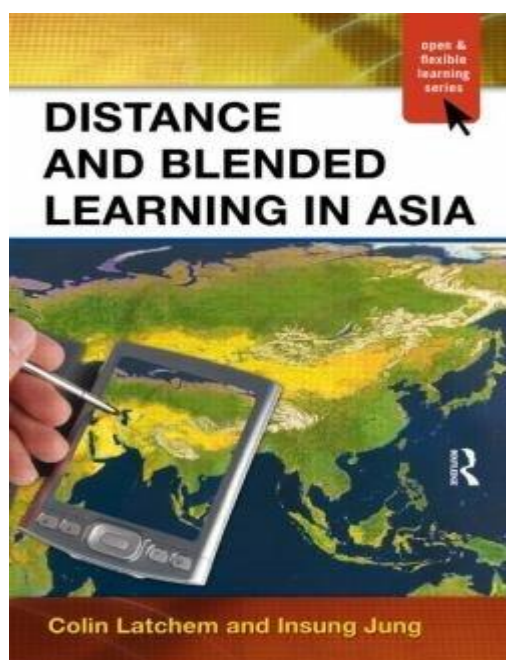# DISTANCE AND BLENDED LEARNING IN ASIA

Latchem, C. & I. Jung, M., ISBN: 978-0-415-99410-1, Publisher: Routledge, Pages: 266, 2010

Reviewed by Yasin OZARSLAN
Computer Education and Instructional Technologies,
Eskisehir Osmangazi University, Eskisehir, TURKEY

Open and distance learning (ODL) is one of the most important trends in education in Asia as well as all around the world. This book reviews ODL/ICT developments in schools, colleges, universities, open schooling, workplace training, professional development and non-formal adult and community education. It examines ODL and ICT experiences, successes and failures of Asian education and training. This is one of the comprehensive books on distance education applications in Asia. It is written by Colin Latchem and Insung Jung. Colin Latchem is an Australian-based consultant in open and distance learning. Insung Jung is Professor of Education, Media & Society at the International Christian University in Tokyo. The book's broader audience is anyone who is interested in ODL. If you are looking for on developments in ODL in Asia, this book is primarily for you. The book is consisted of 266 pages (+xiv) covering 12 chapters with a conclusion part in each chapter.

These conclusion parts provide a critical look at that chapter's issue Topics covered in the book are as follows: Technology, E-readiness And E-learning Readiness, Open Schooling, SchoolNets and Information and Communications Technology (ICT) Integration in Classrooms, Higher Education, Lifelong Learning, Workplace Training, Professional Development and Non-Formal Adult and Community Education, New Providers and New Markets, ICT Integration In and Beyond the School, Instructional Design, Learner Support and Assessment in E-Learning, Leadership for Educational Change and Innovation, Quality Assurance and Accreditation, Staff Training and Development, Research, Publication and Translating Research into Practice.

Chapter 1 examines technology, e-readiness and e-learning readiness in Asian countries. It also provides information about trends in ICT adoption and usage in Asia. Cultural differences in the use of technology are emphasized.

Chapter 2 focuses on developments in open and distance learning and ICT integration in schools. Three main trends are given *Open schooling*, *SchoolNets*, and *ICT integration in classrooms.* Chapter 3 investigates growth ICT usage and ODL in Asian higher education. Correspondence and open learning providers are taken as first wave. Dual-mode, blended learning and cross-border providers are taken as second wave. After that recent newcomers to e-learning and distance education are provided as third wave. Finally, future challenges facing distance and blended learning in Asian higher education are given.

Chapter 4 is about lifelong learning, workplace training, professional development and non-formal adult and community development.

Chapter 5 covers new providers and new markets. Virtual institutions, consortia, partnerships and networks in Asian countries are discussed in this chapter.

Chapter 6 discusses integration of ICT in primary and secondary schools. It presents how some Asian teachers are responding to opportunities which are offered by ICT. The examples given show that there should be never any fear of ICT making teachers redundant.

Chapter 7 explores instructional design, learner support, and assessment in e-learning. Author stated that in many Asian countries there is need for educational reform, to move from 'tell-and-listen" and conformity in learning to self-directed, collaborative or individualized learning and critical and constructivist thinking. With keeping this in mind, ways of changing thinking and practices to improve the quality and extent of e-learning in formal and non-formal education are examined and the topic of instructional design, mobile learning, blended learning, learner support, and e-assessment are investigated.

hapter 8 _focuses on leadership in Asian distance and blended learning, with sections on strategic planning, leadership styles, leadership and Asian culture, strategies for leadership in change management, and leadership recruitment and development. Leadership in ODL and ICT discussed in Asian contexts and all the examples given   from Asia.

Chapter 9 analysis different national strategies for quality assurance and accreditation in Asian open and distance learning. Chapter ends with discussions of international recognition and accreditation, and transnational QA.

Chapter 10 describes the general lack of training and staff development in Asia for distance and blended learning activities. With a comprehensive list of online training resources this chapter provides a model and different strategies for staff development and training.

Chapter 11 includes a comprehensive agenda for research and some useful tips about how to get published, and why Asian researchers tend to be under-represented in publications in this area.

Chapter 12 provides a very brief conclusion from all of the study.
Finally this book involves essential readings about ODL/ICT in Asia and is ideal for everyone. Moreover it provides detailed recommendations for ODL/ICT professionals, educators and students anywhere in the world.

BIODATA and CONTACT ADDRESS of REVIEWER

Yasin OZARSLAN has been a Research Assistant in Department of Computer Education & Instructional Technology at Osmangazi University, Eskisehir - Turkey since 2003. He received a B.S. degree in Electrical and Electronics Engineering Department and an M.S. degree in Management and Organization. His research interest is information and communication technologies. He also gives lessons about computer programming, information and communication technologies in education and learning management systems as an instructor. Now he is also a PhD student in Distance Education Program of Social Sciences Institute of Anadolu University.
Phone (work): +90222 2393750 / 1649
E-mail: ozarslan@gmail.com ; ozarslan@ogu.edu.tr