

WCETR 2011

Evaluation of distance education programs based on the NADE-TDEC 2009-2010

Mohammad Hossein Yarmohammadian ^{a*}, Ahmad Ahmadi^b, Mehdi Sadrian^c,

Maryam Fooladvand^d

^{a*}, Associate Professor & Head, Department of Education, Khorasgan(Isfahan)Branch, Islamic Azad University, Isfahan, Iran.
email: mhyarm@gmail.com

^b Associate Professor, Isfahan University, Isfahan, Iran

^{c&d} M.Sc., Educational Planning, Khorasgan(Isfahan) Branch, Islamic Azad University, Isfahan, Iran.

Abstract

Distance Education is an approach in which student and teacher are far from each other. Information and communication technology (ICT) can help schools to solve this problem. So there is a competition between countries to use this technology as much as possible to reach the aim of education, teaching and learning better. For the time this technology was used in some countries such as U.S.A and Canada and some European countries thus we can use their experiences and the way that have used successfully. One way to qualify something is to standardize and evaluate the results. One of these standards is that has been established by USA Office of distance education. The aim of this research is evaluate the program of Isfahan high school distance education centers according to students' opinion based on NADE-TDEC pattern 2009-10. There are 17 centers in Isfahan, Iran that 179 students of these centers were selected randomly and questionnaires were distributed among them. The results of this research showed that the quality of course development is upper than medium, quality of technology is lower than medium, quality of instruction is upper than medium and quality of institutional support is upper than medium.

© 2011 Published by Elsevier Ltd. Open access under [CC BY-NC-ND license](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/).

Keyword: Distance education, Evaluation, Virtual education, Quality of Education.

1. Introduction

Distance education is a method in which the learner is not physically present in educational environments and classrooms. The major feature differentiating distance education from other methods of education is the physical distance among learners, teachers and the educational institute (Abraham, 1997). Distance education is carried out through media. Educational media and Information and Communication Technology (ICT) play pivotal roles in this method of education. ICT has resolved the “distance” difficulties in communication to a great extent and consequently many countries have initiated in their globalization programs the competition in distance education at international levels (Khaleghi, 2006). In 1836, University of Hawaii was established as one of the first academies developing correspondence education. In the United States of America, first steps were taken in 1870s. In 1873, Ticknor founded the Ticknor Society in Britain as a correspondence education system for women. In 1874 Illinois State University offered a course in correspondence education. In order to offer correspondence courses to immigrant students, The National Centre for Distance Education(Centre National d'Enseignement Distance, CNED) was established in France in 1939. This center is now the largest institute of distance education in Europe. The University of South Africa (UNISA) has become an institute of distance education since 1946. The establishment of

United Kingdom Open University (UKOU) in 1969 led to establishment of universities of distance education in several European and Asian countries. These universities included Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia (UNED) in Spain (1972), Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) in Pakistan (1974), Sukhothai Thammathirat Open University (STOU) in Thailand (1978), Korea National Open University (KNOU) in Korea (1982), Universitas Terbuka (UT) in Indonesia (1984), and Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) in India (1985). In Iran, the University of Abu Reyhan Biruni carried out distance education for the first time in the form of correspondence education in 1971. It offered associate degree in the eight fields of chemistry, physics, mathematics, Persian language and literature, elementary education, rural economy and cooperation, banking services and technical services. In 1973, Iran Open University was established. Its major goal was to increase the admission capacity of Iran's higher education system for training specialists. In 1994, the Supreme Cultural Revolution Council (SCRC) obliged the Ministry of Education to establish an institute in order to offer attendance and non-attendance training courses and its statute was approved by SCRC. In 2003, the institute of distance education was established according to the statute of SCRC. It was the first official policy making and administrative organization of Ministry of Education in 2004-5 academic year and began the admission of qualified students. To achieve its goal, the institute began establishing centers for distance education in all parts of the country. In the beginning of 2004-5, 15 provinces were participating in the program which included all provinces by 2005-6 academic year. In that year 400 centers were established in all parts of the country especially in deprived regions to offer academic services in those areas. Distance education in these centers is carried out through correspondence education, troubleshooting courses and educational guidance. Etezadi (2009), through carrying out a research, "study of distance education difficulties from Isfahan secondary students and teachers' points of view in 2008-2009", and reviewing other studies like Boyd-Barret (2000), Ellsworth (2000), Pina (2008), Hasanzade (2001), and Pakide and Rostaminejhad (2007), claims that this method suffers some limitations regarding the access to Information Technologies (IT), shortage of orientation courses, and that there is a need for more information and culture building programs. Zamani and Madani (2005) also analyze "distance education, strategies for improving the efficiency and effectiveness of educators" and suggest that the main challenge facing the authorities of distance education is to provide students with powerful learning environments. The aim of powerful learning environments is development of complex and high level skills, deep understanding of concepts, and cognitive skills such as self-monitoring learning ability.

2. Research method

The aim of this research is the evaluation of distance education programs in Isfahan's secondary schools, Iran from the learners' viewpoints based on NADE-TDEC pattern in the 2009-10 academic year. This study employed a descriptive-survey method and tried to give a description of opinions of students studying at distance education centers of Isfahan's secondary schools about educational programs. The statistical society included students of 17 distance education centers of Isfahan's secondary schools in the 2009-10 academic year. The sample included 179 students, selected through stratified randomization which was proportional to the size of statistical society. Required data was collected and analyzed through a researcher-made questionnaire based on NADE-TDEC pattern. Appropriate statistical tests at descriptive and inferential levels were used to analyze the data.

3. Conclusion

Based on standards derived from NADE-TDEC pattern, the researcher tried to evaluate distance education programs in Isfahan's secondary schools. By introducing four questions, the researcher tried to assess curriculum design, new educational technologies, and educational and administrative matters of these centers. According to previous studies and the researchers own studies, this research identified the quality of distance education programs in Isfahan's secondary schools from the viewpoint of students in 2009-10 based on NADE-TDEC pattern and the data collected from the researcher-made questionnaire. After the thorough analysis of the results of research questions, following suggestions are made in 4 components respectively:

- 1- The quality of curriculum design
- 2- The quality of new used educational technologies
- 3- The quality of matters related to education

4- The quality of administrative matters (such as the time of classes, costs, rules related to education)

The results are shown in following table:

Table 5-1 weighted average of research questions

The measure	Weighted average	Components
Above average	3.20	1- quality of curriculum design
Weak average	2.53	2- quality of new used educational technologies
Above average	3.07	3- quality of matters related to education
Above average	3.36	4- quality of administrative matters (such as the time of classes, costs, rules related to education)

Acknowledgment

Authors would like to express their appreciations to all of students and staff of Isfahan distance education centers who participated in this survey. They are thankful for support and assistance of responsible director of distance education in Isfahan Education Department and also Dr Payam Najafi, vice chancellor for research, Islamic Azad University, Khorasgan(Isfahan) Branch.

References

Abraham, A. (1997). Libraries and distance education. Translated by: Kiani Khouzeestani. Quarterly of Book. Spring and summer. pp. 125-133.

Alharthi, M. (2003). A High Quality Portal Frame Work for Asynchronous Learning Networks: Intellectual Capital Aggregation and Organization, doctorate thesis, Vanderbilt University.

Armstrong, A. J. (2002). An Investigation of Personal – Social Contextual Factors of the Online Adult Learner: Perceived Ability to Complete and Succeed in a Program of Study. Doctorate Thesis, Virginia Commonwealth University.

Bayless, L. (2000). What are the non-Academic Needs of Distance Learners PhD thesis. Regional Polytechnic Institutional State University.

Ellsworth, J.B. (2000). Surviving Change: A Survey of Educational Change Models . Syracuse , NY : Eric Clearing House on Information and Technology.

Hasanzadeh, M. (2002). A feasibility study of distance education via internet based library and information education in Iran. Unpublished Master Thesis. Faculty of Educational Sciences, University of Tarbiat Modares.

Hoseini, A. (2005). Effectiveness of distance education centers. Proceedings of distance education. Tehran: Distance Education publication. 210 p.

Esfijani, A. (2002). Study of effects of education by information networks on 2nd grade female students’ educational motivation at 14th districts of Tehran Education. Unpublished Master Thesis. Tarbiat Moallem University.

Etezadi, M. (2009). Study of distance education difficulties from Isfahan secondary students and teachers’ points of view in 2008-2009. Unpublished Master Thesis. Islamic Azad University of Khorasgan, Isfahan, Iran.

Khaleghi, N. (2006). The role of libraries and librarian in servicing to learners. Electronic journal of Iranian research institute for scientific information and documentation. Vol 6. No. 1.

Pakide, F. A., RostamiNejad, M. A. (2007). Study of learners’ views about distance education. Quarterly of Reform and Education. No. 43. Tehran.

Pina, A. (2008). Factors Influencing the Institutionalization of Distance Education in Higher Education, The Quarterly Review of Distance Education, Information Age Publishing Inc.

Talebzadeh, M. Hoseini, S. A. (2005). Distance education: a new approach in Iran Education. Quarterly of Educational Innovations. Vol 6. No. 19. spring of 2007.

Yarmohammadian, M. H. (2010) Principles of Curriculum Planning, Tehran, Yadvareh Ketab Co.

Yarmohammadian, M. H., Bahrami, S. & Foroughi Abari, A. A. (2009) Educational Management and Planning, Isfahan, HMERC, IUMS Publishing.

Zamani, B.& Madani, S. A. (2005). Distance education, strategies for improving the efficiency and effectiveness of educators. Journal of Computer Report.No. 171.