UNIT 3 MEDIA AND TECHNOLOGY IN COUNSELLING AND TUTORING

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3.0 INTRODUCTION

You have studied counselling and tutoring in the previous units. You have also learnt various issues involved in tutoring and counselling. Now, in this unit, you will know how media which incorporates technology supports counselling and tutoring. The information and communication technologies (ICTs) play a great role in distance education (DE) setup. Because, it not only works for learner support services, but also to prepare, design and deliver programmes on time. Further, it is used heavily by learners for their necessity and enhancement of their skills.

Counselling and tutoring are the parts of the support services to distance learners. As it has been discussed learners are heterogeneous in character and belong to different geographical, economical, cultural, and religious background, they need support services differently. In addition to that different programmes demand different types of support services. To provide on time services to learners, media and technology are the so far best methods to be adapted in distance educational institutions across the globe.

It is generally misunderstood that media means only computer. This is not so, it includes various other tools such as, print machine, broadcasting, computer without internet, and computer with enabled internet. The detail analysis of media and their use in counselling and
tutoring services will be discussed in this unit. In the fourth or the last unit we have focused on organizing counselling and tutoring services. We have discussed about various components i.e. planning, scheduling, budgeting and infrastructure arrangements for organizing effective counselling and tutoring sessions.

### 3.1 LEARNING OUTCOMES

After going through this unit you will be able to:

- Identify the technologies used in counselling and tutoring services;
- Explain the significance of print medium in counselling services;
- Elucidate the use of broadcasting in tutoring services;
- Discuss the use of telephone instrument in counselling services; and
- Analyze the web supports for counselling and tutoring services.

### 3.2 USING MEDIA AND TECHNOLOGY FOR COUNSELLING AND TUTORING

We have already discussed about the qualities and skills of a counsellor in the first unit of this block. In distance education the varied media, such as face-to-face, correspondence and telephone make a critical difference to everything we do.

For instance, so far we have made at least three implicit assumptions about how counselling is conducted. However, these assumptions may not be true of all media. What are those assumptions?

i) That counselling is a two-way process between a counsellor and a learner.

ii) That counselling is directed at individuals.

iii) That it can be initiated by either the counsellor or the learner.

You may be able to spot other such assumptions. But let us look at the different media and ask how far counselling (informing, advising, counselling) is possible in each medium, and what are the relative advantages and disadvantages.

Counselling activities are although not completely different from tutoring but there are a few clear differences marked by them. These are as follows:

**Counselling services**

i) It is often a learner centred activity

ii) In most of the situations learners contact to their counsellor for their academic and non-academic help

iii) To be a counsellor one must be a good listener

iv) A counsellor must analyze all the issues raised or posed by the learners
v) Sometimes counsellor takes initiative to make the counselling sessions interactive.

**Tutoring services**

i) The discussions are centered on the course materials/contents

ii) A teacher has to give lecture to his/her students

iii) In this case, a teacher should be a nice talker

iv) Tutor's initiative in this service is given primary importance

v) The discussions between teacher and student should not fall outside the subject of study.

If these are the situations, then we will discuss which forms of media will cater the need of counselling and tutoring to the learners. In counselling and tutoring domain, there are four assertions which are well accepted. These are:

i) Counselling is a two-way process between a counselor and a learner whereas tutoring supports this phenomenon of learning.

ii) Conselling is directed towards individual and tutoring often endorses this fact.

iii) In both the domains either a learner or a counsellor initiates the interactions.

iv) In tutoring, a tutor plays two roles; didactic (formal lecturing, explaining, and presenting study content) and facilitative (allow learners to explore on their courses) whereas counselling is all about to facilitate learners.

You may add some of the other assertions. Counselling incorporates the tutoring. Hence, discussion on counselling implies consideration of tutoring issues. Now, let us list the media and technology used for counselling and tutoring services:

- Face-to-face counselling
- Group counselling
- Telephonic counselling
- Counselling through assignment responses
- Counselling by letter
- Counselling by handbook
- Counselling by audio and video cassettes
- Counselling by broadcasting
- Counselling by computer or interactive video disks
- Virtual counselling
- Counselling by internet
- Counselling by mobile devices

These are the technologies used for counselling purposes across the distance educational institutions which depends on their learners’
strength, institutional financial stability, faculty numbers, educational management approaches, etc. See the table below for the characteristics of interactivity and flexibility of media used in counselling purposes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Medium and Types</th>
<th>Characteristics of Interactivity and Flexibility</th>
<th>Types of counselling</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>One alone One to one One to many Many to many Time Place Pace</td>
<td>Problem solving and developmental</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Face-to-face</td>
<td>Both</td>
<td>Both</td>
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<tr>
<td>Telephone</td>
<td>Both</td>
<td>Developmental</td>
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<td>Teleconferencing</td>
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<td>Answer phone</td>
<td>Usually developmental</td>
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<td>Letters</td>
<td>Usually developmental</td>
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<tr>
<td>Handbook</td>
<td>Both</td>
<td>Both</td>
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<tr>
<td>Audio/video tape</td>
<td>Both</td>
<td>Developmental</td>
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<td>Radio</td>
<td>Usually developmental</td>
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<td>TV</td>
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<td>Computer</td>
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<td>Internet</td>
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<td>Usually developmental</td>
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<tr>
<td>Virtual Conferencing</td>
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<td>Both</td>
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</table>

### 3.3 ROLE OF PRINT MEDIUM IN COUNSELLING AND TUTORING

When print medium is used for counselling and tutoring, immediately two concepts figure out; a) Self learning print materials, b) Handbook for counselling services. Let us discuss these two ways of counselling in the context of DE with examples. To remind you further, when people talk about media or technology intervention in DE, it should not be understood as the computer with internet technology, rather, it must be understood as both print and non-print media of technology intervention in the DE settings.
Self Learning Print Materials (SLPM)

SLPM is a dominant medium to offer distance education programme across countries till today after the development of technology based instructional materials in the open university system. It is an irreplaceable medium because of its unique features, quality control measures, assessment and evaluation pattern, and the acquaintance of both learners and teachers to the domain. Chapters/units of distance education course materials are generally well structured. It is designed in such a manner that a few self exercise questions are given for learners to work on those and receive feedbacks of their learning growth by comparing the possible answers provided at the last part of units. By doing the self-check exercises in the unit, they enhance their knowledge on the subject domain. Hence, the possible answers given at the end of the unit play the role of tutor/counsellor.

Counselling through assignments is a part of SLPM. A counsellor comments on learners’ assignment responses and grades them. This is the most important aspect of a counsellor/tutor in DE settings. The comments given on the assignment-responses provide feedback, guidance and support to the learners in their study activities. The basic purpose of an assignment is not to solely turn it into a component of examination, but to create a platform on academic communication between learners and counsellors where they can exchange their views and receive teaching in some extent. The reasons for adding a certain percentage of assignment marks/grades in the final examination grades/marks are to retain learners’ motivation in the study tasks, otherwise they may not do the tasks seriously.

Handbook for Counselling Services

Handbooks (programme guides) are created for each programme in DE setup. These handbooks are sent to the learners along with their study materials. These handbooks explain the required information for the learners at their pre-entry stage and admission time of distance learning. These handbooks are prepared by considering the target group and their characteristics such as socio-geographical conditions, power to grasp contents, etc. Mostly these are written in an ‘interactive style’. They carry the texts which encourage and motivate learners in distance learning. However, in this case no two way communication is possible. Many DE institutions have developed counselling materials in handbook form. These handbooks provide clear, straight and economical information to a large number of learners for their motivation, needs, and so on.

3.4 ROLE OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT) IN COUNSELLING AND TUTORING

ICT intervention in DE is not a new concept as of today. This is so because DE adopts technology as it changes from time to time. For example, the recent technological researches on DE are probably on mobile devices, i.e. how mobile devices can be used to cater to the educational needs of large segments of the distance learners. There are no such aspects of DE left where technology did not intervene. Counselling and tutoring services are no exception to this. Thus,
technology plays an important role to provide these support services to learners. ICT incorporates the communication both in synchronous and asynchronous forms which can be derived from various technological instruments, such as; radio, telephone, audio/video cassettes, computer, mobile devices, etc.

3.4.1 Broadcast Media in Counselling and Tutoring

There are different media used for tutoring and counselling services in distance education. Out of these a few are of broadcasting in nature. These are:

a) Telephone teleconferencing
b) Teleconferencing
c) Interactive Television
d) Interactive radio counselling

Broadcasting facilities give more information to learners and is used for less interaction with learners. Thus, it is claimed that broadcasting is used for information purposes.

In this technologically advanced world, learner can also equally interact with the concerned resource persons while sitting at their home. So there are many possibilities of two way interactions which may take place between teacher concerned and the learners. However, it would be very difficult to make the broadcasting session interactive in its full form. This is so because, the features of broadcasting are such that it cannot be stopped and started, and proceed at its own pace.

Broadcasting nevertheless encourages, inspires, and motivates learners to attend it. A few open learning institutions across the globe use teleconferencing for counselling sessions. Mostly it is two way audio and one way video. While teleconferencing is on, learners who are in a distance place can communicate to the concerned teacher(s) by phone.

Telephone Teleconferencing

Telephone teleconferencing is actually audio conferencing. In this, the speakerphones are available in the classrooms. This system can be used for up to ten participants. If there are more people, more sophisticated speakers can be used. Audio conferencing is used because telephones are available all over the world. Also conferences can be arranged at a short notice. Compared to other technologies, the cost is low. There are different types of audio conferencing like; Dedicated Conference networks; Dial up Networks; Meet Me conferencing and Direct Dial conferencing systems. There is another type of audio conferencing known as Audio graphic information through telephone line.

Video Teleconferencing

This is a combination of audio and visual media which provides interactive voice communication and television pictures. This system comprises one-way or two-way video and two-way audio networks. Motion video is the most common technology but other options also exist, such as freeze-frame television, compressed video systems and
full motion video systems. Video conferencing is a national conferencing format but involves high cost.

**Interactive Television**

Another area of research and experimentation with the educational media is the use of interactive television. The interactive television has been used extensively since 1983 by a large number of organizations, like IGNOU, UGC, AIMA, NCERT, NIEPA, NIOS, IIT Delhi, etc.

The two centrally sponsored schemes PMOST and SOPT for in-service education of primary teachers used interactive television in the training of primary teachers in Karnataka and Madhya Pradesh in 1996. Both the experiments showed a positive impact of interactive television on learning by the teachers (Dash 1997, Prakash and Lal 1998). Dash studied the reactions of the participants on the content and its presentation, the interaction and technology whereas Prakash and Lal studied presentation and production aspects in relation to the effectiveness of the medium for orientation of primary school teachers. Phutela (1998) reported the SOPT experiment in the state of Karnataka in India. The evaluation of the experiment indicated significant gain on the learning of concepts and practices relating to the large number of themes covered in the programme. The teachers liked the technology for training a large number at a distance.

Taleem Research Foundation (1999) evaluated the effectiveness of teacher training through teleconferencing for primary school teachers of District Primary Education Programme (DEP-DPEP) in the state of Tamil Nadu. The study revealed that majority of teachers was positive towards teleconference as a mode of training. The technology has the potential for training large number of teachers located at different sites. The quality of interaction among the teachers and learners was reported to be high.

An experiment of Higher Cognitive Learning for the Engineering College Teachers by IIT Delhi was professionally evaluated on a pre-test, post-test format. Results showed that the post-test scores were higher than the pre-test. Participant's reaction was positive towards the course and the technology.

Classroom 2000+ was another experiment where lessons were telecast, palmtop computers and STD were used for feedback and interaction. Evaluation of the experiment showed that the technology could deliver quality education to remove existing disparity in education among different sections of the society. The findings of the study Mukhopadhyay and Parhar (1993), Panda (1998) and Goel (2000) revealed that in Physics and Maths the achievement of the experimental group was significantly higher than the control group.

Many organizations and institutions have used Interactive Television to train their workers. In the state of Gujarat, the adult education trainers were trained through satellite. National Productivity Council trained its senior technicians and supervisors. There were nine learning ends. Institution of Electronics and Telecommunication Engineering (IETE) located in Delhi trained a large number of engineers through interactive television. Extension workers were trained in Bhiwani district of the state of Haryana. All these experiments conducted were found to be effective as it gave interactive experience to the participants.
The Indira Gandhi National Open University is the first university, which started the ITV in India for educational purpose. Interactive Television is part of IGNOU’s instructional system. It gives the learners who are at far ends a direct access to the experts who are at the studios. The satellite based one-way video and two-way audio teleconferencing was first conducted in 1993 in collaboration with the ISRO on experimental basis. The target audiences were the Regional Directors, Assistant Regional Directors and Academic Counsellors posted at different regional centres. This experiment was successful and since then interactive sessions are regularly held by various schools of IGNOU for distance teaching. Teleconference sessions are also conducted for orientation of academic counsellors of management and commerce disciplines. In the certificate programme on “empowering Women through Self Help Groups”, women interact directly with the experts through teleconference sessions. The women empowerment project has established 150 programme centres all over the country. School of Education conducts teleconference session in their Post Graduate Diploma in higher Education (PGDHE) programme. PGDHE programme was launched by IGNOU in 1992 for teachers who aspire to teach in universities and colleges. The programme comprises five courses and a project. One of the course is the Extended Contact Programme (ECP). The ECP is partly organized through teleconference mode. IGNOU has experimented the ECP through teleconferencing in 1993. The faculty of School of Education and other outside experts conducted discussion and have video presentations. The teleconferencing assigns an activity that a learner is supposed to undertake following the session. At the end of the session, which is approximately of one hour, 30-35 minutes are devoted for interaction where all the learners and resource persons take part in the ECP linked through the teleconferencing network. Learners ask questions, raise issues, share experiences and apprehension.

IGNOU telecasts interactive sessions. Satellite communication with interactive mode of teaching is an additional input in some programmes. These programmes are mainly syllabus based. Teleconferencing has become a part for instructional system. According to Rao and Khan (1998), IGNOU uses teleconferencing for approx. 246 hours in 1995, 483 hours in 1996 and 495 hours in 1997. They reviewed the teleconferencing sessions conducted by IGNOU over a period of three years. It was found that professional courses are appropriate for teleconferencing sessions, as learners in these courses are mature and motivated.

In education, interactive television is useful as it:

- Offers uniform, quality instruction to learners scattered over many sites or over a large area;
- Allows learners at multiple location to interact with the expert and with each other; and
- Provides counselling without leaving the workplace.

**Interactive Radio Counselling**

In May 1998, the IGNOU-AIR interactive radio counselling was stated for students of open/conventional universities. IGNOU collaborated with AIR Bhopal and started this service. The experiment was
successful and therefore extended to other AIR stations. The focus of the counselling sessions is the academic subjects. At present, these sessions are broadcast from 189 AIR stations in India. IGNOU is using this mode to reach the isolated and remote area. On the first and third Sundays of every month, IRC is on National Broadcast Network. The session is for one hour. Similarly, on the second and fourth (fifth) Sunday of every month, the session is of one hour in all the AIR stations, except Srinagar where pre-recorded lessons are broadcast at night for one hour. The state open universities conduct the IRCs from Ahmedabad, Bhopal, Bangalore, Patna, Jaipur, Kolkata, Hyderabad and Mumbai on the fourth Sunday of every month.

A few evaluation studies on interactive radio counselling have been reported. Chaudhary and Bansal (2000), Sukumar (2001) and Sharma (2002) found that the participants appreciated the interactive radio counseling session. However, it was found that there was need to encourage interactivity amongst the listeners. Non-students also make use of these programmes. Learners suggested the use of local language for interaction.

**Check Your Progress 1**

**Notes:**

a) *Space is given below for your answer.*

b) *Compare your answer with the one given at the end of this unit.*

Imagine you have groups of learners at the following stages of their studies. Devise a suitable counselling activity for each.

i) About to tackle the first assignment.

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ii) Choosing future courses.

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iii) Coming up to the exam.

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3.4.2 Answer Phone

Telephone answering machines which give an automatic taped message when dialed are now in relatively common use in many parts of the world. Since most offices have more than one telephone line, it is easier to use one of those lines out of office hours to provide an appropriate counselling message.

3.4.3 SMS Services

For last few years, SMS (Short Message Service) is playing major role in exchanging information among people especially students. State Open Universities and other institutions started using SMS services for sending important information to learners immediately. IGNOU utilizes the advantages of SMS to reach to their students. The information about admission notice, counselling sessions, term-end results, and training programmes are being informed to the students from time to time. As a result it has been found that students as well as IGNOU got the following advantages from SMS (data provided below is based on the software report which is used to send SMS to learners and others):

- Attendance to counselling sessions has increased, in some cases, from 10% to 90%
- Pace of pickup of course material by students at Regional Centers has increased
- Results of examinations reaching students within a few minutes of their declaration at headquarters
- Admission notification being sent
- Workshop intimations
- Student Support Services strengthened as RCs are able to send critical information to students who are otherwise contacting Headquarters.

Various schools, divisions and regional centres of IGNOU are using the SMS alerts to provide information to the students.

3.5 WEB SUPPORT IN COUNSELLING AND TUTORING

The internet as a counselling medium for distance education programmes remains as a largely untapped resource. The use of the internet needs access to both computers and telecommunicating equipment. The lowest level of connection to the internet requires dial-up telephone access, which remains problematic for many distance learners. Even those located close enough to highly developed telephone infrastructure may find that long distance tolls or hourly connection charges restrict access to those with limited disposable income.

Let us look at the methods and devices that internet based distance education can use for counselling distance learners.
3.5.1 Online Discussion

Method used by the counsellor to reach out in a ‘one-to-many’ is by the use of the World Wide Web (WWW). WWW can be used to put out articles, study guide and whole textbooks and slide shows. In the context of counselling it could be used for posting information, messages, assignments etc.

The most interesting part for distance education is group communication, (many-to-many communication), for which we could use the device of computer conferencing. Computer conferencing connects the counsellor and distance learners present at different locations, through computer networks. If a camera is attached to the computer, the computer conferencing gets converted into video conferencing. All the participants can be seen on the monitor whenever they log-in. In this way the counsellor can see the distance learner and the learners can see the counsellor.

Videoconferencing is similar to regular face-to-face interaction except that the learners and the counsellor are located at different locations, thus providing an opportunity for group discussion and team learning and is independent of space and time.

It is interesting to note that this medium has the potential to offer opportunities for collaboration between institutions across the globe.

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<tr>
<th>Check Your Progress 2</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Notes:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>a) <em>Space is given below for your answer.</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>b) <em>Compare your answer with the one given at the end of this unit.</em></td>
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Imagine that you are setting up a counselling system for the new college. Which media would you adopt and what would be your priorities?

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The counsellor interacts with one or more learners simultaneously at different terminals. The counsellor announces his/her “contact time” in cyberspace, and distance learners log-in to discuss questions in that period. The counsellor acts as the chairperson of the discussion. It is known as bulletin board systems because the ‘chat room’ or ‘talk room’ which holds one-to-one or to many conversations respectively.

3.5.2 E-mail

E-mail is another commonly used example of correspondence or an asynchronous interaction between counsellors and distance learners. Email counselling is online counselling which uses email to communicate. You and your counsellor can send e-mails to each other. Group e-mail is also possible to interact with your peer group.
Instead of writing letters and waiting for several days to get the reply by post, counsellors can post assignments, announcements, supplemental materials, as well as give feedback or responses to distance learners individually or in a group. Distance learners who are ‘quiet’ and ‘shy’ are able to respond in a comfortable and private atmosphere.

Since it is over the internet, counsellor and you do not need to be in the same town or even country. This increases frequent interaction between you and your counsellor. Counsellor and you work together to resolve problems.

The following figure shows the dialogue between a student and a counsellor/coordinator of a programme.

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Dear Kamal

Please send a written communication to me so that I can send to SED for further action.

I am happy about your workshop. What are the tools you are going to take in the workshop? Nowadays schools are focusing on e-content, it is right time that you are going to start.

All the best. If you want any help please let me know.

Regards

Mythili
Situation:

A student of PG Diploma in eLearning wanted to clear the discrepancy in his certificate. So he sent an e-mail to his coordinator cum counsellor.

From: kamalkant.kv@gmail.com

To: mythiligowtham@gmail.com

Subject: Discrepancy in PGDEL Certificate

Respected Madam, received my PGDEL Provisional Certificate and Mark Sheet. I must bring to your notice that my name mentioned in the mark sheet as well as in provisional certificate is mentioned as KAMALKANT GUPTA which should be KAMAL KANT GUPTA (a space between Kamal and Kant). Madam I want to represent for this correction in further correspondence. The Original Certificate is yet to be received, I expect the same error will not be replicated there too. You are humbly requested to forward my representation to the Registrar, Student Evaluation Division so that the correction could be made out (just a matter of updating a database field I hope). Thanks for your support and cooperation for the whole course.

I am going to take a two days workshop in introduction to e-content generation for primary teachers at our school.

Regards.

Kamal

In this way you can avail the e-mail features to interact or get information pertaining to your requirements. Now, let us discuss some social networking media and how these may be useful for counselling in the online environment.

3.5.3 Blogs

First let us talk about blog. A blog is a personal diary; a daily pulpit; a collaborative space; a political soapbox; a breaking-news outlet; a collection of links and your own private thoughts. You can design the Blogs as per your choice. There are millions of Blogs, in all shapes and sizes, and there are no real rules.

In simple terms, a blog is a website, where you write message on an ongoing basis. New message shows up at the top, so your visitors can read what’s new. Then they comment on it or link to it or e-mail you.

A blog allows a single counsellor (or sometimes, but less often, a group of counsellors) to write and publicly display time-ordered articles (called posts). Learners can add comment to posts.

A Blog can be use in the following way:

- Counsellor can build up a blog to share knowledge via posts and comments. There might be a group of learners in a class, encouraged and facilitated by a counsellor, or a group of relatively dedicated life-long learners.
- Counsellor can use a blog for course announcements, news and feedback to learner.

- Blogs can be used with syndication technologies to enable groups of learners and counsellors to easily keep track of new posts.

The following figure shows a blog. This blog was created and maintained by IGNOU to find the student satisfaction on various academic activities.

This blog was created by using www.blogger.com and placed in IGNOU website. A request was sent to all the learners to access the blog. You can also notice in the figure that the blogger/faculty created a post to seek the suggestion from learners to improve academic counselling and learners commented on that post.

In the similar way, counsellor can create many blogs to maintain course wise interaction among learners.

### 3.5.4 Wiki

Now, let us discuss about wiki a collaborative social networking which is being used very frequently. Wiki is widely used in the academic community.

A Wiki is a system that allows one or more people to build up a quantity of knowledge in a set of interlinked web pages, using a process of creating and editing pages. The most famous wikis are Wikipedia and Wikieducator.

A **Wiki can be used in the following way:**

- Wikis can be used for the creation of annotated reading lists by one or more counsellor.

- Wikis can be used in class projects and particularly suit the incremental accretion of knowledge by a group, or production of collaboratively edited material, including material documenting group projects.

- Wikis can be used by counsellor to supply scaffolding for writing activities – thus in a group project a counsellor can supply page structure, hints as to desirable content, and then provide feedback on student generated content.
Learners can flag areas of the wiki that need attention, and provide feedback on each other’s writing.

The following figure shows a Wiki page on counselling.

Counsellors from various regions can collaboratively contribute their experience in Wiki that can be viewed by learners. Learners can also share their experience in Wiki.

### 3.5.5 Chat

Chat is another online facility which is used in real time or synchronous interaction between counsellor and learners. As a learner you can use instant messaging and test chat and internet forum to interact with counsellor in real time situation.

#### Instant Messaging

An instant messaging application allows you to communicate with another person over a network in real time in relative privacy. Popular, instant messaging providers are Gtalk, Skype, Meebo, ICQ, Yahoo, Messenger, MSN Messenger, Pidgin (formerly Gaim) and AOL Instant Messenger.

#### Text chat

Internet Relay Chat (IRC) and other online chat technologies allow users to join chat rooms and communicate with many learners at once, publicly. Users may join a pre-existing chat room or create a chat room about any topic. Once inside, you may type message that everyone in the room can read, as well as respond to messages from others.

#### Internet forums

Internet forums allow users to post a “topic” for others to review. Other users can view the topic and post their comments in a linear fashion, one after the other. Most of the forums are public, allowing anybody to sign up at any time. Examples are Yahoo Groups and Google Groups.
3.5.6 Podcasting

A podcast is a series of audio digital media files which is distributed over the Internet by syndicated download, through Web feeds, to portable media players and personal computers. Though the same content may also be made available by direct download or streaming, a podcast is distinguished from most other digital media formats by its ability to be syndicated, subscribed to, and downloaded automatically when new content is added.

Podcasting can be downloaded to your computer so that you can listen to them at your convenience while at home or work. They can also be added to your iPod for use while taking a walk, on the treadmill, in the car, or whenever you have time. Examples are http://podcast.ucsd.edu/ and www.podcast.com

Counsellor can record his/her counselling sessions and upload on the podcasting website. Learner can download the sessions and listen while travelling or anywhere and any place.

Visually impaired learners can get major advantage of podcasting. The following figure shows one of the podcasting websites.
3.6 LET US SUM UP

In this unit, we have discussed how the information communication technologies are used for counselling and tutoring for support services in distance education. We have also analysed various technologies like counselling through teleconferencing, telephone, e-mail and SMS services. We have discussed how the social media can be used for counselling sessions. Technology based counselling sessions help the learners not only in understanding the subject matters but also to improve the writing skills. You will learn how to create wiki page, blog and other social media in the course MDE-418 on Educational Communication Technologies.

3.7 FEEDBACK TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

QUESTIONS

Check Your Progress 1

i) Learners will require some practical help with this, but there will be some learners for whom it is the first thing they have done since leaving school which will be assessed in this way. So it will be helpful to demystify the assessment process.

Find an old assignment answer (or part) and give copies of it to the learner. Tell them 'pretend you are the teacher and mark this assignment on your own' (5 minutes). Now get together with another person and compare your results. What things did you find yourselves looking for? (10 minutes).

In the ensuing group discussion by using any media/technology like teleconferencing, online chat, etc. (see the accessibility) it should be possible to bring out the importance of answering the question, planning the essay and so on.

ii) For some learners moving to the next course may be intimidating. Therefore, invite some experienced learners to your group to talk about how they choose their future courses and to lead a discussion of course choice.

iii) There is always a lot of anxiety among the learners before the exams. In that sense, focusing on exams and group sessions can be very helpful in sharing and ameliorating this anxiety.

Asks the learners to report about the exams they have appeared this year. Try to identify the reasons for losing marks. This can be run as a simple 'brainstorming exercise', with learners calling out items for you to list on the board for subsequent discussion.

The list might end up including:

a) Not following the paper's instructions about how many, and which questions to answer.

b) Misreading the questions.

c) Spending too much time on some questions and not enough on others.
Check Your Progress 2

The media you would adopt will depend on the situation of new College. In a technically advanced society with a reliable and accessible telephone system you might place most emphasis on telephone counselling, and on usage of the internet, which has several devices for counselling distance learners.

In a developing country, the most important counselling medium would be correspondence both by letter and handbook and perhaps your most important initial task would be to write such handbooks.

Check Your Progress 3

E-mail: Create e-mail account using Google mail, service or yahoo mail service (you can use any other mail services).
   - Ask your learner to create e-mail account in the same mail services.
   - Create a group mail and include all the learner mails.
   - Use the group mail for discussion.

Blog: Create a blog using www.blogger.com or www.wordpress.com create post on it. Sent the blog URL to your learners, ask them to reflect their view on the blog.

3.8 REFERENCES AND FURTHER READINGS


STRIDE Handbook 7. (2006) Media and Technology in Distance Education. New Delhi: IGNOU.


STRIDE, Training Module for Academic Counsellors (2007) Open and Distance Learning: Theory and Practice. New Delhi: IGNOU.

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