

PERCEPTIONS OF COURSE COORDINATORS AND COURSE WRITERS FOR DEVELOPING DISTANCE LEARNING MATERIAL

Assistant Prof. Dr. Muhammad IMRAN YOUSUF
Division of Continuing Education
Pir Mehr Ali Shah Arid Agriculture University
Rawalpindi, PAKISTAN

Dr. Muhammad Nadeem ANWAR
Lecturer Education
University of Sargodha, PAKISTAN

Dr. Muhammad SARWAR
Assistant Professor, Education
University of Sargodha, PAKISTAN

ABSTRACT

The main aim of this research is to better understand and draw perceptions of course writers and course coordinators towards the process of developing distance learning material. For developing good self-instructional material cooperative efforts among course development personnel are essential. The study indicates the areas where contradiction is found among perceptions of a sample of seventy course coordinators and seventy course writes of Allama Iqbal Open University, Pakistan through a self developed questionnaire covering preparation, implementation and execution aspects of course development process.

Keywords: Distance learning material, course writers, course coordinators, aspects of course development, coordination.

INTRODUCTION

Distance education is an educational process in which a significant proportion of the teaching is conducted by someone removed in space and/or time from the learner. Open learning, in turn, is an organized educational activity, based on the use of teaching materials, in which constraints on study are minimized in terms either of access, or of time and place, pace, method of study, or any combination of these.

The term 'open and distance learning' is used as an umbrella term to cover educational approaches of this kind that reach teachers in their schools, provide learning resources for them, or enable them to qualify without attending college in person, or open up new opportunities for keeping up to date no matter where or when they want to study.

Distance learning refers to situations in which learners are physically separated from the educational provider, communicating in writing (by postal mail, e-mail, fax, or computer conferencing), verbally (by telephone, audio-conferencing, or video-123 conferencing), or in periodic tutorial sessions (Perraton 1988; Lockwood and Goolesy 2000). Distance learning courses are not like traditional face-to-face courses.

For distance education the course structure and the coverage of the topic should be neither too extensive nor too limited. Furthermore, the course content must be up to date, incorporating the latest research on theoretical concepts and empirical studies. The course content should encourage and motivate thinking by students, and the level of difficulty must be appropriate for the target group. In this way it seems very important to decide whether a course will be designed by a specialist course team (and taught by specialist instructors) or designed by the person who will teach it. In designing a course, the following aspects should be considered:

- What are the learners' circumstances?
- What is the content?
- What are the learning outcomes, or objectives?
- What is the course structure?
- What kind of interaction will there be?
- How will the course design be evaluated?
- What delivery technologies are available to the learners?
- Which of these technologies is most suitable for each objective?
- What exercises and assignments will the student be given?

The course materials which constitute the mainstay of distance education are crucial to the success of distance learning programmes. These distance learning course units are written by teachers of Open University and also by some other external experienced teachers drawn from different universities and colleges. The units are printed under the names of unit writers and course coordinators are involved for proper conduct of these courses. This study intends to have perceptions of course coordinators and course writers about different aspects of course developing process.

DEVELOPING STUDY MATERIAL FOR DISTANCE EDUCATION

A course unit can consist of an overview, unit objectives, several sections of content divided into subsections, interactive questions, a summary, self-assessment questions on the whole unit, and a list of additional reading materials. Distance learning materials should meet certain quality standards, which can be assessed in four different categories:

- Curriculum content quality: appropriate scope, depth, and level of difficulty of course content
- Production quality: appearance and layout of the material, ease of reproduction
- Format: grammar, spelling, visual appeal, and language level
- Completeness: whether all features generally associated with "good" distance learning materials are present, such as identified learning objectives and coverage of all important aspects of the topic.

Before beginning to design a distance learning course, it is important to consider the circumstances of the learners (Rashid, 1999):

- Do the learners live or work close enough to one another to be able to meet from time to time in groups?
- How much education do they have?
- What do they know about the subject of the course?
- Do they have any experience with distance learning?
- Do they seem nervous about learning on their own?

- **What technology do they have access to?**
- **Will they be able to try out their new learning at work?**
- **If possible, course designers should visit the learners in their locations to gain an understanding of their circumstances.**

Process of course Design

The course design process involves many aspects like identifying the target audience, objectives of the course, availability of funds and other resources. When a course is first conceived and planned, it starts with analyzing the students for whom the course is intended, and defining the educational objectives. In order to relate all elements of the instructional process in building a successful programme, a systematic approach to designing a course is required. According to Jenkins (1987) following are the elements of a course design in distance education.

- **Goals, constraints and priorities for designing a course.**
- **Selecting topics or job tasks.**
- **Understanding the characteristics of open learners.**
- **Infrastructure, electricity, water, gas, postal services, telephones, schools, number of classrooms, roads and availability of libraries.**
- **Study habits, for drawing good student profile, all above points needed to be answered carefully.**

The correspondence material should be fully self-contained as the students have no access to libraries or other material. The material should be highly structured and didactic with precise instructions on what the student has to do the text should have self-assessment questions, illustrations, summary, activities and some bibliography. It should be written in an easy and simple language.

Elements of Course Development Strategy

Important elements of a course development strategy are student characteristics, the course topic and objectives, the content, the teaching and learning activities, and the course assessment. Clearly, course development for distance learning is a complex and challenging task. For each element, some guideline questions are required.

Student characteristics

The writer must have the information in respect of the target audience/population.

- **Basic Data: Rural/urban division, sex, age, group employed or unemployed, their level of literacy.**
- **Life style: Student's housing conditions, their working hours, financial position, mode of traveling, attitudes and their aspirations.**

In the first phase, following guidelines questions about the target students are required such as:

- **What is the students' knowledge of the subject?**
- **Are the course requirements clearly specified?**
- **Are the learning results defined?**
- **Does the course match the requirements identified in the needs assessment?**
- **Do students have the necessary IT skills?**
- **Is regional adaptation of the course necessary and possible?**

The educational backgrounds of students, and their skills, will vary from country to country and from region to region. The course developer will know very little about the subject-specific knowledge of the students, their skills in using technology, or their practical experience in the field of study. For example, some students will be familiar with using computers and the Internet while others might not have used these technologies before. Course developers should expect students to have some basic knowledge of the subject and some technology skills, because they are enrolled in a master's program. However, the students' skills in using the Internet or material on CDROM might be very limited, so support and help (e.g., how to install a plug-in, how to check a connection, and so on) will be necessary. Cultural background, which affects how students think, learn, and work, is another critical student characteristic.

Course topic and objectives

Before a course developer or writer converts course material into a format appropriate for distance learning, he or she must reflect on the course topic and objectives. Why? The topic of an existing training course might be relevant for a group of professionals in a single developing country, but not for a broad range of students in different countries. The topic and the contents must be general enough to enable adaptation to local circumstances in different countries. The objectives reflect the potential outcome of the training and will give students an idea of their learning opportunities. Following guidelines question are helpful in this regard:

- Is the course topic appropriate, relevant, and adapted for students in developing countries?
- Are there any controversial ethnic, religious, or cultural topics?
- Is the topic relevant to development aspect of the country?
- Can it be expected that local professors are familiar with the topic?

Devies (1971) investigated some reasons for writing objectives:

- Limiting the task, and removes all ambiguity and difficulties of interpretation.
- Ensuring that measurement is possible, so that the quality and effectiveness of learning experience can be determined.
- Identifying the learning objectives to be achieved in terms of measurable student behavioral outcome.
- Listing the subject content and analyzing task components relating to stated goals.
- Developing pre-assessments to determine the student's profile.
- Designing teaching/learning activities and instructional resources (Printed & Non-printed A.V aids Broadcast & Non-broadcast media).
- Selecting and co-coordinating resources such as budget, personnel, facilities, equipment and schedules to carryout the course design process.
- Specifying support services required for developing and implementing activities and acquiring or producing materials.

Course content

The fundamental element of every distance learning course is the content, which is summarized by the course topic and objectives. The developer of a distance learning course must be aware of the differences in roles and delivery modes. Following guidelines question are targeted under this element:

- What material is readily available for the various parts of the curriculum?
- What additional material is necessary for the various parts of the curriculum?
- Where can you get these materials?
- Does the course cover the right content and is the coverage extensive enough?
- Is the content up to date?
- Is any important content missing, which might be of importance for the target group?
- Is the structure of the content flexible? Can it be divided into logical smaller segments for conversion into digital learning material?
- Is the level of difficulty right for the learners?
- Will the content need to be adapted to local conditions?
- Will the course be accepted by students, and will they learn from it?
 - How long will it take students to study the materials?

Teaching/Learning activities and resources

In a teaching learning process, the importance of interaction cannot be over emphasized. It helps to achieve objectives particularly in the affective domain consisting of attitude formation, development of appreciation and interpersonal relations. Likewise, in the cognitive domain, higher level skills like problem solving and decision making can receive attention through interaction activities. With the help of activities, knowledge and skills that have already been learnt can be reviewed, clarified, corrected, reinforced and applied. Students can be asked through an activity to report on their projects and other experiences, which enable them to learn from each other as well as from the tutor of the study center. This can only be possible if the writer is able to design such activities and insert them at the proper place of the unit. The writer must have the knowledge and experience of various forms of activities (Rashid, 1998).

- **Reviewing Experience:** The writer asks students to report on or develop lessons from their own experiences.
- **Attitude Questions:** Asking students to respond to attitudes or statements and to explain their responses.
- **Finding Things Out:** Students normally get information from others through interviewing or discussion technique.
- **Finding and Using Information:** Such activities require the students to use books, documents and reports and so on to answer questions set by the writer.
- **Role Play:** It can be included at a place where the students may be asked to discuss the problems and issues of their studies in a meeting of tutors.
- **Preparing Written Information:** These activities can include preparation of newsletters, notices or a press release.
- **Problem Solving and Planning Action:** Such activities are developed to enable the students to describe their problems and then work in small groups on a strategy for solving them.

Generally, distance education courses are made up of a number of course components or learning materials, which can include any of the following: teaching texts, study guides, course guides, readers or anthologies, assignments (with or without an accompanying tutor guide), television broadcasts or videotapes, radio broadcasts or audiotapes, software or online information and data, CD-ROMs, textbooks, and¹²⁷ laboratory materials.

In addition, some student support may be provided, either through personal communication at local universities or through online student tutors. Both the media used for distance learning and the student support arrangements affect the possible level of interaction in a distance learning course.

- What is the best format for your course (Print, Other media or Web-based)?
- Is the course suitable for the delivery mode (e.g., online, CD-ROM, print material)?
- Is the printed course reader easy to prepare?
- What is the best approach for the course (exploratory, problem-based)?
- Is the material presented in a clear and understandable way?
- Are different methods of presenting material used to correspond to different learning styles?
- Does the course provide opportunities for student/instructor interaction or student/student interaction?
- Are there opportunities for learning through doing, collaborative learning, or other types of activities?
- Are the learning activities clearly defined and manageable?

Writing styles

Distance Education materials not only have to convey information to the students, but also they have to structure and control the process by which this information is presented to and assimilated by the students. Such materials need to be designed with much more care than the texts of formal systems. There is a need to develop an effective writing style in distance education is particularly significant. In writing styles some factors are very important for writing the distance education material. These are given as under:

- How much new thinking needs to be done about subject matter?
- How much do we need to find out about the needs of distance learning students?
- Whether the materials are meant to be truly self-instructional.
- To what extent can the writer get his learners to work from already published material?

Format of distance education material

Format refers to the general appearance of the page and of the document as a whole. The placement of unit on the page, such as the headings, margins and number of columns, features of type, such as double or single spacing, paragraph indentation and type style. The unit size, its shape and binding all makes it attractive. The format of the unit consists of the following:

- Introduction
- Objectives
- Page design
- Headings
- Numbering systems and sections
- Use of icons/symbols/diagrams/charts
- Self assessment exercises
- Activities
- Summary
- Spacing of answers/feedback
- Bibliography

Studies regarding the creation of printed material for distance education indicate that one of the most effective methods of teaching is through illustrations. Illustrations, like heading and sub-headings, break-up long strings of continuous text. In many cases, a good illustration can replace the text and communicate the desired information more quickly and effectively. Any time writer can use a phone, line drawing, chart, graph, or table.

Visual and learning material

One of the main functions of any visual aid is to set in train the right kind and quantity of perceptions from which learning can take place. Now-a-days visual materials are being utilized to make the teaching more effective. As a matter of fact, it now appears obvious that properly designed visual material like pictures, photographs, maps, diagrams, graphs and symbols for distance education can be very useful for all open learners. Use of pictures, use of comics, use of pictorial charts, diagrams in the text are very productive and create stimulation in the students of open learning system.

Course assessment and evaluation

Course assessment has a significant impact on learners and their progress. Assignments should be consistent with course content and objectives and be manageable in the time allocated, with the resources and technologies available to the learner. Assignment tasks should enable learners to pursue some of their own interests or apply their learning to a practical situation or their own context. Possible assignment types include the following:

- Essays or reports
- Multiple-choice questions
- Individual or group work on case studies or scenarios
- Discipline-specific problem solving (mathematics, science, engineering)
- Video demonstrations or on-site meetings
- Developing a database or annotated bibliography
- Projects
- Simulations
- Experiments

Regardless of the form of the assignment, feedback on a learner's assignment is always necessary. In response to multiple-choice questions, the feedback can be an automatic message from the learning system. For most of the other assignment forms, more specific feedback is necessary. The course developer will provide guidelines, questions, and suggestions for course assignments, and the local facilitator will be responsible for course assessment and grading. Following are guidelines question:

- Can the course assessment be with the provided resources?
- Is the course assessment open questions, questionnaire, assignments or other methods?
- How much time will students need to prepare coursework and exams?
- What is the grading system of the course? Are guidelines for grading provided?
- How will the course evaluation be organized? Will it be summative or formative?
- Is the method for course evaluation appropriate for the topic and the length of course?
- Are the course assessment and the evaluation transparent for the students?

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study was based on the following objectives:

- To identify different aspects of course unit writing at Allama Iqbal Open University, Pakistan for distance learning.
- To explore the perceptions of course writers and course coordinators about process of distance learning material development.
- To draw comparative views of course writers and course coordinators.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The study carries immense significance for promoting the cause of distance education in Pakistan. It would help in identifying different aspects of distance education course writing so that new trends are to be drawn.

So this study will provide the basis for further strengthening of distance education in the country. The study is also likely to motivate the course writers and course coordinators of distance education to seek and search further new styles of writing the study material according to the needs of the students.

The findings of the study are also likely to help the personnel related to the management of Allama Iqbal Open University such as administrators, planners and other authorities of open learning system. In addition to the above, the study is likely to help future researchers to investigate and explore further new trends and dimensions of distance education for coming generations.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Population and Sampling

The population of the study consisted of all the course writers and course coordinators involved in the process of developing distance learning materials. Seventy course writers and seventy course coordinators were selected randomly as sample of study.

Research Tool Development and Data Collection

Since the study was descriptive in nature, therefore, survey approach was considered appropriate to collect the data. For the purpose, questionnaire on five-point (Likert) scale was developed. The questionnaire was validated through pilot testing on five course writers and five course coordinators.

Data Analysis

The data collected through questionnaire were coded and analyzed through Ms- Excel in terms of percentage and mean scores. Scale values were assigned to each of the five responses ranged from 5-1 viz SA to SDA and to calculate the mean score, following formula was used.

$$\text{Mean Score} = \frac{(\text{FSA} \times 5 + \text{FA} \times 4 + \text{FUNC} \times 3 + \text{FDA} \times 2 + \text{FSDA} \times 1)}{N}$$

Where

FSA = Frequency of Strongly Agreed responses.
FA = Frequency of Agreed responses.
FUNC = Frequency of Uncertain responses.
FDA = Frequency of Disagreed responses.
FSDA = Frequency of Strongly Disagreed responses.

FINDINGS

The findings drawn out from the data analysis are given below.

Table: 1
Perceptions of Course Coordinators (CC) and Course Writers (CW)
about Preparation Aspects of Course Development

S. #	Statements	CC/CW	SA	A	UNC	DA	SDA	Mean Score
1	Complete schemes of studies are provided to the course writers	CC	19	28	08	07	08	3.61
		CW	25	15	12	11	07	3.57
2	Format for unit writing is provided to be followed	CC	28	14	12	05	11	3.61
		CW	16	17	18	12	07	3.33
3	Process for writing distance education material is explained and conveyed	CC	16	31	08	07	08	3.57
		CW	15	24	12	09	10	3.36
4	Sufficient time is given for writing course unit	CC	28	19	08	07	08	3.74
		CW	12	06	08	18	26	2.43
5	Language experts are involved in the process of course development	CC	27	21	09	07	06	3.80
		CW	12	33	08	07	10	3.43
6	Subject specialists are involved in the process of course development	CC	16	27	14	07	06	3.57
		CW	19	27	08	07	09	3.57
7	Teaching materials are tried out	CC	11	16	23	11	09	3.13
		CW	08	18	21	13	10	3.01
8	There is proper co-ordination among the personnel of course production	CC	22	16	14	10	08	3.49
		CW	05	11	11	19	24	2.34

It is evident from Table: 1 that eight items were taken for course preparation aspect of distance learning material development process.

The mean score of statement No. 1 and 6 shows that both the respondent i.e. course writers and course coordinators were found agreed with the concerned statements.

**Perceptions of Course Coordinators (CC) and Course Writers (CW) about
Implementation Aspects of Course Development**

S #	Statements	CC/C W	SA	A	UNC	DA	SDA	Mean Score
1	Teaching materials are presented in an understandable manner	CC	19	24	12	05	10	3.53
		CW	22	26	08	08	06	3.71
2	Mass media is kept forth to promote education among the masses	CC	18	12	16	11	13	3.16
		CW	14	18	19	10	09	3.26
3	Contents of courses are useful for everyday life	CC	14	22	15	11	08	3.33
		CW	14	19	18	10	09	3.27
4	Existing courses are slightly fraught with errors and misconceptions	CC	20	16	11	11	12	3.30
		CW	15	10	11	24	10	2.94
5	Existing courses contain practical work	CC	26	20	07	10	07	3.69
		CW	14	20	14	11	11	3.21
6	Examples related to the everyday life are used properly in the courses	CC	07	09	11	24	19	2.44
		CW	23	18	14	11	04	3.64
7	Students activities are adequately provided in the course	CC	23	18	11	09	09	3.53
		CW	18	29	11	04	08	3.64
8	Additional reading materials are indicated	CC	28	16	11	08	07	3.71
		CW	22	24	11	07	06	3.70

The mean scores of statement No. 7 focus that both the course writers and course coordinators were found uncertain in their response that course materials were tried out. It is evident from mean score of item 4 and 5 that course writers disagreed that sufficient time was given for unit writing and that language experts were involved in process, whereas course coordinators agreed the statement. The aspect of coordination was negated by course writers and course coordinators were also found uncertain.

Overall level of agreed position of course coordinator is observed for all items except 7 and 8, whereas uncertain or disagreement is obvious by course writers against all items except item No. 1 and 6.

Table: 3
Perceptions of Course Writers and Course Coordinators about
Execution Aspects of Course Development

S . #	Statements	CC/C W	SA	A	UNC	DA	SDA	Mean Score
1	Courses developed reflect new knowledge	CC	6	11	8	18	27	2.3
		CW	32	16	7	6	9	3.8
2	The courses have potential to meet the future needs of the students	CC	7	6	16	19	22	2.39
		CW	21	20	12	8	9	3.51
3	These courses equip the students with better professional insight and skill	CC	20	22	15	7	6	3.61
		CW	19	25	8	9	9	3.51
4	Courses are developed in a way to make them self-instructional	CC	26	19	10	7	8	3.69
		CW	22	24	8	11	5	3.67
5	Teaching materials are appropriate for target students	CC	15	18	26	4	7	3.43
		CW	11	16	28	8	7	3.23
6	Teaching materials are attractively presented	CC	22	19	11	9	9	3.51
		CW	19	22	12	9	8	3.50
7	Teaching materials are up-to-date	CC	8	7	12	24	19	2.44
		CW	9	6	10	21	24	2.36
8	The revision of courses is invited in the light of new trends	CC	21	22	11	11	5	3.61
		CW	24	19	14	7	6	3.69

It is evident from table: 2 that mean scores for both course coordinators and course writers were found in agreed response (above 3.5) against items No. 1, 7 and 8. Whereas both type of respondents were uncertain in their responses (mean scores less than 3.4) for items No. 2, 3 and 4. The disagreement of course coordinators (mean score 2.44) was found declaring that examples related to everyday life are used properly in courses.

Results of Table: 3 indicates that both Course Coordinators and Course Writers for Course development agreed that courses have potential to equip the students with better professional insight and skill; courses are developed in a way to make them self-instructional; teaching materials are actively presented and the revision of courses is invited in the light of new trends. Both the respondents were found uncertain (mean score less than 3.5) about the aspect that teaching materials are appropriate for target students. Whereas for the aspect that teaching materials are up-to-date, both type of respondents disagreed (mean scores less than 2.5). For item No. 1 and 2 level of agreement with mean scores above 3.5 is declared by Course Writers and the same aspect have been negated (mean score less than 2.5) by Course Coordinators.

DISCUSSION

Keeping the significance of distance education in view, the Allama Iqbal Open University, Pakistan has launched various programmes up to Ph.D. level through system of distance & open learning. The self-explanatory materials including text guides, assignments and Radio/T.V. supports are prepared by coordinated efforts of writers, course development coordinators, reviewers, designers and editors along with other team members of course development team. The creator of distance education materials is the course development coordinator. Then there is the writer who has a vast background and demonstrated experience in his field of expertise. The written course is then sent to editing cell after going through course team discussions and observations. After designing task and editing, the course is sent for printing and then mailed to the students along with the allied & support materials. Distance learning materials also require different media, delivery methods, course design, evaluation methods, and learner-support structures (COL 1999). Course coordinators and course writers both were found uncertain in their responses for keeping forth the mass media among distance learning material. Whereas a recent survey by the Open University in Britain showed that students spend more time with printed text than any other medium. Students rated CD-ROMs more highly than any other electronic medium, especially when the CDs contained interactive material (Wyeth 2002).

Furthermore, the learning material must come with an agenda and a time sheet. Students need to know what is on the agenda and the performance objectives. All learning activities must be planned to ensure that the students will have a positive learning experience therefore facilitators are to develop learner support structures for the courses and so problem-based learning and reflection on the process and content of learning should be encouraged. The production of all study materials is ultimately the responsibility of Course Development team, yet different personnel involved are equally responsible for smooth conduct of material development process.

Lack of coordination among the personnel of course production was found in this study and language experts were reported less involved in the process of course development. The Course Coordinator reserves the right to make final decisions on instructional design, copy editing, and production matters. Overall success depends upon the mutual coordination among course coordinators and course writers.

The relationship between the course coordinators and course writers may be strengthened by arranging meetings, exchanging ideas and discussing educational problems for the production of better and updated study material. An independent department/academy may be set up at main campus of AIOU for the training of new course writers. The training courses like new trends of writing, innovative ideas, new writing styles and formats etc may be developed for them.¹³⁴

The aspect of providing format for unit writing and that of explaining the process for writing was observed uncertain by course writers; whereas course coordinators were found positive in their perceptions about these aspects. Sufficient time for writing course was not given and language experts were less involved in process of course development. This unit-by-unit process works well provided that the overall design has been properly planned initially. The most effective form of planning occurs when there is meaningful dialogue among course coordinators and course writers who meet often in the initial stages. These frequent meetings must continue throughout the course development process by providing opportunities to discuss ways of enhancing student learning and solving problems as they arise.

CONCLUSIONS

Following conclusions have been drawn on the basis of findings of the study.

- The study material was prepared by providing complete scheme of studies to course writers and also in this process subject specialists are involved.
- The aspect of providing format for unit writing and that of explaining the process for writing was observed uncertain by course writers; whereas course coordinators were found positive in their perceptions about these aspects.
- Assigning sufficient time for writing course and involving language experts in process of course development were the aspects that were perceived positive by course coordinators whereas course writers negated the statements.
- Proper coordination among personnel of course development is not perceived by course writers and course coordinators were also found uncertain in their responses in this regard.
- Total disagreement by course writers and course coordinators was found for the aspect of presenting teaching materials in an understandable manner; students' activities are adequately provided and that additional reading materials are indicated among the distance learning materials.
- Course coordinators and course writers both are uncertain in their responses for keeping forth mass media; usefulness of content for everyday life and that course contain slightly fraught with errors and omissions among the developed material for distance learning.
- It was observed that examples from everyday life were not being used by course writers as perceived by course coordinators whereas on the other hand course writers claimed to do so, therefore total contradiction among both groups was obvious in this regard.
- It was observed that total agreement among perceptions between both types of respondents for the aspects that courses equip the students with better professional insight and skill; developed as self-instructional and are presented attractively.
- Course coordinators disagreed that courses reflect new knowledge; have potential to meet the future needs of students whereas course writers have positive claims for these aspects.
- Teaching materials are not declared up-to-date by both types of respondents and appropriateness of material for target students was also observed as uncertain by both groups.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In the light of the analyzed data and on the basis of findings, following recommendations are made for AIOU.

- Orientation workshop/ seminar and training of course writers of distance learning may be organized.
- Proper schedule for developing distance learning material may be organized and sufficient time for writing may be given to course writers. A realistic timeframe be developed that includes dates for the submission of draft revised and finalized units, for the provision of course readings and for further meetings.
- Try out of teaching materials should be done under supervision of experts and as per consideration of target students.
- Proper coordination among personnel of course developing may be ensured through observing regular team meeting. Sessions among team members including course writers and course coordinators should be open for discussions and suggestions for improvement.
- The study material should be prepared in the light of new researches keeping in view the socio-cultural beliefs, practices, values and other needs of the society.
- Specific language evaluation center at AIOU in which technical analysis of study material with respect to language, style, logical sequence, format and presentation may be conducted under the supervision of linguistic personnel.

BIODATA and CONTACT ADDRESSES of AUTHORS

Dr. Muhammad Imran YOUSUF is working as Assistant Professor in Division of Continuing Education, Pir Mehr Ali Shah Arid Agriculture University, Rawalpindi, Pakistan. He did M.Phil. in Education from Allama Iqbal Open University, Islamabad, Pakistan and Ph.D. in Education from University Institute of Education and Research, UAAR. The main areas of his interest are distance education, continuing education and teacher education

Dr. Muhammad Imran YOUSUF
Assistant Professor,
Division of Continuing Education,
Pir Mehr Ali Shah Arid Agriculture University
Rawalpindi, PAKISTAN
E mail: dr.imran@uaar.edu.pk

Dr. Muhammad Nadeem ANWAR is working as Lecturer in Education, University of Sargodha, Pakistan. He did M.Phil. in Education from Allama Iqbal Open University, Islamabad, Pakistan and Ph.D. in Education from University Institute of Education and Research, UAAR. The main areas of his interest are distance education, continuing education and teacher education.

Dr. Muhammad Nadeem ANWAR
Lecturer Education University of Sargodha, PAKISTAN
E-mail: nadeem_phd@yahoo.com

Dr. Muhammad SARWAR is working as Assistant Professor in Education, University of Sargodha, Pakistan. He did M.Phil. in Education from Allama Iqbal Open University, Islamabad, Pakistan and Ph.D. in Education from University Institute of Education and Research, UAAR. The main areas of his interest are distance education, teacher education and educational assessment.

Dr. Muhammad SARWAR
Assistant Professor, Education
University of Sargodha, PAKISTAN
E-mail: drmiansarwar@yahoo.com

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