

Assessing of distance learning in adult education

Abbas Emami¹, Maryam Khodamoradi², Mehran Bozorgmanesh³ and Esmaeel Ghorbani⁴

^{1,2,3,4} Marvdasht Branch, Islamic Azad University, Marvdasht, Iran

*Corresponding author: mehran11070@yahoo.com

Abstract: The adult education process drives towards the achievement of the capability to individually use reason on the subject matter in question. Adult education is oriented at the use, at any age, of attitudes and skills prone to clarifying any distortions in communication, favouring “why,” “how,” “when” and “where” as well as the “what for” in all situations. Adult learners are often those that distinguish each other and have many different targets at the same time and will follow a common challenge to fulfill the goals of building self motivation vectors as educational materials to learn and use the forge.

[Abbas Emami, Maryam Khodamoradi, Mehran Bozorgmanesh and Esmaeel Ghorbani. **Assessing of distance learning in adult education.** *Rep Opinion* 2012;4(12):1-5]. (ISSN: 1553-9873). <http://www.sciencepub.net/report>.

1

Keywords: distance learning, adult education

Introduction:

Adult who is able to recognize their needs? He is who knows what will. Refers to individual adults in their lives cross and understand their responsibilities and has accepted the role is social. Adult illiteracy is like a disease that infects virtually every dimension of Kentucky life. Adult illiteracy saps the energy and capability of Kentucky’s people and its economy. Adult illiteracy feeds the state’s unemployment, its welfare rolls, and the correctional institutions. Adult illiteracy severely hinders the life chances of young children, undermines school reform, and limits the opportunities for postsecondary education. Despite landmark reforms in public schools, too many Kentuckians continue to drop out of school, thereby perpetuating the chronic problem of adult illiteracy. Too many young Kentucky parents are unable to read and lack the basic literacy necessary to provide the necessary stimulating, supportive family environments for young children. It is known that children’s literacy levels are strongly linked to the educational level of their parents and that children of parents who are unemployed and have not completed high school are five times more likely to drop out. To be successful, the Commonwealth’s strategies must energize and gain the commitment of all the state’s political, education, business, and civic leaders. No strategy will succeed unless it engages leaders in each community and county to identify needs and develop programs and services appropriate to the community’s unique circumstances. The most serious challenge will be to motivate low-skilled, under-educated adults within the working age population to seek further education. Simply expanding the number of providers and programs will not necessarily increase demand from the populations and communities where the needs are greatest. Deepseated social, economic and cultural barriers—many dating back generations—lead people to undervalue education. In addition, in many counties it is

difficult for people to see a direct relationship between better education and better-paying jobs. Either there are no jobs available or many existing employers do little to emphasize the connection between better education and the possibilities for getting a job, keeping a job, or earning a higher wage. For many, getting more education and earning a high school diploma or a college degree has little positive meaning.

Only the negative consequences are obvious: getting more education often means leaving one’s family and community for jobs and opportunities for advancement somewhere else. The future of Kentucky depends on uplifting the quality of life and economy of all of Kentucky. The social and economic costs of neglect of large parts of the state will drag down the rest of the state and seriously hinder its capacity to compete in the global economy.

The field of adult education and literacy is plagued by confusion about definitions. Over the years definitions have evolved from provisions in federal law and initiatives of groups advocating particular methodologies or the needs of specific adult populations. The result is that definitions tend to merge statements about the goals to be achieved (e.g., improving the literacy of a particular population) with a particular means (e.g., adult basic education) to achieve the goal. Therefore, it is helpful to distinguish between at least these dimensions of the issue:

1. “Literacy” refers to the knowledge, skills, and competencies of individuals. The federal Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (Title II of the Workforce Investment Act)¹ defines literacy as “an individual’s ability to read, write, speak in English, compute and solve problems, at levels of proficiency necessary to function on the job, in the family of the individual, and in society.” Literacy is often defined in terms of specific domains such

as “basic academic skills,” “workplace skills,” “life skills,” “parenting skills,” or skills

Necessary to exercise one’s rights and responsibilities for citizenship. Different dimensions of literacy are often categorized by terms that cluster several dimensions of literacy important for different clients. Examples include workplace literacy (combining both basic academic skills and workplace skills), and family literacy (combining basic academic skills and other skills essential for successful parenting).

2. “Education attainment” usually refers to the numbers of years of schooling completed or the level of credential (e.g., high school diploma or associate degree) an individual has obtained. Despite concerns about the meaning of credentials, there is a strong correlation between educational attainment and literacy.
3. “Literacy initiatives” often are defined in terms of the needs of a particular target group. These may be parents of young children, youth who have dropped out of high school without earning a high school diploma, welfare recipients, persons with limited English-speaking ability, incarcerated adults, or adults in the workforce.

Getting a college education can be difficult for people with inflammatory bowel disease (IBD). Frequent trips to the restroom, exhaustion, doctor visits, and medication side effects are all barriers to the traditional college experience.

What if you could get the degree without ever setting foot on a campus? You can do just that through distance or virtual learning.

Distance learning has been around for a long time (we’ve all seen the commercials on TV). While there is still prejudice surrounding some distance learning, it is increasingly being accepted as an alternative to traditional classroom learning. Courses can be offered via the Internet, where students are able to interact with instructors and other students without physically being in the same room.

Before considering if distance learning is a viable option for you, there are several questions you should ask yourself:

- What course of study would you pursue?
- Are you interested in pursuing a degree? Brushing up on existing skills?
- Would your course of study require some traditional classroom time (such as laboratory or field work)?
- After obtaining a degree, would you be able to obtain employment that allows for your illness (such as telecommuting or flexible hours)?

There are two types of programs offered by distance education schools: synchronous learning programs and asynchronous learning programs. With synchronous learning, distance education students

must log on to the school’s website at a set time. Often, they interact with their peers and professors via group chats, web seminars, video conferencing, and phone call-ins. With asynchronous learning, distance education students complete all coursework on their own time. They often learn via assignment sheets, message boards, email, pre-recorded video lectures, mp3s, and traditional mail correspondence. Many students find that distance education courses give them the freedom to complete a degree while meeting their personal and professional obligations. Motivated learners are often able to complete distance education degrees in a fraction of the time often required. Distance education courses also allow students to network with participants from all over the nation. On the downside, distance education courses do not offer the face-to-face interaction found in traditional classrooms. Some students find that they struggle to stay motivated and meet deadlines due to the independent nature of distance education courses.

What Is Adult Learning?

Adult learners have a different approach to learning. By the time you reach adulthood, you’re most likely responsible for your own success and you’re perfectly capable of making your own decisions once you have the information you need.

Adults learn best when learning is focused on them, not the teacher. This is called andragogy, the process of helping adults learn.

Malcolm Knowles, a pioneer in the study of adult learning, observed that adults learn best when:

1. They understand why something is important to know or do.
2. They have the freedom to learn in their own way.
3. Learning is experiential
4. The time is right for them to learn.
5. The process is positive and encouraging.

Choosing a Distance Learning Program:

Distance learning is one of the fastest-growing components of higher education. Almost 3.5 million students were enrolled in at least one distance learning course in the fall of 2006 and online enrollments are increasing every year. The convenience of taking classes at any time from any location appeals to today’s adult learner, especially those who work, have families or live in rural areas.

Today a growing number of paralegal and legal secretarial programs have a distance learning component (no law schools currently grant credit for distance learning studies). However, not all distance learning programs are of equal quality. Moreover, the increasing popularity of distance learning programs have led to “diploma mills” or “accreditation mills” that

offer bogus degrees and certificates. Choosing a distance learning program requires careful research and evaluation. Below are several important factors to consider in choosing a distance learning program.

1. **Accreditation.** Accreditation is a means of ensuring the quality and effectiveness of higher education institutions and programs in the United States. Eight regional accrediting agencies accredit most of the colleges and universities in the United States. A host of national and professional accrediting organizations also exist, including the Distance Education and Training Council (DETC), an organization that identifies and accredits distance learning programs. These twelve questions outlined by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation are helpful in examining a distance learning program's claims of accreditation.

In evaluating distance learning paralegal programs, determine if the school is accredited by one of the regional accrediting bodies and by the American Bar Association (ABA). ABA-approval signifies that the school has met certain standards in terms of academics, facilities and instruction. Graduating from an ABA-approved school may give you an advantage in the legal job market.

2. **Reputation.** The reputation of the distance learning program you attend may hinder or enhance your post-graduate employment prospects. In evaluating the reputation of a distance learning program, you should not solely rely on the school's website or marketing materials. Other ways to investigate the reputation of a distance learning program include:

- Visiting the school.
- Talking to alumni (contact the career services department for alumni names and contact information).
- Researching the distance learning program's record with the Better Business Bureau.
- Talking to paralegals, attorneys and legal employers about the reputation of the school you are considering.
- Researching the school in print publications, news articles and on the Internet.

1. **Academic Offerings.** When evaluating distance learning programs, it is also important to consider the program's academic offerings. A quality distance learning program offers a comprehensive curriculum with a variety of options, electives and advanced coursework. Talk to professors or an academic dean regarding the content and delivery of courses. The American Association for Paralegal Education (AAfPE) recommends that paralegal instructional content include courses in legal research and writing,

litigation, ethics, contracts, business organizations and torts. In addition, courses should develop students' critical thinking, communication, computational, computer and organizational skills, and competency to handle ethical issues, according to the AAfPE.

Legal programs should also offer an experiential learning component such as an internship, practicum, pro bono work or clinical experience. These are great resume-building opportunities and allow you to learn practical skills and gain real-world experience.

2. **Instructional Technologies.** Distance learning courses can be delivered in a variety of ways through a growing array of technological tools including audio tapes, CD or DVD ROM's, e-mail, telephone conferences and web-based delivery systems. Questions to ask include whether the program employs a mix of instructional technology? Is hands-on training and support provided? Can students preview courses online and try out the technologies before enrolling?

3. **Teaching Staff.** The faculty is the backbone of any distance learning program. Are the courses taught by professors or are the courses pre-taped correspondence instruction? If the courses are taught by instructors, what is the background and qualifications of the teaching staff? Are classes taught by paralegals, attorneys or a mix of both?

4. **Career Services.** Another important consideration in any distance learning program is the extent and quality of its career services program. Research indicates that the greater the resources offered by the career services department, the greater the program's job placement success. You might inquire as to what percentage of graduates find related employment following graduation and whether the career center offers personalized career counseling, job placement assistance, job search seminars, online job boards or resume assistance.

Conclusion:

Distance education programs are more popular than ever. College and high school students now have hundreds of legitimate distance education schools to choose from. If you're new to the idea of learning through distance education, this article will help you understand the basics.

Distance education is any type of schooling that takes place away from a physical campus. In traditional programs that the principles of psychology and curriculum planning, less attention is the form of content presentation ie codification and providing books, original format and have the dominant form, while for adult content that could have valuable experience in addition to writing, other ways also be provided Affect the selection of pictures and images related to the concepts and content produced by including them.

Learning activities such as activities outside the classroom, dialogue, role playing and ... Another type of content is presented. Duties are placed on the learner, a resource for developing knowledge, skills and insights he considered.

Curriculum content only from the training provided to learners or not, but put together their learning through activities that can inform or does, skills and attitude to achieve. In this case, apart from learning that the essays taught learners directly to sustainable and effective learning occurs in his.

Another way of providing content that is educational activities outside the learning environment possible for learning more and better enables adult learners. For example, hits, field trip experiences for learners or transfer is provided, develop knowledge, insight and skills they will.

To ensure that science curriculum and educational aspects, according to community needs and audiences, application form is provided or not, the content selection criteria should be considered. These criteria is being include knowledge, effectiveness, flexibility, diversity, relevance and practical learning. Some research findings that can be a learning process for the Guidelines for training operations are applied, is given below:

- 1- intrinsic motivation, learning a deeper and make them sustainable. When the need is met directly by the learning itself, what is learned, but is complementary learning. Creating a training activity in adult learning needs, learning ensures stable
- 2- Positive reinforcement (reward) learning to reinforce the negative (punishment) is more effective. Many adults because of negative experiences at the beginning of schooling, are weak and afraid. Feeling of success in adult learning for continuous learning and adult participation is essential.
- 3- Learning, especially regarding skills development, will be added frequently.
- 4- Duties and meaningful content than meaningless subjects are learned more easily and are later forgotten. This issue, especially

for older adult learners is true. Challenges of adult learning facilitators by the way that content was significantly associated with the experiences and needs of learners is.

- 5- Passive than active participation in learning activities, learning increases. Adult educators are allowed to participate actively in India, a stable and meaningful learning to help The task force's policy recommendations are guided by these principles:

- Recognize that adult illiteracy is not an isolated problem but a fundamental barrier to every major challenge facing Kentucky. Without significant improvements in adult literacy the Commonwealth will be unable to make progress on issues such as early childhood education, education reform (elementary/secondary and postsecondary), economic development, and improving the health and well-being of Kentucky's families and communities.

- Shift from top-down implementation of a federal or state program to leading a statewide public campaign that depends fundamentally on a bottom-up commitment of communities, employers, and educational institutions. The campaign must engage all aspects of Kentucky life—all dimensions of state and local government, all education levels, the state's business and civic leaders, voluntary organizations, and all others whose work affects—or is affected by—the problem of adult illiteracy.

- The future of Kentucky depends on narrowing the disparities among counties by improving the adult literacy of the population in all regions of the state.

Reference:

1. Fabry, D. L., & Higgs, J. R. (1997). Barriers to the effective use of technology in education: Current status. *Journal of Educational Computing Research*, 17(4), 385-395.
2. Ginsburg, L., & Elmore, J. (2000). *Captured wisdom: Integrating technology into adult literacy instruction*. Naperville, IL: North Central Regional Education Laboratory. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 454 408).
3. Glenn, A. D. (1997). Technology and the continuing education of classroom teachers. *Peabody Journal of Education*, 72(1), 122-128.
4. Habermas, Jurgen. (1991). *Knowledge and Human Interests*. Boston: Beacon Press.

5. Knowles, M. S. (1994). *Andragogy in action: Applying modern principles of adult learning*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Inc. Pub.
6. Knowles, M. S. (1999). *The making of adult educator: An autobiographical journey*. 1st Edn. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Inc. Pub.
7. Kolb, David A. (1993). *Experiential learning: Experience as the source of learning and development*. 1st Edn. United States: FT Press.
8. Krajnc, A. (1999). *Andragogy*. In Collin, J. T. (Ed.), *Lifelong education for adults: An international handbook*. 1st Edn. New York: Pergamon Press.
9. Lang, J. M. (1998). *Technology in adult basic and literacy education: A rationale and framework for planning (Research report)*. Cheney: Eastern Washington University, Instructional Media and Technology. Retrieved on November 14, 2003, from <http://cehd.ewu.edu/education/GraduateExamples/JML98Educ601.html>
10. Lawler, P. A., & King, K. P. (2003). Changes, challenges, and the future. In K. P. King & P. Lawler (Eds.), *New perspectives on designing and implementing professional development of teachers of adults. New directions for adult and continuing education* (Vol. 98, pp. 83-91). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
11. Jaffee, L. L. (2001). Adult literacy programs and the use of technology. *Adult Basic Education*, 11(2), 109-124.
12. Jordan, W. R., & Follman, J. M. (1993). *Using technology to improve teaching and learning. Hot topics: Usable research*. Palatka, FL: Northeast Florida Educational Consortium, Southeastern Regional Vision for Education. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service ED 355 930).
13. Moore, M. G., & Kearsley, G. (1996). *Distance education: A systems view*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.
14. Norzaini Azman. (2006). History, trends and significant development of adults education in Malaysia in *HISTORIA: Journal of Historical Studies*. Vol. VII, No. 2. Bandung: Historia Utama Press.

11/21/2012