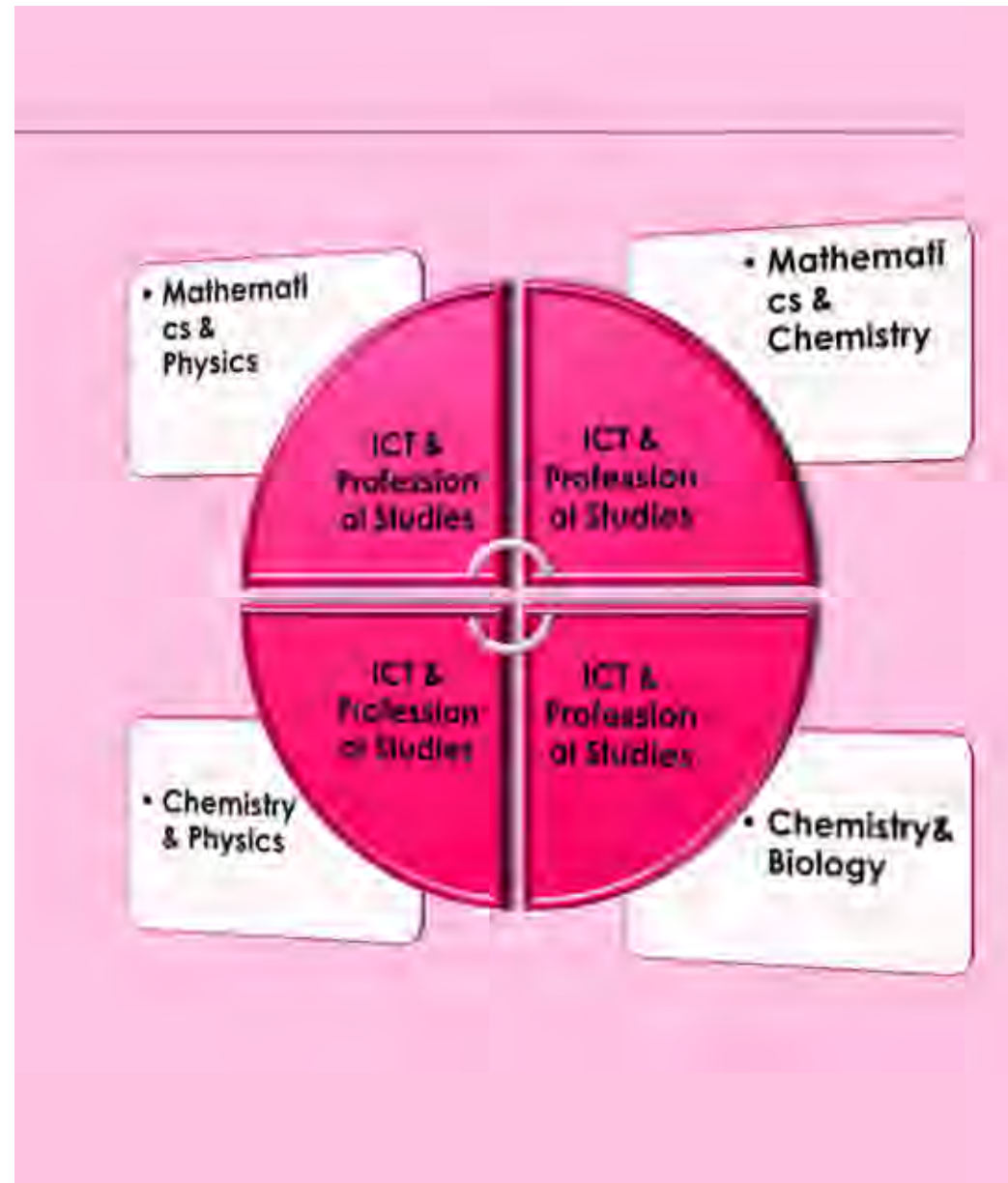
Face-to-face

- Face-to-face teaching held include direct instruction, supervision, counseling, consultation and library contact (www.kyu).

- ODeL program is blended in nature since embodies face-to-face elements, group discussions as well as online instruction (Tabor, 2007 and Vaughan & Norman, 2010).

Source: 2011 African Virtual University [AVU].

The ODeL Curriculum and ICT Supported Modules

○ The courses under ODeL were designed by uniting curricula from all the participating African universities to write 73 e-modules.

○ When the modules get to a member university, lecturers select out aspects that best suits their needs within the contexts of the B. Ed. (Science) programs.

○ Representatives from universities across Africa have developed the e-modules (AVU, 2011) which can be acquired from OER @AVU [Open Education Resources @ AVU].

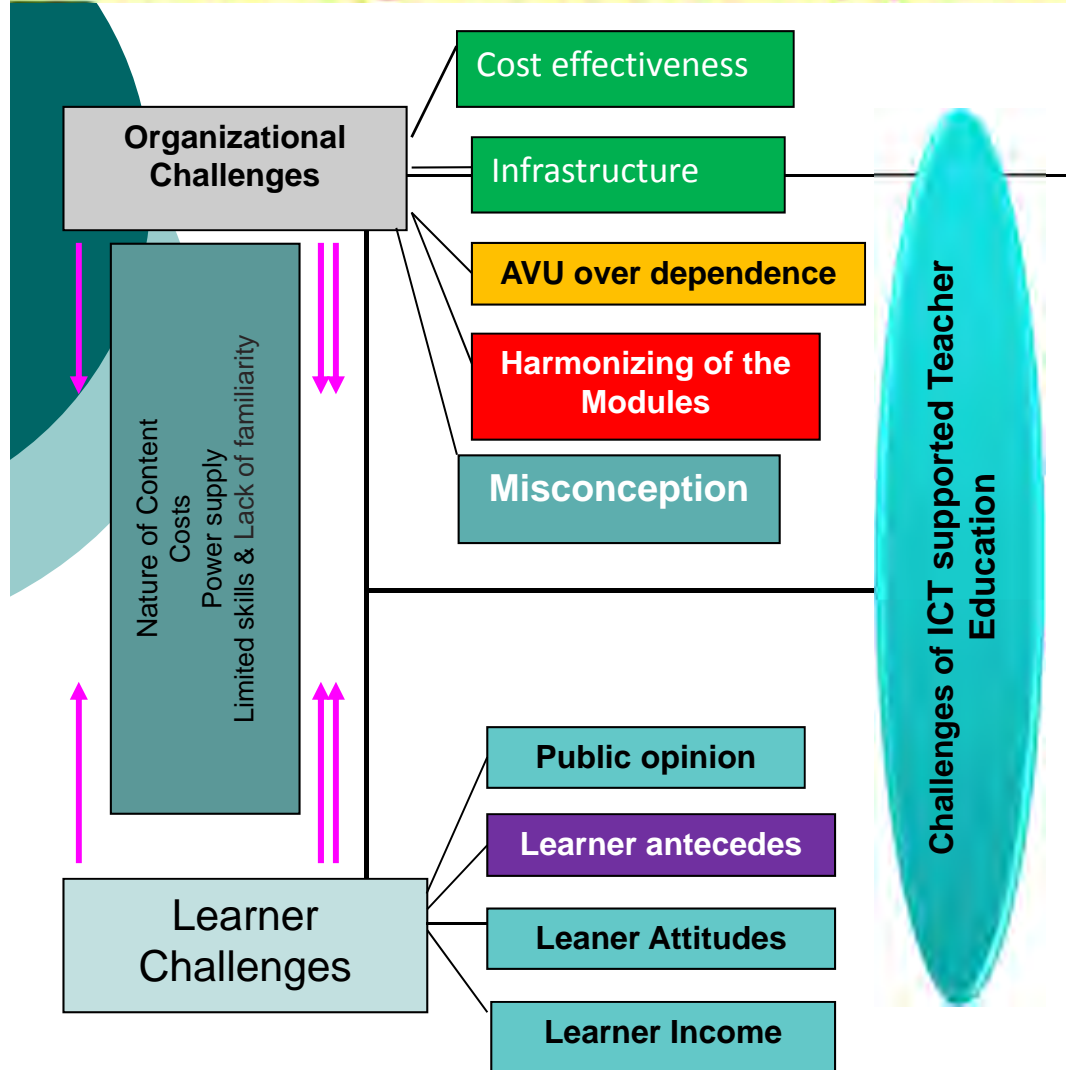○ Courses are summarized into four main subject combinations as seen

Media

- A computer with internet (Optional)

- Web-based Materials

- Online resources

- Recorded Materials on CD-Rom/DVD

- Recorded Materials on CD-Rom/DVD

Challenges of ICT supported Teacher Education

Organizational Challenges

Cost effectiveness

Infrastructure

AVU over dependence

Harmonizing of the Modules

Misconception

Nature of Content
Costs
Power supply
Limited skills & Lack of familiarity

Learner Challenges

Public opinion

Learner antecedes

Leaner Attitudes

Learner Income

Challenges of ICT supported Teacher Education

Organizational Challenges
- *Technological infrastructure*
- *Over dependence on AVU*
- *Harmonizing of the modules*
- *Cost effectiveness*
- *Misconception of the 'Openness' of the program*

Learner Challenges
- *Student antecedes*
- *Public opinion towards Distance Learning in Uganda*
- *Learner income*
- Learner Attitude

Organizational Challenges and Learner Challenges
- *The nature of science subject*
- *Expense and cost effeteness*
- *Cost Effectiveness*
- *Irregular electrical power supply*
- *Limited skills*
- *Lack of familiarity*

PROSPECTS OF ICT SUPPORTED DISTANCE TEACHER EDUCATION IN UGANDA

○ **Increase in telecommunication use**

YEAR	Users	Population	% Pen	GDP p.c.*	Usage Source
2000	40,000	24,400,000	0.1 %	US$ 410	ITU
2006	500,000	28,574,909	1.7 %	US$ 280	ITU
2007	750,000	30,262,610	2.5 %	US$ 280	ITU
2008	2,000,000	31,367,972	6.4 %	US$ 300	ITU
2010	3,200,000	33,398,682	9.6 %	US$ 460	ITU

The university has designed an ICT policy and is already being enacted.

○ KYU Strategic Plan 2007/2008 – 2011/2012
○ Modules are powerful media and distance
○ Open Education Resources portal OER@AVU.

Concluding Remarks

- reinforces and sustains Universal Secondary Education (USE) in Uganda by increasing the number of graduate secondary teachers.
- enhances high quality teaching staff for the disadvantaged rural schools.
- Supports the normal school teaching routine where Teachers do not have to take leave
- Offers in-service distance education in science disciplines.
- Convenient for teachers with family ties.

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