

PROBLEMS FACED BY TUTORS IN DISTANCE EDUCATION SYSTEM AT REGIONAL LEVEL

¹Basharat Ali, ²Dr. Azhar Mahmood

Abstract

Distance Education is a form of education in which the course contents are delivered and the interactions are provided by the technologies and methodologies of the Internet and correspondence. This paper aims to find out the problems of tutors of distance system of education and to give some suggestions for solutions of the problems. The study was descriptive in nature and survey was conducted to collect the data. All the tutors (705) of B.A. level semester spring 2016 of Rawalpindi region were selected for the study and 250 tutors were selected as a sample randomly. Data was analyzed by applying percentage. On the basis of data analysis findings and conclusion were drawn and recommendations were made. Majority of the students do not send their assignments within due dates. Majority of the tutors disagreed that transport facility was given to the tutors for approaching study centers. Majority of the tutors agreed that proper training was not given to the tutors in each semester as well as tutors _remuneration is very low. Hundred percent tutors agreed that they were not given advance money to bear the postal charges and tutors were not paid by University in time. Majority of the tutors agreed that poor financial provisions for tutorial services influenced their performance. Regional office responded to the queries of the tutors in time as well as staff of concerned regional office was cooperative. Majority of the tutors disagreed that they faced difficulty in marking assignments due to poor handwriting of students.

Keywords: Distance education, Tutors' problems, Technologies, Financial Matters.

Introduction

Distance Education is a form of education in which the course contents are delivered and the interactions are provided by the technologies and methodologies of the Internet. It denotes the forms of the study not led by teachers present in classrooms but supported by tutors and an organization at a distance from the student. This brief description allows an interpretation which equates distance education with correspondence education. Distance learning is an excellent method of teaching the adult learner. Because of the competing priorities of work, home, and school, adult learners desire a high degree of flexibility. The structure of distance learning gives adults the greatest possible control over the time, place and pace of education; however, it is not without problems. Loss of student motivation due to the lack of face-to-face contact with teachers and peers, potentially prohibitive startup costs, and lack of faculty support are all hurdles to successful distance learning. Distance education is much more flexible and

¹ Ph.D. Scholar, Department of Education, International Islamic University Islamabad

² Associate Professor, Department of Education, International Islamic University Islamabad

student centered in approach. By allowing students to learn in more convenient locations, and often at more convenient times, distance education opens educational opportunity to previously un-reached learners (Attri, 2012). Distance education might seem to be a product of modern information technology, such as computers and the Internet, however, according to Harper, Chen, and Yen, the modern version is a reintroduction of an older method of education in a new form, rather than a newly created one (Harper et al., 2004).

In the United States, the Higher Education Opportunity Act enacted by Department of Education defines distance education as —the use of one or more technologies to deliver instruction to students who are separated from the instructor and to support regular and substantive interaction between the students and the instructor, either synchronously or asynchronously (United States Congress, 2008, p. 21). This study was designed to analyze the problems faced by the tutors in distance system of education at Rawalpindi. Keeping view of shortage of time the study was delimited to all the tutors of B.A. Program appointed in the spring semester 2016 in Rawalpindi Region at A.I.O.U.

Review of Literature

The development of the learning through distance learning-education based on the individualistic learning process which means that learner reach the knowledge by research on computer assisted programmes under the fast, comfortable conditions individually for catching stable learning rather than lecturing method. Distance Education is really related by the discovery of truth for gaining antithesis sides of the thoughts to get the exact knowledge.

The role of the distance tutors' require to design and encourage an environment that allow for productive activities but it will be responsibility of students to make environment work for themselves(Isman, 2004).

Distance tutor roles are often confusing and ill defined, in addition to being untested. The vague role often leaves faculty feeling as if they are flying in an uncertain environment. It is dubious, especially when considering the rapid rate of distance education growth, that faculty are effectively prepared for teaching at a distance. For instance, it is quite possible new instructors to distance learning were not made aware of the need to frame the course and supplement student interactions by providing resources and opportunities (Easton, 2003). Finance of distance education is a problem of great significance. Poor financial provisions to the tutors for tutorial services influence their performance that's why the tutors are not marking the assignments and papers up to the mark. Tutors are given low rates for marking, rates should be revised (Rashid, 2001). Assessment in distance system of education is a problem for the tutors of distance system because in distance learning tutors are not provided an opportunity to know the students communication and presentation style. This often raises the issue of reliability of the student's responses. The issue of assessment- i.e. knowing whether the trainees have achieved the learning objectives is more difficult in situations where tutors and students seldom meet each other (Sheeja, 2011).

Upholding and acquiring appropriate equipment and training tutors and facilitators to use it excellently, are essential conditions but are not adequate in them to assure a school district of an excellent distance education program. There are other factors involved, many of which are effective rather than cognitive, such as user-friendliness and ability to implement learner support. New technologies are big challenge for the distance education tutors (Ravitch, 1993). Many tutors are slow to use of new

technologies in their classrooms because they are still traditional tutors and don't try to use latest technologies for making their teaching effective. The tutors who use new technologies in their teaching, learners are motivated and learn actively. In distance system new technologies are considered very important, in the future tutors will be bound to mark online assignments and result will be delivered to universities through e-mail (Talab, 1993). There is no interaction between the tutors and students in distance system of education because there is no daily or weekly face to face contact with tutors, students may have trouble in self-evaluation. The separation of the student and teacher imposed by distance removes a vital link of communication between these two parties. Keegan hypothesized that students who did not receive adequate reintegration measures such as electronic or telephone communication, would be less likely to experience complete academic and social integration into institutional life. Consequently, such students would be more likely to drop out (Sheets, 1992).

Methodology

The study was descriptive in nature and survey was conducted to collect the data. The population of the study consisted of all the (705) tutors of B.A. program appointed during the spring semester 2016 in Rawalpindi Region at A.I.O.U. According to Gay (2005) if the population is 700 then the sample of the study should be 250, so the sample was taken 250 tutors of B.A. program appointed during the spring semester 2016 in Rawalpindi Region at A.I.O.U. Data were collected from the tutors by post and personal visits.

Data Analysis

Data were analyzed by applying percentage. On the basis of data analysis, findings and conclusions were drawn and recommendations were made.

S. No	Statements	Agreed %	Disagreed
1	The students send their assignments with in the given dates.	30%	70%
2	Transport facility is given to the tutors for approaching the study centers.	0%	100%
3	The students participate in the tutorial meetings.	20%	80%
4	Student centers are allotted far from the tutor's residence.	40%	60%
5	The student copy same to same the text while writing their assignments.	95%	5%
6	Tutors face difficulty in marking assignment due to poor handwriting of the students.	30%	70%
7	Tutors are appointed to their desires codes.	10%	90%
8	Proper training is given to the tutors in each semester.	20%	80%
9	The tutors' remuneration is very low.	90%	10%
10	Tutors are paid by University in time.	10%	90%
11	Tutors are given advance money to bear the	0%	100%

	postal charges.		
12	Poor financial provision for tutorial services influence tutors performance.	100%	0%
13	Regional office responds to the queries of the tutors in time.	100%	0%
14	The staff of concerned regional office is cooperative.	80%	20%
15	The regional director establish on tutors' convenience.	90%	10%

Conclusions and Recommendations

Majority of the students do not send their assignments within due dates. Majority of the tutors disagreed that transport facility was given to the tutors for approaching study centers. Majority of the tutors agreed that proper training was not given to the tutors in each semester as well as tutors remuneration is very low. Hundred percent tutors agreed that they were not given advance money to bear the postal charges and tutors were not paid by University in time. Majority of the tutors agreed that poor financial provisions for tutorial services influenced their performance. Regional office responded to the queries of the tutors in time as well as staff of concerned regional office was cooperative. Majority of the tutors disagreed that they faced difficulty in marking assignments due to poor handwriting of students. Advance money may be given to the tutors to bear the postal charges. Transport facility may be provided to the tutors for approaching study centres. The rates of marking assignments may be revised and increased after every specific period. The students may be bound to attend the tutorial meetings as well assignments of the students be ensure to reach tutors within due dates. Proper training may be given to the tutors at the beginning of each semester.

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