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## **Dear GLOKALde Readers,**

**We present our Volume: 4, Number: 1 issue to our valuable readers.**

**Distance education, is "An educational system of instruction that the learner can access to educational resources, synchronously or asynchronously, with the use of rich communication technologies in addition to printed materials, without time and space limitations". In our journal, studies on distance education are included.**

**In this issue, the articles entitled "Assessment of Anadolu University Home Management Associate Degree Program in terms of Students" by Assist. Prof. Dr. Serpil DÜNDAR and "Technological Race: Distance Education Can Enhance Gender Equity for Women Education in Nigeria" by Dr. Martha NKECHINYERE AMADI are included.**

**We hope to stay in touch with you in our upcoming issue that will be published by 1 October 2018.**

**Cordially,**

**Prof. Dr. Emine DEMİRAY  
Editor-in-Chief of GLOKALde  
Anadolu University, Open Education Faculty,  
Yunusemre Campus, 26470-Eskisehir, TURKEY  
Tel office: +90 222 335 0580 / Ext.5829  
GSM: + 90 532 650 3974  
URL: <http://www.glokalde.com>  
URL: <https://akademik.anadolu.edu.tr/edemiray>  
Email: [edemiray@anadolu.edu.tr](mailto:edemiray@anadolu.edu.tr) and [editor@glokalde.com](mailto:editor@glokalde.com)**

## **ASSESSMENT OF ANADOLU UNIVERSITY HOME MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATE DEGREE PROGRAM IN TERMS OF STUDENTS**

**Assist. Prof. Dr. Serpil DUNDAR**  
**Open Education Faculty, Anadolu University**  
**Eskisehir, TURKEY**

### **ABSTRACT**

The purpose of this study is the assessment of Anadolu University Open Education Faculty, Management and Organization Department, Home Management Associate Degree Program providing education via distance education system in terms of students. For this purpose, a survey consisting of 33 questions has been prepared. This survey has been sent to all active students enrolled to this department by e-mail. The following are primarily mentioned in the study; the purpose and function of the home management associate degree program which is a women oriented education program, information on the courses and student numbers.

Thereafter, by referring to the subject of woman in distance education in Turkey and in the world and the related statistical data of woman and man on education, the positive and negative sides of the distance education were mentioned with regards to women. At the findings stage, 343 surveys received from students have been assessed by being analyzed in SPSS program.

The following have been taken into consideration in the assessment; demographic characteristics of students, reasons to prefer the program, the courses from which they benefit in their social lives, intra-family relations and business lives, their opinions on academic program, computer and internet utilization, whether the program makes contribution to acquire a profession, improve themselves as an individual and growing consciousness on woman rights. In conclusion, the program assessment has been carried out in terms of students.

**Keywords:** Anadolu University, distance education, home management, woman.

### **INTRODUCTION**

Open education is seen as a way of bringing more women in education because those who cannot receive proper education are mostly women both in Turkey and in the world and because the open education system overcomes limitations such as distance, time and multiple decisions. Women who cannot find the opportunity for formal education prefer open education as a way of improving themselves. For women, Open education plays an important role in personal development.

Women cannot benefit from formal education facilities because of time and place restrictions, scarcity of recourses and overwhelming duties at home. Therefore, they can be provided with opportunities to improve themselves and complete their education by open education system that serves the opportunities at their homes without any time or place restrictions. (Demiray, 2010, s. ix.).

In Turkey, besides the formal higher education departments of Child Development and Education, Home Economy, Child Development and Pre-school Education, Decorative

**Products, Clothing, Ready-made Clothing, Hairstyling and Beauty, Embroidery, Knitting Teaching, which aim at giving formal education for women, Eskisehir Anadolu University started associate degree program in Home Management in 1992-1993. It is one of the open education faculty associate degree programs in the university and it enriched the list of the offered programs, which have included license degree programs in Economics and Management since 1982.**

**The program aims at giving students the skill and knowledge to use the sources of home, family and individuals in the most efficient way. The courses for which the students of the program are responsible in their first year are General Management, Introduction to Behavioral Sciences, Introduction to Economics, Communication, History of Civilizations, Basics of Information Technologies, Introduction to Law and Foreign Language.**

**In the second year they are taking Family Finances, Turkish Language, History of Atatürk's Principles and Revolutions, Family Health, Family Structure and Relations, Home Management, Women in Society, Family Psychology and Teaching courses. As of November 20, 2012, there are 4038 and 5044 active and passive students attending House Management program. 28.175 women and 19.232 men have finished the program since it was established in 1992-1993. People who graduate from this department can work as a specialist in ministries, hotels, nursery schools, kindergartens, hospitals, nursing homes, etc. In short, any public or private institution that takes up the tasks at home can be a workplace for the graduate students. ([www.anadolu.edu.tr](http://www.anadolu.edu.tr). 19.11.2012)**

**When the women and men examined in terms of education, it can be seen that, of all the 3.171.270 illiterate people, 553.704 are men and 2.617.566 are women. The number of men who graduated from a higher education program is 3.196.262 and the number of graduate women is 2.299.487 in the total number of 5.495.749 graduates.**

**45% (1.713.602) of the students who are attending a higher education program in 2010/2011 are women. (KSGM –Head Office for Status of Women-, 2012, s.12, 14).**

**Social connotations for women, their fertility and productivity roles affect their formal education process negatively. Society sees women as housewives and babysitters, and it does not welcome any activity that would spoil their schedule for the roles.**

**As a result, women, especially with a family, have difficulty in attending studies or activities outside home and there is a lot of research justifying the fact. That is why open education seems to fit commonly for women.**

**Moreover, attendance to courses for women with roles housewives and mothers makes it very difficult to manage time; however, distance education system lets them be as flexible as they want in terms of time. Women's inclination towards open education is fostered by their time, place and resource restrictions and also by their socio-economic incapability. (Kwapong, 2007, s:69).**

**In the countries where open education is a means of higher education, there are a number of studies conducted on male and female students' participation to distance education programs.**

**In one of her studies, Christine Von Prummer reveals that distance education is a favorable facility in the sense that it lets housewives and mothers plan and organize their house chores, their time to spend with kids and their own time to study and work.**

**In distance education, especially adult women can pursue their education while they are working or starting a family as well. (Von Prummer, 2000, s:3). In her study, Sheila Wipf states that distance education is a very apt opportunity for women who wish to develop themselves in academic sense and that it lets them pull the strings of their own life, which**

was beyond the bounds of possibility in the past.

She also asserts that the number of women utilizing computer and other technologies in distance education has come up to the number of men. (Wipf, 2007).

The following data has been attained in the study carried out by Kirkup and Von Prummer: Multiple roles that women take on, financial burdens, security worries and distance to the facilities become an impediment for women to receive traditional education. For a woman who takes on all the responsibilities at home, it becomes impossible even to go to the place of education. Surrounded by financial restrictions, they cannot pay for tuition, babysitters and transportation for the sake of attending formal education.

Besides, cultural roles that are fixed for women, early marriages and lack of family support destroy their desire to go to school. However, distance education systems can overcome most of the boundaries that prevent women from receiving education and raise the level of justice in education by lessening the differences in physical appearance, socio-economic backgrounds, race and gender. Learning becomes independent from time and place, but the financial and technological restrictions remain in distance education, too.

Technophobia and the expensiveness of hardware and software can still bear problems for women. (Eshelman, 1997).

Open education systems are a great opportunity for women to complete their education, yet it can be still problematic for especially working women to benefit from distance education due to their responsibilities at home.

They cannot allocate enough time for their studies and cannot get support from the other family members.

A criticism about women attending distance education programs is that these programs lock women down in their homes, alienate them from social life and push them to loneliness.

Students cannot get enough interaction while they can receive enough of it in face-to-face education.

Nevertheless, distance education system is a worthy opportunity for women to acquire a profession, pursue a career/status and complete unfinished education; and also for lessening the inequalities originating from gender. (Demiray, 2010, p.119).

## **PURPOSE AND METHOD**

The purpose of this study is the assessment of Anadolu University Open Education Faculty, Management and Organization Department, Home Management Associate Degree Program providing education via distance education system in terms of students.

For this purpose, a survey consisting of 33 questions has been prepared and this survey has been sent to 2129 female and 2968 male students enrolled to this department by e-mail. 343 students out of 5097 have sent the survey back but one survey has been canceled.

The evaluations have been made on 342 surveys. As the variables in the survey are nominal, one of the non-parametrical techniques chi-square method has been employed and cross-charts relationships have been explained.

SPSS 20.0 packaged software was used in the scope of this analysis. The purpose and function of the home management associate degree program which is a women oriented education program, information on the courses and student numbers are mentioned in the introduction part of the study.

Thereafter, by referring to the subject of woman in distance education in Turkey and in the world and the related statistical data of woman and man on education, the positive and negative sides of the distance education were mentioned with regards to women.

At the findings stage, 342 surveys received from students have been assessed and evaluated.

The following have been taken into consideration in the assessment; demographic characteristics of students, reasons to prefer the program, the courses from which they benefit in their social lives, intra-family relations and business lives, their opinions on academic program, computer and internet utilization, whether the program makes contribution to acquire a profession, improve themselves as an individual and growing consciousness on woman rights.

In conclusion, the program assessment has been carried out in terms of students.

## **FINDINGS AND IMPLICATIONS**

In this study, aiming the assessment of Anadolu University Open Education Faculty, Management and Organization Department, Home Management Associate Degree Program providing education via distance education system in terms of students; 30.7% of 342 participants are women and 69.3% are men.

The women participated in the study are aged between 18-24 with a rate of 44.8%, 25- 34 with a rate of 39% and the men participated in the study are aged between 25-34 with a rate of 39.2% and between 18-24 with a rate of 28.7%. As for the marital status; whilst 68.6% of the women and 54% of the men said they are single, 77.1% of the women and 62.4% of the men said they do not have kids.

Considering the income rates of the students, 49.5% of the women and 23.6% of the men said they have no regular income while 29.5% of the women and 30.8% said they have a monthly income of 1000-2000 TL.

The region where 44.8% of the women and 40.1% of the men live is Marmara and it is followed by Inner Anatolian region. "Big cities" top the list of the residential place with a rate of 61.9% for women and 57% for men and second best choice is "small cities".

After the demographics of the participants, they were asked about their opinion on the distance education programs.

First, their reasons to prefer the program were questioned and the answers of the female participants were "acquiring a profession" with a percentage of 53.3% and "getting promotion in the current job" with 19%.

However; men said they chose it for "getting promotion in the current job" with a rate of 34.6% and to "getting a degree" with a rate of 31.2%.

As seen in Table: 1, there is a significant correlation between sex and reasons to prefer the program ( $p < 0,05$ ). The reasons of male participants to prefer the program gather

around “getting a degree” and “getting a promotion in the current job”.

However, those of women are found as “acquiring a profession” with a rate of 53.3%. When the findings are analyzed in terms of gender, women regard Home Management program as a women oriented program to get a profession while men see it as a way of getting promotion in their current job and getting a degree, not as a way to acquire a job.

This result complies with the objectives of the program as is stated in the employment opportunities of the program.

**Table 1:  
The Reasons to prefer the program**

$\chi^2= 43,977; p=0,000$			Sex		Total
			Female	Male	
The reasons	Acquiring necessary information for the family and daily life	f	4	12	16
		%	3.8%	5.1%	4.7%
	Getting a degree	f	17	74	91
		%	16.2%	31.2%	26.6%
	For general knowledge	f	4	15	19
		%	3.8%	6.3%	5.6%
	Getting promotion at current job	f	20	82	102
		%	19.0%	34.6%	29.8%
	Self-realization	f	2	6	8
		%	1.9%	2.5%	2.3%
	Acquiring a profession	f	56	48	104
		%	53.3%	20.3%	30.4%
	Coincidence	f	2	0	2
		%	1.9%	0.0%	0.6%
Total		f	105	237	342
		%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

When students are asked if they find the courses in the program satisfactory, Female students stated that they find them satisfactory with a rate of 82.9% and male students said that they find it satisfactory with a rate of 82.3%. (Table 2).

**Table: 2  
Are the courses in the program satisfactory?**

$\chi^2= 0,017; p=0,897$			Sex		Total
			Female	Male	
Enough	f	87	195	282	
	%	82.9%	82.3%	82.5%	
Not enough	f	18	42	60	
	%	17.1%	17.7%	17.5%	
Total		f	105	237	342
		%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Opinions of women and men on whether the courses are satisfactory do not differ. ( $p < 0,05$ ). Majority of both men and women think that the courses in the program are satisfactory.

Women find the core courses in the program satisfactory with a rate of 82.9% while men thinks they are satisfactory with a rate of 82.3%. 74.3% of women find the branch courses satisfactory whilst 71.7% of men find them satisfactory.

The rate of women who find language courses re satisfactory is 61.9% and the rate of men who think so 70%.

These findings show the satisfaction of the students about the program, courses and course contents.

However, to the question "Do you think it is enough for the program to be a two year associate degree?", 62.9% of women and 51.5% of men answered "No it is not, it should be a four year license program".

When the question "Does the program make any contributions to acquire a profession?" was asked, students said, "yes" with a rate of 68.4% (Table 3). This rate is 79% for women and 63.7% for men.

It has been noted that there is a statistically significant relationship between gender and the opinions on the contribution of the program to get a profession after chi-square analysis. ( $P < 0.05$ ).

It has been also found that the opinions of female participants on contribution of the program to get a profession are more positive compared to men.

This result complies with the fact that women answered "to acquire a job" when their reasons to prefer the program were asked.

**Table: 3**  
**Does the program make any contributions to acquire a profession?**

$\chi^2 = 7,919; p = 0,005$			Sex		Total
			Female	Male	
Yes	f	83	151	234	
	%	79.0%	63.7%	68.4%	
No	f	22	86	108	
	%	21.0%	36.3%	31.6%	
Total		f	105	237	342
		%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Whether the program makes any contributions to personal growth 75.4% of all the participants answered "yes".

This rate is 82.9% for women and 72.2% for men. It has been noted that there is a meaningful relationship between gender and program's contribution to personal growth. ( $p < 0,05$ )

It has been also found that the opinions of female participants on program's contribution to personal growth are more positive compared to men.



To the question " Do the courses in the program help raise awareness on woman rights?" 65.7% of women and 65.4% of man answered "yes".

It has been noted that there is not a meaningful relationship between gender and program's contribution to raising awareness on woman rights. ( $p > 0,05$ ) In general, men and women stated positive opinions about the subject. In this sense, the program seems favorable in terms of students.

When the question "What are the courses that you most benefit from in your social life, intra-family relationships and work life?" was asked, 22.9% of women and 24.1% of men chose "Information Technologies" as the course that they most benefited from in their social life.

The second most chosen subject is "Introduction to Law" by 19% of women and 18.1% of men. It has been seen that there is not a meaningful relationship between gender and the most benefited courses in social life. ( $p > 0,05$ )

The fact that the majority of the participants are young and live in big cities is in direct proportion to their most benefited course "Information Technologies". 43.8% of women and 39.7% of men chose "Introduction to Behavioral Sciences" as the course that they most benefited from in their in their intra-family relationships.

The second most chosen subject is "Communication" by 34.3% of women and 26.6% of men. There has been spotted no meaningful relationship between gender and the most benefited courses in intra-family relationships. ( $p > 0,05$ ).

No significant difference was detected between course preferences of men and women.

These two courses are important for their intra-family relationships and this implies that the program plays a meaningful role in students' personal life and that the program is reaching its aims.

To the question "What are the courses that you most benefit from in your work life?", 24.8% of women and 27.8% of men answered "General Management" as the course that they most benefited from in their work life.

The second most chosen subject is "Information Technologies" by 21.9% of women and 18.6% of men. It has been seen that there is not a meaningful relationship between gender and the most benefited courses in work life. ( $p > 0,05$ ). No significant difference was detected between course preferences of men and women.

Most of the participants are working at different jobs and it explains why "general management" the most favorable answer for their work life.

94.2% of the participants said they have personal computers. The rate for women who have personal computers is 93.3% and the rate for men is 94.5%.

As for the Internet use, 91.4% of women and 88.6% of men stated they use the Internet. The total rate of the participants who utilize the Internet is 89.5%. No significant difference was detected between the Internet utilization of men and women.

Majority of the students has access to technology and they use it as necessary. The most preferred type of course material is "books" by 52.4% of women and 43.9% of men.

The Internet comes second with a rate of 26.7% by women and 33.8% by men. Similarly,

**43.8% of women and 46.4% of men revealed that they use the e-exam service the most among other online services.**

**Lastly, students were asked whether the program is a women oriented one and 56.1% percent gave the answer "no".**

**Even if the purpose of the program and job opportunities after graduation may seem womanish considering gender roles in society, students still consider it not exclusive to women regarding the courses and contents of the program.**

## **CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS**

**The program was evaluated as positive by the active students in this study, which aims at assessing Anadolu University Open Education Faculty, Management and Organization Department, Home Management Associate Degree Program providing education via distance education system in terms of students.**

**"Acquiring a profession" for women and "getting promotion at current job" for men are the most preferred reasons to choose the program. This result complies with the purpose of the program in terms of female students. Opinions of women and men on whether the courses are satisfactory also do not differ.**

**Majority of both men and women think that the courses in the program are satisfactory.**

**These findings show the satisfaction of the students about the program, courses and course contents. However, students would prefer the program to be a four year license degree when they were asked if the two year associate degree is sufficient for the program. It has been also found that the opinions of female participants on contribution of the program to get a profession are more positive compared to men.**

**This result also complies with the fact that women answered, "to acquire a job" when their reasons to prefer the program were asked. It has been also found that the opinions of female participants on program's contribution to personal growth are more positive compared to men. In general, men and women stated positive opinions about the contribution of the courses in the program to raising awareness on woman rights.**

**Both women and men chose "Information Technologies" as the course that they most benefited from in their social life, "Introduction to Behavioral Sciences" as the course that they most benefited from in their intra-family relationships and "General Management" as the course that they most benefited from in their work life.**

**The most preferred type of course material is "books" by both women and men. Similarly, Both women and men revealed that they use the e-exam service the most among other online services in distance education.**

**Open education has a crucial function in women's development and Open Education Faculty "Home Management Associate Degree Program" offers a mostly women oriented program, which aims at earning women the skill and knowledge to use the sources that home, family and individuals have in the most efficient way.**

**This fact is in line with the fact that women chose "acquiring a profession" as the first reason to choose the program.**

**Because of time and place restrictions, scarcity of recourses and overwhelming duties at home women can be provided with opportunities to improve themselves and complete their education by open education system that serves the opportunities at their homes without**

any time or place restrictions. As is the case in other parts of the world, it should not be enough to start women oriented programs in only higher education level.

It is also necessary to establish informal education programs that would encourage women to work and help them acquire a profession, raise awareness on their own rights and become modern individuals who are self-confident and socially successful.

#### **BIODATA and CONTACT ADDRESSES of the AUHOR**



Dr. DUNDAR in 2003, she received doctor's degree with her dissertation titled as "Presentation of Social Gender in Tv News" (Televizyon Haberlerinde Toplumsal Cinsiyetin Sunumu). After receiving the degree of expert in Open Education Faculty, department of non- formal education in 2009, she was appointed as an assistant professor in Open Education Faculty in 2012. Since then, she has been working as an assistant professor in Anadolu University Open Education Faculty. She was directed numerous television educational program in the center of the television production

Anadolu University. And she has many national, international articles and papers about media, women and distance education published in various books and magazines are some of her works. These are "Women's Representation in Television News"(Televizyon Haberlerinde Kadının Temsili), "The Presentation of Violence Against Women in National Newspapers" (Türkiye'de Kadına Yönelik Şiddetin Ulusal Gazetelerde Yer Alış Biçimi), "Women in Televizyon News in Turkey" (Türkiye'de Televizyon Haberlerinde Kadın), and television educational programme titled "Language and Concept Development in Children".

**Assist. Prof. Dr. Serpil DUNDAR**  
Open Education Faculty, The Center of The Television Production  
(Açıköğretim Fakültesi Televizyon Üretim Merkezi)  
26470, Eskişehir, Turkey.  
Tel : +90222 3350581 (10 hat)/5819  
GSM: + 90 532 7174670  
Email: [sdundar@anadolu.edu.tr](mailto:sdundar@anadolu.edu.tr)

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## **TECHNOLOGICAL RACE: Distance Education Can Enhance Gender Equity for Women Education in Nigeria**

**Martha NKECHINYERE AMADI (Ph.D)**  
**Department of Educational Administration**  
**Faculty of Education**  
**University of Lagos Akoka, NIGERIA**

### **ABSTRACT**

This paper elaborates on how distance education can expand the scope and coverage of education for women in Nigeria, using ICTs. Every thing from traditional media to Web 2.0 to mobiles is the backbone of distance education. Developing the technology that is most appropriate for women in their own environment-community radio have a special place as to enhancing the quality of education of women. Aspiration for social and women education in Nigeria must be simultaneously built on the foundation of knowledge and skills through a system of delivery that reaches the women as appropriate for this present time. Distance education tends to be regarded as a second best option, open to those who, for whatever reasons cannot enrol in face-to-face institution. Domestic burden, childbirths, raising children, cultural boundaries and socio-cultural values places women behind and serves as factors hampering women education. Women usually invest a higher proportion of their earnings in their families and communities than the men. Against this background, with ICT, women can be at home and build up their productive skills, obtain a degree and even earn a living- all online, while they have enough time to look after their children and take good care of the home.

**Keywords:** Technology, distance education, gender equity, women, education.

### **INTRODUCTION**

As has been aptly stated in (Sahed, Karasale, & Lifanda, 2005), the 1995 United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women UN, 1995 in Beijing, the girl-child today is the woman of tomorrow. The skills, ideas, and energy of the girl-child are vital for full attainment of the goals of equality, development, and peace. For the girl-child to develop her full potential, she needs to be nurtured in an enabling environment, where her spiritual, intellectual, and material needs for survival, protection, and development are met and equal rights safeguarded (Randell, & Diana, 2009).

Girls' education on the African continent has reached a crossroads. The Convention of the Rights of the Child (CRC) was established in 1989 as the first internationally binding legal instrument to encompass the full range of human rights -civil, political, economic, and cultural and social- and codified the concept of human rights specifically applicable to children.

Article 12 proclaimed that children are entitled to express their views on all matters of concern to them, and this norm in turn applies to all aspects of childhood education. According to the UNESCO EFA Global Monitoring 2009 Report, the principle of participation was buttressed in the Convention, with parallel rights to freedom of expression, religion, and association. Article 28 of the Convention addresses education and specifies that all children have the right to primary education, which should be free for all (universal primary

education),

The Beijing Conference in 1995, the Fourth World Conference for Women, set out a broad Platform of Action (BPFA) concerning the girl child. Drawing on baseline statistics from 1990, 130 million children worldwide had no access to primary education, of which 81 million were girls. A considerably higher number of girls had no access to secondary education. According to the UN Division for the Advancement of Women, BPFA acknowledged the urgent need to:

- ✓ increase girls' access to primary and secondary education,
- ✓ alter representations of women and girls in the curriculum, and
- ✓ increase the number of female teachers worldwide.

Strategic Objective 4 stated the need to eliminate discrimination against girls in education, skills development and training. Without significant change to traditional curricular representations of women in roles of inferiority, girls would find it difficult to aspire to transcend these roles and work toward gender parity. Moreover, female teachers must be trained and placed in schools to serve as positive role models for young girls, both in primary and secondary schools. Through these threefold changes, Beijing set out a transformative path for the 21st century toward gender equality for the girl child. This path proved the foundation for the agenda of the Dakar World Educational Forum in 2000 and the formation of the MDGs to be accomplished by 2015 (UNESCO, 2009).

The World Educational Forum, held in Dakar, Senegal in 2000, equally established a Framework of Action to achieve Education for All (EFA) by 2015. EFA Goal II is to achieve universal primary education (UPE), and EFA Goal V is to remove gender disparities and inequalities in education. The Framework of Action was further divided into a two-part agenda:

- gender parity in school participation, and
- equality between girls and boys in opportunities and outcomes.

In Nigerian case, especially the limited education women receive could be detrimental to social development needs of women and girls, hence the focus of this paper, which add some important perspectives to the literature in the area looking out how distance education can enhance women education in Nigeria by the use of various technology. This paper is on how distance education can enhance gender equity in women education in Nigeria using ICTs.

## **THE USE OF TECHNOLOGY**

At the second World Summit on the Information Society (Tunis, November 2005), Kofi Annan reminded that we are living in a world of rapid change where technologies play a multitude of roles. How we tap this technology's potential will shape our future together. We cannot remain indifferent to this enormous metamorphosis.

**The participation of researchers and educators in the process of change that information and communication technologies bring to education is an opportunity to construct, shape and share development knowledge (Karsenti, 2010).**

Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) are obviously of great significance for education. The integration of ICTs in general and women education in particular is the need of the hour. The use of ICTs can make substantial change for education and training. First, the rich representation of information changes, learners perception and understanding of the context and secondly the vast distribution and easy access to

information can change the relation between teacher educators and student - teachers. Moreover, ICTs provide parental support for educational innovations. The ICTs such as Compact Disc and CD-ROM, Video disc, Micro Computers, E-Mail, Voice Mail, Instructional software, Educational Television, VCR, Cable TV, etc. are involved in the list of ICTs . There is a question among the Educators "Can these technologies help the Education Strategist to face the above challenges?"

There is no doubt that the ICTs help to provide quality education to a large number of students. ICTs help to interact with students over a physical distance and access on libraries, journals and other resources. With the help of ICTs educators/teachers can have access to students, colleagues, universities and so on. ICTs provide feedback without biases and provide life long professional virtual situation, training on demand and so on. Further, ICTs facilitate sharing of ideas, experience as well as collaborating on projects through virtual communities. ICTs contribute to the whole system of knowledge dissemination and learning.

ICTs are dominating now in all our private spheres, social and working environment. Few studies conducted on ICTs, e-Learning had become popular amongst educationists because of their strengths and advantages they provide to the instructional process. Ability to serve a large number of students at a potentially reduced cost (Goldberg, Salari and Swoboda, 1996; Starr 1997; McCormack and Jones, 1998; Bates, 2001.)

The web today is used as instructional media in educational institutions. Web is used independently for teaching and learning as replacement for face-to-face teaching. Berge, Collins, & Doughaty, 2000; Bates, 2001 reported experience of Indian Institute of Management Banking (IIMB) in using e-learning. The IIMB has been using e-learning to supplement face-to-face teaching.

A web enhanced training package was recently completed by the University of Lagos, in the university library and the university Computer Institute of Technology (CITS). The project was for the development of learning management system which is scalable and can be implemented in a large scale for the university. Internet is considered as a facilitator for 'just in time' education.

## **CAN DISTANCE EDUCATION HELP TO EDUCATION STRATEGIST TO FACE THE ABOVE CHALLENGES?"**

### **Concept of Distance Education**

Distance education, or distance learning, is a field of education that focuses on the pedagogy and andragogy, technology, and instructional systems design that aim to deliver education to students who are not physically on site. Rather than attending courses in person, teachers and students may communicate at times of their own choosing by exchanging printed or electronic media, or through technology that allows them to communicate in real time and through other online ways (UNESCO, 2003). Within a context of rapid technological change and shifting market conditions, the Nigerian education system is challenged with providing increased educational opportunities without increased budgets. Many educational institutions are answering this challenge by developing distance education programmes.

These types of programmes can provide adults with a second chance at a college education, reach those disadvantaged by limited time, distance or physical disability, and update the knowledge base of workers at their places of employment.

Distance education has the potential to generate new patterns of teaching and learning. Strongly linked with developments in information and communication technologies, it is

close to the development of new learning needs and new patterns of information access and application and learning. There is evidence that it can lead to innovation in mainstream education, and may even have effects beyond the realm of education itself. Distance education therefore plays an especially decisive role in the creation of the global knowledge-based society which women education in Nigeria will not be an exception.

### **Gender and ICTS Integration in Nigeria**

There is need to improve the quality of education and resolve the equity issue. Discrimination against girls, or sexual differentiation, is a serious concern and a barrier to the integration of ICTs in education.

The disparity between girls and boys in learning to use ICTs, at all education levels, underscores the gender-specific nature of Nigerian society, where women's and men's living conditions differ. Depending on the region, women enjoy less social access and are submitted to diverse forms of exclusion, which renders them more vulnerable. Socio cultural frameworks have confined African women to the role of housekeeper (Karsenti, 2010).

**It is generally believed that the family name is preserved in the lineage of the male child, hence the male child should be better equipped than the female in order to get a good job and provide for the family. It is believed that women are mainly for the purpose of reproduction and domestic activity, hence (there is) no need to educate them, as this is a waste of resources (Obote, 2005).**

The problem is exacerbated by the fact that girls appear to be alienated by ICTs, considering them as belonging to the masculine realm. An investigation of computer savvy by university students revealed that female students were less skilled in the use of information technologies than their male counterparts (Sayed & Karelse, 1997). This imbalance at all levels is undoubtedly attributable to a mixture of cultural norms, but also to historical, economic, sociological, legal and traditional factors.

However, a certain balance between boys and girls in ICTs training would be required for the successful long-term integration of ICTs into schools. Moreover, girls make up slightly more than half the student population in most African countries. One cannot contemplate integrating ICTs into the schools without giving due consideration to girls. ICTs integration should not be allowed to be a domain strictly reserved for males. By raising awareness among girls and facilitating their access to ICTs, in short, by advocating sexual equality, it could enable a better implementation of ICTs into education systems. Any efforts to correct gender imbalances would require schools to encourage girls to use ICTs.

According to many studies, several factors must take into account when developing ICTs integration policies so as to overcome the constraints that bar girls from using these technologies at school. For example, educators' (parents' and teachers') behaviours would have to change towards children, from a very young age.

Above all, special measures would have to be implemented in the schools to facilitate girls' access to the computer rooms. There should be no barriers to girls. Otherwise, there is a risk for lack of interest and awareness, exacerbated by the influence of the socio-cultural environment. Every person who can read and write can use ICTs.

The ICTs integration process should therefore consider the entire environment, scholastic and socio cultural, so as to correct the educational imbalance between

the sexes and produce a new generation of young girls and women who are knowledgeable and trained in day-to-day ICTs use. In other words, girls should be offered



the same educational opportunities as boys. Sexual discrimination, i.e. exclusion or marginalization, constitutes a serious hindrance to the effective integration of ICTs into the education system.

Let's look at the reality of the time.

## **ROLE OF DISTANCE EDUCATION IN ENHANCING WOMEN EDUCATION IN NIGERIA**

Open and distance learning can be used for girl's school-age children and adult women that are unable to attend ordinary schools, or to support teaching in schools, both at primary and secondary level. However, it is to be noted that in distance education most courses and programmes are targeted at the adult population. In Nigeria distance education for school equivalency can be an important way of expanding educational opportunities to the women population.

Hence, Open schools that use a variety of media such as audio-conference; video-conference; electronic-mail; telephone; fax; CD ROM, access to data base; radio or television; web conferencing among others will be of a particular interest to high- population country like Nigeria.

There are the capacity of distance education to support large-scale campaigns for disadvantaged women e.g. in the field of HIV/AIDS education; health and nutrition; child mortality, disabled; migrants; cultural and linguistic minorities; refugees; population in crises situations; who cannot be efficiently reached by traditional delivery systems is significant in the context of continuing education and training.

Basically, both private and public providers can make important contributions to the development of industry and trade through programmes for technical and vocational education for women. Core purposes include the ability to respond flexibly to women needs and to provide opportunities for those most disadvantaged by existing provision.

Female teachers' training is an important area where distance education can make a major contribution. This includes initial training for formal qualifications, in-service supplementary training for formal upgrading, and continuing in-service training in particular subjects and topics.

In Nigeria, distance learning can reach large groups of female teachers and will have a profound impact on the national development of women education systems. The use of distance learning for female teacher education is a crucial strategy in the expansion or quality improvement in the public education system.

Moreover, as there is the need to upgrade female teachers' knowledge and competence in using new ICTs, using the new rich instructional and information resources available on the Web is imperative. In such cases it is very appropriate to use the new technologies in the training programme for female teachers.

Non-formal education and community development represent other sectors where distance education can increasingly be used. Programmes at a distance can reach substantial numbers of women, in societies where women lack equal opportunities for participation in conventional forms of education and training.

The barriers that may be overcome by distance learning include not only geographical distance, but also other confining circumstances, (like the women in purdah), personal constraints, cultural and social barriers and lack of educational infrastructure; the



extension of literacy and numeracy skills among millions of adults through the use of radio, television and telematics, helping rural women to develop entrepreneurial skills, assisting agricultural extension workers to improve their capacity to educate farm workers, training of women legislators in legislative drafting, increasing the speed of in-service training of un- or under-trained female teachers, and delivering continuous professional development programmes for women in health, managers and administrators.

Distance education can increase women points of access to education. Learners tend to access distance teaching in four sites, namely, the home, the workplace, dedicated study centres and, like their counterparts in the conventional systems, traditional classrooms. For the women it is often a cheaper alternative to pursuing a course through conventional methods. Distance education may mean a more learner-centred approach, allowing greater flexibility and choice of content as well as more personal organization of the learning programme. Open and distance learning approaches lend themselves to the teaching of many of the complex issues of the modern world, in which input from a variety of disciplines is necessary.

Distance education at the tertiary level shows a two-fold development pattern. On the one hand, numerous single mode open universities have emerged and can absorb large numbers of female learners, while, on the other hand, increasing numbers of traditional universities have begun to offer their programmes also through distance education. The development of new ICTs can reinforce this trend.

Distance education with the use of ICTs can however enhance the delivery of education in many ways (Karsenti, 2010) such as in higher education and teacher training where women learners in communities or faculties can foster self-training and successful cyberspace that extend tutoring and interaction with mentors to new approaches to the concept of time units, independent of learning locations and learning activities. For instance, the contact encouraged using email or even mobile continued education content, or contact with a lecturer. In other words mobile learning decreases limitation of learning location with the mobility of general portable devices. M-learning is convenient in that it is accessible from virtually anywhere. M-Learning, like other forms of E-learning, is also collaborative; sharing is almost instantaneous among everyone using the same content, which leads to the reception of instant feedback and tips. M-Learning brings strong portability by replacing books and notes with small RAMS filled with tailored learning contents. In addition, it is simple to utilize mobile learning for a more effective and entertaining experience.

### **How Is Distance Education Serving The Education System?**

Are there new ways of thinking about curriculum development? What are the impacts on female teacher training, in a context where there is a significant lack of trained and qualified teachers in Nigeria? Aside from all this, online learning allows international cooperative teacher training like the new World Bank initiative called IFADEM for the collaborative and cooperative training of teachers across Africa. It also promotes national and international exchanges between teachers and contributes to the fine-tuning of pedagogical practices.

For the women distance education means increased access and flexibility as well as the combination of work and education. It may also mean a more learner-centred approach, enrichment, higher quality and new ways of interaction. For employers it offers high quality and usually cost-effective professional development in the workplace. It allows upgrading of skills, increased productivity and development of a new learning culture. In addition, it means sharing of costs, of training time, and increased portability of training.

For governments the main potential is to increase the capacity and cost-effectiveness of education and training systems, to reach target groups with limited access to conventional education and training, to support and enhance the quality and relevance of existing educational structures, to ensure the connection of educational institutions and curricula to the emerging networks and information resources, and to promote innovation and opportunities for lifelong learning, The Web offers a worldwide forum in which to teach courses that can be dynamically updated in ways never before possible.

Each female student has an enormous range of resources available, free from limitations of time and space. There remains considerable work to be done concerning searching and sifting techniques within these resources for learners and teachers alike. These resources are reconfiguring the ways in which students learn, and new approaches to networked learning are evolving. The use of the Internet and the World Wide Web in open and distance learning is predominantly represented within higher education, it is also beginning to be used in schools.

Thus, great attention should be given to distance learning to meet the educational needs of the women population, with a view to providing new and alternative learning opportunities for those who were initially deprived of them, or who, for one reason or another, did not make use of them. Educate girls to empower the nations. If we educate a boy, we educate one person, if we educate a girl; we educate a family- and a whole nation.

#### **How Programmes Are Used at a Distance in Nigeria**

There are basic issues to be noted in the pedagogy of distance learning in Nigeria. In reality, different examples will be used to support different pedagogic approaches with value of mobile learning. For instance:

- The National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN), have the NOUN radio, University of Lagos, Akoka, Nigeria use the UNILAG Radio, and the Institute of Management and Technology, (IMT) Enugu are known for their (UNIAIR) programme. These radio stations are where students listen and receive their lectures. These are very popular and are being used by these institutions, to broadcast educational programs of variety on areas such as teacher education, rural development, programmes in agriculture for farmers, science education, creative writing, mass communication, in addition to traditional courses in liberal arts, science and business administration.
- Looking at the above provision, the Nigerian women are using that opportunity to enroll into distance education programmes. With about thirty six study centers situated all over the country and with a population of over thirty thousand students, the women are about twelve thousand. These women are engaged in the various degree programmes offered by these institutions. The courses offered by these women are: education viz; early childhood, teacher education, adult education, educational administration, guidance and counseling and vocational training. There are other professional programmes enrolled by the women such as: law, business administration, agriculture, nursing, human resources and among others. Women are found in almost all the registered programmes of the institutions. In Awka/Lagos study centre the researchers had facilitated over five hundred women from 2006-2010 academic sessions.
- National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN) provides learning resource (LR) with a school based training system for all the study centres in the six regions. Sets of equipment compliments the learning resource centres. E.g. printers, CD- players and writer, data storage items (hard disks and CD-ROM, television, satellite dish and receiving software, digital camera, video use in micro-teaching, set of an audio and video CDS, prints and guides. Students download their course materials on their institutions website.
- NOUN, UNILAG, IMT, and amongst others engage in the configuration equipment,

this is by getting and storing current information on the new curriculum and teaching methods. It is also by observing and discussing lessons taught by other teachers via technology, either on CD-ROM or in real-time via satellite television, and learning to use computers;

- These institutions find and create educational resources to use in preparing lesson plan with colleagues, interacting with other teachers and trainers either online or in meetings and workshops. The teaching learning resources are adequately managed by efficient and effective planning, coordination, and monitoring;
- There are the technical and support trained staff to maintain equipment, technical problems assist to use the equipment and manage the educational resources, and learning support teachers who provided pedagogical leadership and assistance;
- NOUN concentrated much on human resource development. Emphasis was on the soft technology of people's skill, knowledge and understanding rather than on the hard technology of equipment. As a practical response to the growing demand for training and research, Regional Training and Research Institute for Open and Distance Learning (RETRIDAL) was established in collaboration with the Commonwealth of Learning (COL) to ensure the success of ODL system and fully maximise the benefits of distance education in the West Africa sub-region, much of the project's success was due to this;
- NOUN and UNILAG, spent some percent of its budget on equipment and training of different kinds (e.g. new curriculum, teaching methods, training of trainers, materials development, preparation of computer-mediated, online (web-based) and CD-ROM based distance learning materials, management of learning resource centres and the use of e- learning and its integration into teaching and learning);
- In dedicated distance education institutions in Nigeria, there been a drive to get students online to support teaching, learning and administration. The internet provides various means to remedy the lack of interpersonal communications that has been "the Achilles heel of distance education";
- E-learning is pedagogically integrated into the course design and adapted for the current environment, which enable and support enhanced forms of learning. NOUN, UNILAG and IMT students, and amongst others are made to work in small groups on a collaborative task, where they use the internet to find information resource. Conferencing or e-mail is used to communicate and construct a joint project which is assessed, then using e-learning as a clear pedagogic role;
- With the computer networks, learners are encouraged to take an active part in the learning process and construct their knowledge by interacting with learning materials and their peers. There is an online learning discussion forum as social interactive learning environments, for constructivist learning theories. The constructive principles provide a set of guidelines for creating learner-centred, collaborative environments that support reflective and experiential processes.

## **MOBILE LEARNING**

The mobile phone (through text SMS notices) is used with students whose course requires them to be highly mobile and in particular to communicate information regarding availability of assignment results, venue changes and cancellations, etc.

NOUN facilitators use mobile computers connected by wireless networks for students lectures and conferencing. In use also are learning with portable technologies such as handheld computers, PDAs, Pocket PC, smart phones, MP3 players, and by replacing books and notes with small RAMS, filled with tailored learning contents RAMS. This M- learning focuses on the mobility of the learner, interacting with portable technologies, and learning that reflects a focus on how society and its institutions can accommodate and support an

increasingly mobile population.

The M-Learning adds as mobility to the instructor and includes creation of learning materials on-the-spot. Using these mobile tools for creating learning aides and materials in the classroom helps to enhance group collaboration among students and instructors.

### THE VALUE OF MOBILE LEARNING

Mobile learning will be of value to bring new technology into the classroom. It is more light weight device compare to books, PCs, etc. Mobile learning could be utilized as part of a learning approach which uses different types of activities (or a blended learning approach). Also, mobile learning supports the learning process rather than being integral to it. It needs to be used appropriately, according to the groups of students involved. Mobile learning is useful tool for students with special needs. Good IT support is needed. Mobile learning can be used as a 'hook' to re-engage disaffected youth. Thus, it is very necessary to have enough devices for classroom use.

### CONCLUSION

The following steps have been identified in mobile learning by practitioners, policymakers and researchers as essential to this process: Meeting the MDG and EFA goals for 2015; achieving universal and compulsory primary education; eliminating child labour; providing financial incentives for girls' education to help poorer families; improving sanitation and providing sanitary products to mature teenage girls; bringing women into the curriculum in positive, transformative and influential roles, bringing women teachers into the classroom – in primary and secondary schools, to serve as role models for young girls. A lot of development in women access to education using ODL; ODL is a way of providing learning to the space less; married women for ODL; ODL Create awareness to the disadvantaged; and ODL has come to reform/flush out some of these burdensome traditions.

### BIODATA and CONTACT ADDRESSES of the AUTHOR



**Martha NKECHINYERE AMADI (Ph.D)** Department of Educational Administration Faculty of Education, University of Lagos Akoka, Nigeria. Dr. Martha NKECHINYERE AMADI is a lover to the classroom. Martha went through the ladders of teacher training at the College of Education Nsugbe, where she obtained Nigerian Certificate of Education (NCE), Bachelors of Education (B.ed), Masters in Educational Administration and Supervision (M.Ed.) and Doctor of Philosophy.

(Ph.D.) in Educational Administration and Planning, between 1985 and 2002. She was a part-time lecturer at the Nnamdi Azikiwe University between 2004-2007, where she moved to National Open University of Nigeria as a Research Fellow for Regional Training and Research Institute for Open and Distance Learning (RETRIDAL) between 2007 and 2009. She is a lecturer in the Department of Educational Administration, Faculty. Her research interests include technology-enhanced teaching and learning. She is registered member of teacher Registration Council of Nigeria (MTRCN), as well as Nigerian Association of Educational and Planning (NAEAP) and Nigerian Institute of Management (NIM). She has published many articles in reputable journals local, national and international readership.

**Martha NKECHINYERE AMADI (Ph.D)**  
Department of Educational Administration  
Faculty of Education  
University of Lagos Akoka, NIGERIA  
Phone: 0803-872-3221

Email: [drnkyamadi@yahoo.com](mailto:drnkyamadi@yahoo.com)

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