Chapter 11
Administrative-Related Evaluation for Distance Education Institutions in Turkey

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ABSTRACT

This chapter intends to determine the existing status of distance education at higher education level in Turkey. Recently, there are various institutions in Turkey which provide distance education such as distance education research and application centers, information departments, continuing education centers, head of IT departments etc. However, little is known about their administrative related structuring. This chapter provides a qualitative research which aims to answer following issues: (1) to determine the existing distance learning programs and compulsory joint courses being provided in distance mode, (2) to identify varying titles given to the institutions or units which provide compulsory joint courses or programs in higher education, (3) to determine the LMSs used to provide distance education, (4) to determine e-learning activities in distance education institutions, (5) to identify the roles of administrative staff in distance education institutions.

INTRODUCTION

Orientation to distance education in Turkey has been a continuous process until today with an increasing momentum since 1950s. However, the first practice of distance education in higher education is carried out by Open Education Faculty of Anadolu University, which was established in 1982. It is considered to be an important attempt in terms of implementation of distance education in the field in national and international literature. The first attempt to implement distance education in Turkey was conducted by the Banking and Commercial Law Institute of Ankara University in 1956 (Kaya, 2002). In 1974, teacher training was started in higher education by correspondence study (Özer, 1989). Distributed Higher Education Institution (YAYKUR), established in 1975, has opened a way to graduate from universities via distance education by providing education at the level of associate degree and their equivalents through television broadcasts. This institution was closed in 1979 (Özdil, 1986; Demiray, 2007). Anadolu University Open Education Faculty (OEF), which was established in 1982, was given the task of providing continuous and open education in Turkey with legal regulation and in that period, OEF was the only institution providing distance education at higher education level. In 1993, Faculty of Economics and Business Administration was established in Anadolu University to deliver bachelor's degree via distance learning.

Bachelor Programs of the Pre-School and English Language Teaching were opened in the Open Education Faculty in cooperation with the Ministry of National Education (MNE) in 2000. Currently, Anadolu University continues to provide distance education with its seventeen undergraduate and thirty six associate degree programs in Faculty of Business Administration, Faculty of Economics and also in OEF within the scope of Open and Distance Education System. As of March 2016, Anadolu University is a mega university that is not only recognized in Turkey but also worldwide with its more then a million students (www.anadolu.edu.tr).

Department of Computer Engineering in Middle East Technical University started to offer certificate programs via distance education in 1989. In this process, distance education activities were initiated by sending virtual messages (Demiray, 2007). Fırat University started its distance education activities through its own television station in 1991. After then, in 1992, the first Open High School, and in 1997, the first Open Primary School was established (Demiray, 2007). Distance education studies were conducted in cooperation with Ahmet Yesevi University and Anadolu University via teleconferences between 1999 and 2000. Thanks to advances in this system, Master of Business Administration program was opened by Ahmet Yesevi University and then, most of the courses were given from Ankara to the students in Turkestan. Then, Mersin University started first technical programs by distance

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