

Perception of Students towards Distance Learning: A Case Study of Pakistan

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Abstract: Background: Distance learning has come a long way and opened new vistas in the field of education. With DL opportunities growing at a high rate in many tertiary institutions, there is need to ensure that prompt feedback on assignments is integrated in the instructional design process of DL courses. **Aim:** The purpose of this study is to investigate the perception held by individuals about distance learning offered by the two large universities of Khyber Pakhtoonkhawa (KPK) province of Pakistan i.e., Allama Iqbal Open University and Virtual University. **Setting:** In order to achieve EFA (education for all-1990) goal 4, a survey population was identified as individuals of Khyber Pakhtoonkhawa (KPK) who are/were the distance learners of Virtual University (VU) or Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU). **Materials:** Data was collected from 104 respondents and using a structured questionnaire developed by the researcher. **Results:** The results of this study show that distance learning is most patronized by younger learners (<30 years) as there was 55% distance learner (DL) students who were below 30 years of age. **Conclusion:** The preference for distance learning by this category of students is largely because of the awareness and effectiveness of DL along with contributing factors of flexible of use of time, location and work commitment. Both singles and married almost equally prefer DL. **Recommendation:** The study suggests that majority of the students are satisfied with teaching and learning by distance. Suggestion is to use pre-stamped and addressed postcards, out-of-class phone conferences, and e-mail for feedback regarding assignment, course content, relevancy, pace, delivery problems, and instructional concerns for increasing students learning by distance. [Zainab Alam; Aqil Waqar; Khalid Zaman; Beenish Shehzadi and Yasir Mehmood. **Perception of Students towards Distance Learning: A Case Study of Pakistan.** *J Am Sci* 2012;8(11):509-517]. (ISSN: 1545-1003). <http://www.jofamericanscience.org>. 78

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1. Introduction

DE or distance learning is a field of education that focuses on teaching methods and technology with the aim of delivering teaching, often on an individual basis, to students who are not physically present in a traditional educational setting such as a classroom. It is a process to create and provide access to learning when the source of information and the learners are separated by time and distance, or both. The types of available technologies used in DE are divided into two groups: synchronous and asynchronous. Synchronous technology is a mode of delivery where all participants are present at the same time. It resembles traditional classroom teaching methods despite the participants located remotely. It requires a timetable to be organized. Web conferencing and videoconferencing are examples of synchronous technology, as are direct-broadcast satellite, internet radio, live streaming, telephone, and web-based VoIP.

The asynchronous mode of delivery is where participants access course materials on their own schedule and so is more flexible. Students are not

required to be together at the same time. Mail correspondence, which is the oldest form of DE, is an asynchronous delivery technology and others include message board forums, e-mail, video and audio recordings, print materials, voicemail and fax [36]. Prester and Moller [29] suggest that computer mediated communication tools enable today's distance learners to engage in collaborative problem-solving, threaded discussions, and peer tutoring through asynchronous distance learning environments. These are best accomplished by establishing virtual learning communities, which break down traditional instructor-as-transmitter, learner-as-receiver roles and instead promote a more learner-driven environment.

Pakistan with a population of almost 170 Million has encouraging statistics of 70% in terms of enrolment till primary level of education in 2008. However, this drops down to a dismally low 33% for secondary education and is appallingly low i.e., 5% for tertiary level education. The primary reason for this is that the major populace is rural based and poor. By the age the students should be at secondary and tertiary level; the poor families prefer them to

become earning members of the family rather than seeking further education. This situation is exacerbated by the non-availability of secondary and tertiary level institutions in their local vicinities. Moving to cities for seeking further education means cutting down on the earning potential of the already poor family and is therefore not a considerable option. According to the Asia-Pacific Regional overview of the Education for All (EFA) Global Monitoring Report [11] will be narrowly missed in the East Asia and the Pacific region. The picture is more discouraging in South and West Asia.

The present study focused on effectiveness of distance learning in Pakistan. In this regard following five main points would be under consideration.

1. What demographic characteristics exist for distance learners?
2. Why did students choose the distance learning mode formats?
3. What are the student perceptions of teaching by distance?
4. What are the student perceptions of learning by distance?
5. What are the student perceptions of learner support services?

1.1. Scope of DE

Education is the fundamental human right. International movement of Education for All [10] was declared at Jomtein, Thailand. This declaration was signed by 155 Governments, different international agencies; NGO's to ensure quality basic education for children, youth & adults. Education for All (EFA) recognized that everyone – children, youth and adults- have need of basic learning. And these needs are interrelated, so when primary (children) & secondary (adult) education taken into account then must focus on girls and women & “poor, disadvantaged & disabled” children. EFA target year, 2015, is less than 5 years away. 72 million children in the world are still out of school and 759 million adults remain without literacy skills, majority of them being girls and women.

After food, it is education that has posed as the second greatest challenge for today. It is a sector where the government should have pumped in more funds but unfortunately didn't. The consequences were disastrous. A stumbling block was removed with the emergence of DE. DE serves the persons living in the isolated areas with inadequate facilities of formal education system as presented by Rai [31] that DE has taken systematic teaching -learning process to persons living in isolated areas where facilities for the traditional form of class room teaching can not be developed. Further, as distance learning addresses the needs of specific target groups, there is a great variation in the range of programs

offered. DE also serves the dropouts, older students and disadvantaged groups. Distance system also serves the persons involve in the community commitments as indicated by Reddy [32] that the open Universities have also increased access for other disadvantaged groups including older students, who may be geographically isolated or excluded from regular classes because of shift patterns, seasonal or other kind of work and family and community commitments.

2. Literacy Rate in Pakistan

According to the latest Pakistan Social and Living Standards Measurement (PSLM) Survey [30], the overall literacy rate (age 10 years and above) is 57% (in which, 69% for male and 45% for female) compared to 56% (69% for male and 44% for female) for 2007-08. The data shows that literacy remains higher in urban areas i.e., 74% than in rural areas in which shown in 48%, and it is more prevalent for men (69%) compared to women (45%). Gender and geographical disparities in the area of literacy are sharp and present a dismal picture. However, it is evident from the data that overall female literacy is raising over time, but progress is uneven across the provinces. When analyzed provincially, literacy rate in Punjab stood at (59 %), Sindh (59%), Khyber Pakhtoonkhawa (50%) and Balochistan (45%). The literacy rate of Sindh and Khyber Pakhtoonkhawa has improved considerably during 2007-08 to 2008-09. Below is the Table 1 which shows the provincial wise literacy rate estimates.

Table 1: Estimates of Literacy Rates during 2007-09 in Pakistan

		2006-07	2007-08	2008-9
Pakistan	Male	67	69	69
	Female	42	44	45
	Both	55	56	57
Punjab	Male	67	70	69
	Female	48	48	50
	Both	58	59	59
Sindh	Male	67	69	71
	Female	42	42	45
	Both	55	56	59
KPK	Male	67	68	69
	Female	28	33	31
	Both	47	49	50
Baluchistan	Male	58	66	62
	Female	22	23	23
	Both	42	46	45

Source: Pakistan Social & Living Standard Measurement Survey [30].

3. History of Distance Learning

The idea of DE was first mooted in UK in late 1960s by the British Prime Minister, Mr. Harold Wilson. He was of the view that educational opportunities must be provided to those who might have missed better education due to early employment and wish to upgrade, their knowledge and skills, in their spare times in the evenings at home. The UK Open University was, thus established in 1969. Since then it has become a major institution of learning in UK and has opened up opportunities for millions of working people. The gospel of distance and Open Learning has, since then spread throughout the world. More than sixty Open Universities are operating around the world on the basis of DE. Modern information and communication Technology has made the task of DE much easier and effective.

3.1. Distance Learning in Pakistan

The Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU), established in 1974, was the second Open University in the world and first in Asia and Africa. It, thus, speaks of the foresight of the policy-makers of that time. As the last 37 years of AIOU have proved, DE has opened up new opportunities for millions, particularly women, and supplemented the efforts of the federal and provincial governments in a big way and that too without becoming a burden on their resources [1].

The Virtual University, Pakistan's first university based completely on modern Information and Communication Technologies, was established by the government as a public sector, not-for-profit institution with a clear mission:- to provide extremely affordable world class education to aspiring students all over the country. Using free-to-air satellite television road casts and the internet, the Virtual University allows students to follow its rigorous programs regardless of their physical locations. It thus aims at alleviating the lack of capacity in the existing universities while simultaneously tackling the acute shortage of qualified professors in the country. By identifying the top professors of the country, regardless of their institutional affiliations, and requesting them to develop and deliver hand-crafted courses, the Virtual University aims at providing the very best courses to not only its own students but also to students of all other universities in the country. The Virtual University of Pakistan holds a Federal Charter, making its degrees recognized and accepted all over the country as well as overseas. The University opened its virtual doors in 2002 and in a short span of time its outreach has reached over sixty cities of the country with more than a hundred associated institutions providing infrastructure support to the students. Pakistani

students residing overseas in several other countries of the region are also enrolled in the University's programs [37].

4. Literature Review

The concept of distance learning is not a new phenomenon in Pakistan, where institutions like Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) have been providing DE since 1974. Almost 23 research articles, many websites and books are studied to view the students' perception for DE. White [38] worked on DE in Australian higher education. He opines that a history of DE is extremely helpful to understand the concepts of DE and its emergence. Kearsley's [21] survey of faculty engaged in developing interactive multimedia projects found the major issues to be: effectiveness of multimedia in learning, teaching strategies, design decisions, selection of the hardware and software systems to be used, monetary costs of equipment, and the time costs associated with the development process. Brigham [3] also studied major issues among faculty. His findings overlap with those above described. The major issues facing faculty included: governance, course approval responsibilities, and intellectual property rights, varying views of what constitutes respectable materials, support staff requirements, faculty experience, organizational structure and demands on faculty time. There are legitimate grounds for some of these concerns. Honeyman and Miller [18] have recognized agriculture DE as a valid alternative for higher education focusing on agriculture aspect. Hedberg and Alexander [16] found that the efforts needed to develop classroom-useable multi-media technologies equal that of traditional research, yet the status of the former are viewed as significantly lower by faculty. There are also faculty concerns that the format of distance learning is inferior from a pedagogical perspective. However, the evidence that exists indicates that distance students perform as well as, or better than, students in conventional classroom settings.

Gibson [13] found that over 90% of those institutions with over 10,000 students currently provide some form of DE offerings; as do over 85% of institutions with 3000 to 10,000 students. Of the 14.3 million students enrolled in higher education, over 750,000 students were enrolled in DE courses. Wilson [40] maintains that relative to traditional face-to-face courses, DE offerings cost three to four times as much and they require four to eight times the amount of faculty time. Daniel et al [6] wrote on the role of Mega-Universities and Knowledge Media: Technology Strategies for Higher Education in education and awareness. Gold and Christine [14] wrote on what's the difference: A review of

contemporary research on the effectiveness of distance learning in higher education, in which they examined how much effective DE is at higher level. Oblinger [27] wrote on DL education and covering most of the aspects of DE.

McDonald [23], in his article: Is "As good as fact-to-face" as good as it gets?, opines that the goal of online learning should be more than existing standards of traditional education. Moreover, he emphasizes the need of online education which will open the door for enhancing strategies in teaching and learning. McDonald further claims that DE can be a frontier for new methods of communication giving rise to innovative teaching and learning practices that may not be possible in traditional, place-bound education. The article discusses both the positive and potential negative impacts of online education.

Talesra [35] review of contemporary research on the effectiveness of distance learning in higher education which contributed a lot to know how much effective DE is at higher level. The term open and distance learning represents approaches that focus on opening access to education and training provision, freeing learners from the constraints of the time and place, and offering flexible learning opportunities to individuals and groups of the learners. Holmberg [17] article on the evolution, principles and practices of DE, describes DE as it is today and does so against the background of its history. Basic concerns are how the constituent elements of DE, i.e. subject-matter presentation and interaction, have been brought about at different stages in this history and what their character has been. Moore & Kearsley [24] significantly explained the cause and effect of DE as a Systems View. Contemporary education issues provide the much-needed perspective to make sense of an educational system. Dickey [8] wrote on online three-dimensional (3D) virtual worlds are emerging technologies that offer unique learning opportunities for traditional and distributed education. A comparison of online and Traditional Learning by Hannay & Newvine [15] indicated those students which strongly prefer DE, largely because it allows them to balance their other commitments more easily. Respondents also perceive that they achieve higher quality educational outcomes in the distance learning environment. They do not believe that they sacrifice quality education for the convenience of utilizing distance learning. While distance learning may be most appropriate at colleges and universities with large numbers of adult learners, commuters, and part time students, there may be some educational advantages for institutions to integrate some of the best aspects of distance learning

into traditional courses to build a "hybrid" learning environment.

Virtual education paradigm has been developing as a form of DE to provide education across the boundaries of a nation and/or country. It imparts education through information and communication technologies. In Pakistan the Virtual University of Pakistan imparts it. The study "*Student's Attitude towards Virtual Education in Pakistan*" by Hussain [19] revealed that Virtual education is an alternate to the formal system of education. It can cater large students' body at all academic levels. It is flexible and convenient to the learners providing them exposure with emerging technologies. It integrates the nation extending the opportunities of higher education, uniform curricula; technology based instructional methodology and equal opportunities of higher education. DL is also acting like an agent of social change and can reduce conflicts among societies and nations. However, students do face some problems as well. These include problems of password, computer vision syndrome (CVS), fingers' joint pain, backache, dizziness & headache and electricity failure. From the findings of the study it can be projected that in future formal universities may be adopting the virtual mode in some way.

Tabor [34] elaborated the concept of "Narrowing the Distance: Implementing a Hybrid Learning Model" The Hybrid Learning Model is an extremely versatile tool to capture, describe, reflect on and plan good practice in teaching. An article "Empowerment of Women through DE in Pakistan" by Bukhsh [4] pointed out that there exist gender disparities in formal system of education with respect to number of institutions and enrollment in Pakistan. In formal system of education there are inadequate schooling and facilities for female education in Pakistan. There exist openness to every one in distance system of education Females have greater number of chances for education through DE rather than formal system education in Pakistan. The enrollment ratio of the girls in formal system is less than the boys at all levels in Pakistan. The enrollment ratio of the girls is higher than the boys at all levels in distance system of education in Pakistan. Casey et al [5] was of the view that for many institutions with distance learning programs, a growing number of alumni have never been to campus or have rarely visited but they may use and appreciate library services. Vaughan [36] wrote in detail manner about "Blended Learning". Blended Learning refers to a mixing of different learning environments. By reviewing such articles now we can conclude that distance learning is an effective tool for modern societies to become more educated at their workplace

without the constraint of being at campus in traditional class, although teacher is irreplaceable role in life of students. New technologies must be used to meet the EFA final (2015) goals.

The above discussion confirms the importance of distance learning. Therefore, the present study evaluates the importance of distance learning on the residents of Khyber Pakhtoonkhawa (KPK) province of Pakistan.

5. Methodology

A sample is a finite part of a statistical population whose properties are studied to gain information about the whole. When dealing with people, it can be defined as a set of respondents (people) selected from a larger population for the purpose of a survey. The present study identified as individuals of Khyber Pakhtoonkhawa (KPK) who are/were the distance learners of Virtual University (VU) or Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU). Data were collected from 104 respondents and using a structured questionnaire developed by the researcher. The use of these students in the study was to achieve a more realistic picture of how distance learners perceive DL, because they have completed their other degrees from traditional on-campus programs.

5.1. Sampling

Sample size determination was done on the cost basis approach. In this study we used simple random sample technique which is a subset of individuals (a sample) chosen from a larger set (a population). Each individual is chosen randomly and entirely by chance, such that each individual has the same probability of being chosen at any stage during the sampling process. More specifically selected the Cluster Random Sampling technique used for selection of respondents. Strata's on basis of geographical boundaries i.e., Mansehra, Abbottabad, Haripur and other related area of KPK region.

The survey utilized 18 close and open-ended and Likert-type scale questions to collect data for this study. It contained four selected participant demographics: gender, age, marital status and work experience. In addition, Likert-type items with a four point scale: strongly agree (a value of (1), agree (2), disagree (3) and strongly disagree (4) were included. The original questionnaire was pre-tested with 20 respondents after which revisions were made to clarify some questions.

The instrument was administered face-to-face to distance learners enrolled in different institutes at different locations through the assistance responsible official in each of the institute. In addition to administering questionnaire, the researcher was given the permission to review students' records to verify information such as gender, birth date, years of work experience.

5.2. Survey Statistics

Survey conducted for the current study through questionnaires got 104 responses out of 108 and their statistics is described below with using frequency distribution and their percentage in Table 2.

Table 2: Demographic Variables

Variables Labels	Frequency (N=104)	% of Respondents
Gender		
Male	60	58%
Female	44	42%
Age (Years)		
<30	57	55%
30-40	35	34%
41-50	9	9%
>50	3	2%
Marital Status		
Single	52	50%
Married	51	49%
Divorced	01	1%
Separated	00	0%
Work Experience (in years)		
<3 year	43	41%
4-6 year	22	21%
7-9 year	6	6%
10 or more	33	32%

The results indicate that male dominance of the distance learning (58%) with majority (55%) of respondents within the age less than 30 years. According to Dubious (2003), DL encourages older people to seek higher education but the results of this study shows the change trend of learners in KPK, Pakistan that 55% young respondents having age less than 30 shown high preferences for distance learning. Both Singles (50%) and Married (49%) almost equally prefer DL. Here the results were in contradiction to study of Frimpong [12] who found that the DE format attracted more married participants than single students. Most respondents (41%) indicated that they were in employment and had working experience less than 3 Years. It was also indicator that individuals of KPK more preferred to get employment and in early years of work they want to improve their qualification to get more benefits along sharing the burden of family and country economy. Current inflation of the era has motivated individuals to get employed first and then using DL more enhances the education for career development.

Next to, the more emphasized question of this study was to determine why students choose to study by DL mode? Students were given four options to select any one or more which they consider for applying in Distance Learning. Figure 1 shows the reasons of choosing distance learning by students.

Table 3 shows that respondents were told to add any other reason if they had. Students preferred

DL because of work commitments (45.19%) and flexibility of use of time and location (41.35%).

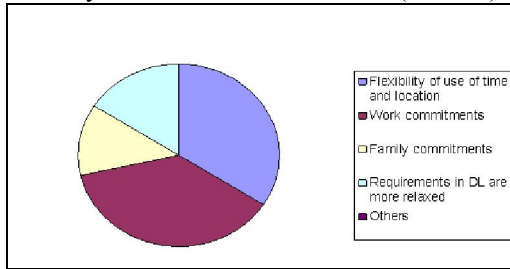


Figure 1: Reasons of choosing DL by Students

Table 3: Reasons for choosing Distance learning (DL) by students

*Reasons for choosing DL	Frequency	Percentage
Flexibility of use of time and location	43	41.35%
Work commitments	47	45.19%
Family commitments	16	15.38%
Requirements in DL are more relaxed	20	19.23%
Others	0	0%

* Multiple responses

Graduate level professional schools (such as those focusing on law and education) have been particularly hard hit as many graduate students need to negotiate work and family obligations while completing their coursework. The one of main concern of this study was that to find out the Distance Learners perceptions towards teaching by the distance mode Next question ask from the students about how you rate teachers teaching by distance? The results are shown in Table 4.

The above table indicates that majority of the respondents were satisfied by their DL

facilitators. Just as (81.73%) of the respondents agreed with the statement that occasional face-to-face sessions were effective and 71.15% were agreed that content of session met my expectation. There is 16.34 % disagreement of respondents with the statement i.e., the facilitator provided prompt feedback on my assignments. Delors [7] pointed that teachers have irreplaceable role and must be upgraded. New technologies can only support and complement teachers' work. Use pre-stamped and addressed postcards, out-of-class phone conferences, and e-mail for feedback regarding course content, relevancy, pace, delivery problems, and instructional concerns. Strategies for Teaching at a Distance by University of Idaho [33] suggest that make detailed comments on written assignments, referring to additional sources for supplementary information. Return assignments without delay, using fax or electronic mail, if practical. In Müller's [25] qualitative study of undergraduate and graduate women within an online degree program, attributions for successful completion of their degree emphasized the sense of community fostered within the online environment. Attributions for the inability to complete one's degree emphasized feelings of disconnection from course faculty. Although 78.27 % respondents of present study were agreed that facilitator used the relevant instructional medium. Students' attitude towards distance learning is an important factor in eventual academic success. Table 5 shows that overall students indicated their satisfaction toward distance learning.

Table 4: Student perceptions of teaching by distance mode

Statements	N=104				
	SA	A	U	D	SD
The facilitator provided prompt feedback on my assignments.	14 (13.5%)	58 (56%)	15 (14.42%)	15 (14.42%)	2 (1.92%)
The facilitator used the relevant instructional medium.	19 (18.27%)	52 (50%)	29 (27.88%)	3 (2.88%)	1 (0.96%)
The face-to-face sessions were effective for me.	30 (28.85%)	55 (52.88%)	13 (12.5%)	5 (4.81%)	1 (0.96%)
The content of the sessions met my expectations	21 (20.19%)	53 (50.96%)	19 (18.27%)	8 (7.69%)	3 (2.88%)

(Note: N= Number of responses, SA= Strongly Agree, A=Agree, U= Neutral, D=Disagree, SD= Strongly Disagree)

Table 5: Perceptions of Distance Learners towards learning material

Statements	N=104				
	SA	A	U	D	SD
The learning materials were self explanatory.	22 (21.15%)	45 (42.27%)	29 (27.88%)	5 (4.81%)	1 (0.96%)
Group discussions were found useful.	25 (24.04%)	44 (42.31%)	16 (16.38%)	16 (16.38%)	3 (2.88%)
My use of computer and internet increased.	17 (16.35%)	38 (36.54%)	34 (32.69%)	11 (10.58%)	4 (3.85%)
The workload in DL was too much.	15 (14.42%)	35 (33.65%)	27 (25.96%)	23 (22.11%)	3 (2.88%)

(Note: N= Number of responses, SA= Strongly Agree, A=Agree, U= Neutral, D=Disagree, SD= Strongly Disagree)

The results reveal that almost 66% respondents indicated that group discussions were useful for them which confirm earlier research of Bland et al [2] that found students prefer group discussion. DL is being too much (48%) with their other commitments. But this study differs in the context to Osei [28] that only 5% disagreed that learning materials being self explanatory. So Distance Learners of KPK, Pakistan were (66.34%) satisfied with the statement that “learning materials were self explanatory”.

About 53% respondents indicated that there use of computer and internet increased via DL. The flexibility of online learning also may accommodate differential learning preferences [20, 26]. Katz [20] found that students in asynchronous video-conferencing group showed greater satisfaction with and control of their learning and motivation to study. Next question is what are the student perceptions of learner support services? The responses are shown in Table 6.

Table 6: Students’ perceptions of learner support system by distance learning

Statements	N=104				
	SA	A	U	D	SD
I received enough information from Institute of DL about my study.	26 (25%)	52 (50%)	15 (14.42%)	8 (7.69%)	2 (1.92%)
I received prompt feedback about my enquiries on the program of study.	10 (9.61%)	49 (47.11%)	21 (20.19%)	17 (16.35%)	7 (6.73%)
There are enough study facilities to help with my program.	15 (14.42%)	46 (44.23%)	25 (24.04%)	15 (14.42%)	3 (2.88%)
Facilitation sessions are organized	18 (17.31%)	48 (46.15%)	31 (29.81%)	7 (6.73%)	0 (0%)
I have recommended this program to other colleagues.	20 (19.23%)	51 (49.04%)	21 (20.19%)	11 (10.58%)	1 (0.96%)

(Note: N= Number of responses, SA= Strongly Agree, A=Agree, U= Neutral, D=Disagree, SD= Strongly Disagree)

Table 6 shows that students satisfied with learner support of DL institution. Majority of them commented higher scores on the scale “Strongly agree” and “Agree” which shows higher levels of satisfaction about the support services of institute. About 75% of respondents agreed with the statement that they received enough information from IDL about their study. The 57% ratio indicated that they received prompt feedback about enquiries on their study program. The facilitation sessions are well organized (64%) and 68% respondents will recommend this program to other colleagues. Osei [28] that about 17% respondents disagreed with the statement that there are enough study facilities to help with their program. They remarked that they have not provided proper reading materials, reading rooms and internet facilities in centers outside the main campus.

5. Conclusion

The results of this study depicts totally different results from traditional concept that Distance learning is most patronized by an older (>30 years) learners. In our study we have 55% DL students who were below 30 years of age. The preference for distance learning by this category of students is largely because of the awareness and effectiveness of DL along with contributing factors of flexibility of use of time location and work commitment. The study suggests that majority of the students are satisfied with teaching and learning via

distance. However, respondents had concerns regarding the provision of prompt feedback on assignments by facilitators. Most of the student in this study termed facilitation sessions as well organized and their positive attitude for recommending DL program to other colleagues as well.

Distance learning has come a long way and opened new vistas in the field of education. With DL opportunities growing at a high rate in many tertiary institutions, there is need to ensure that prompt feedback on assignments is integrated in the instructional design process of DL courses. If the technology being employed is utilized to its maximum distance learning can play its role as a humanizing force, which can bring together people from various walks of life. To implement new technological distance learning & teaching requires big budget, but its results would be long lasting in the future determination of country Economy & reduction in poverty and upgrading the society life style.

Almost 50 percent population of Pakistan is less than 18 years of age. Youth of any country are the demographic dividend who determines the country’s future progress. To realize this dividend this group of population must be educated. When children miss out on their right to education, it is not only they who suffer the consequences through loss of opportunities in life, but the entire social, cultural and economic peaceful development of the country

loses, too. Applying the equity-based approach to education, where budgets and programs target the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children to ensure they have quality education, Pakistan can greatly accelerate its progress towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals by 2015.

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