Chapter 67
The Role of Distance Education in Global Education

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ABSTRACT

This chapter indicates the overview of distance education and the importance of distance education in global education. Distance learning becomes an alternative to traditional classrooms. Students can benefit from the flexibility that comes with distance learning, and for students who do not have the time or money to attend the traditional schools, distance learning can provide a path to higher education. Distance learning can increase the opportunities for students across the globe, ensuring that students do not have to choose a school based on its location. Distance-based learning offers more flexibility to students in terms of how and when they take classes. The chapter argues that facilitating distance education has the potential to improve educational performance and gain sustainable competitive advantage in global education.

INTRODUCTION

Distance education mainly serves learners who cannot attend the face-to-face courses or programs for one or another reason (Ekmekçi, 2015). Learners stay at home or office and follow the course, do the assignments, and interact with each other and the teacher via the Internet (Ekmekçi, 2015). Distance education contributes to a large portion of the population has access to education and represents a possibility of meeting the new formative demands arising apace, with the adoption of a teaching format that is not restricted to classroom activities and mainly due to its low cost and its high degree of flexibility enables the approximation of the long distances and the democratization of access to education for learners seeking the better use of time, compatibility, and flexibility of schedules, geographic independence, among other learners (Rodrigues, Affonso, Quinelato, & Montiel, 2014).

Lifelong learning and knowledge management are practically directed at employment, career opportunities toward continuing professional education for both employed and unemployed people (Kasemsap, 2016a). Distance education develops in the field of technical education, which is connected

with the characteristics of the educational material of humanities disciplines, difficult to formalize and, secondly, with the greater competence of pedagogic staff of technical education in the utilization of new information and communication technology (ICT) and modern software (Nurmukhametov, Temirova, & Bekzhanova, 2015). Distance education course formats can alter the modes of information exchange and interpersonal interaction related to traditional course formats (Mackey & Freyberg, 2010). There has been an explosive growth in distance education which is rapidly transforming the traditional learning habits with the more recent ones utilizing the latest educational technology (Paksoy, 2015).

This article aims to bridge the gap in the literature on the thorough literature consolidation of distance education. The extensive literature of distance education provides a contribution to practitioners and researchers by describing the current issues and approaches in distance education to appeal to the different segments of distance education in global education.

BACKGROUND

For the last twenty years, many universities and educational institutions tried to find the new ways and methods in order to effectively utilize the Internet-based technologies in teaching and learning through the distance education initiatives (Altunisik, 2013). The increasing educational demand, time limitations, and geographical obstacles practically increase the demand of distance education (Ilgaz & Askar, 2013). With the development of Internet technologies, online distance education is becoming an important format for teaching, learning, and instruction (Li, 2007). Internet technologies are realized that they can employ in the training system and they are recognized as the educational facilitator in the distance education (Çelik, Ferikoglu, Kiraz, Albayrak, & Ekiz, 2013). Distance education, having arisen at the end of the 20th century, enters the 21 century as one of the most effective systems of learners' training (Lenar, Artur, Ullubi, & Nailya, 2014).

Education in the 21st century requires the implementation of innovation in the teaching technology (Malganova & Rahkimova, 2015). In parallel with the recent developments, education has initiated to utilize the Internet media (Çelik et al., 2013). Distance education exploits the Internet intended for course supply for the students and educators in the different locations (Paksoy, 2015). Learners electronically interconnect with the educators in global education (Sims, Dobb, & Hand, 2002). Regarding distance education, course content can be presented through the recorded lectures, slide presentations, text-based documents, interactive online activities of various forms, audio files, video files, pod casts, wikis, live chat sessions, online discussions, live online presentations, videoconferencing, and other methods. Video cases can capture the complexity of the classroom context and provide the efficient way to expose the learners to the authenticity of the classroom (Bayram, 2013).

The emergence of worldwide communications networks and powerful computer technologies has redefined the concept of distance learning and the delivery of engineering education content (Bourne, Harris, & Mayadas, 2005). Distance education continues to have a significant impact on higher education (Hollis & Madill, 2006). With pressures to increase the access to higher education, colleges and universities have focused on increasing the number of online courses and educational programs offered (Meyer, 2014). Distance education can overcome the barriers to the learning (e.g., time limitation and geographical location) and provide the online communities of practice in circumstances where different factors make it difficult (Siri & Rui, 2015).

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