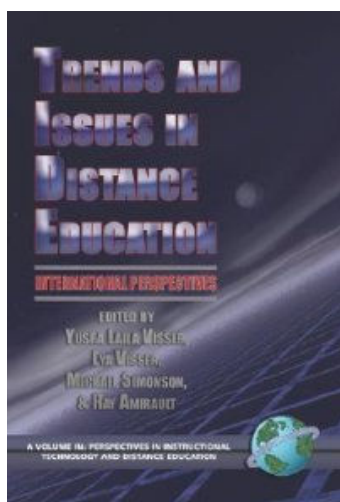


Trends and Issues in Distance Education: International Perspectives

**Edited by Yusra Laila Visser, Lya Visser, Michael Simonsin, & Ray Amirault
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In this book, the terms of "distance education" has been discussed from different perspectives. The term "distance education" conjures up in many minds the image of modern, computer-enabled technology that has blossomed in only the last twenty years.

Many of the lessons learned over the last century of distance education research and practice have been implemented in a wide variety of distance education programs worldwide, from higher education online learning programs in the United States to rural, radio-based instructional programs in developing

countries. Distance education is truly international discipline. While it is true that the term "distance education" has a universal definition, local distance education experiences are often quite idiosyncratic. This idiosyncratic nature emerges

from the need to integrate distance education within the constraints, opportunities, and realities of specific cultural and geographic contexts.

From these local distance education experiences, educators are developing new understandings of the broader field of distance education, including the trends and issues present in the field.

ORGANIZATION OF THE SECTIONS

This book has been organized by thematic content into four main sections. Each of these sections represents a unique level of analysis for trends and issues in distance education.

Part I presents five distinct perspectives on the state of distance education and the trends and issues of the field. First perspective of five distinct perspectives is "a survey of progressive and conservative trends in education with implications for distance education practice." Second perspective is "quality, accreditation and recognition: issues in the delivery of transnational education." Third perspective is "the long and short of distance education: trends and issues from a planetary human development perspective." Fourth perspective is "distance education reappraised: emerging trends in traditional universities and corporate training institutions." And fifth one is "what the world needs now: international research on distance education."

Part II contains a series of interviews that that were conducted with international distance education leaders. This section has four chapters. The individuals interviewed in

this section were selected because they have played a significant role in the development of distance education theory, research and practice.

Part III of the book presents a fascinating array of case studies in distance education. This section has eight chapters. The chapters in Part III section of the book cover experiences with programs and initiatives in places as diverse as South Africa, Brazil, and Turkey. Some of these case studies report on experience with in a specific nation.

Part IV, the last part of the book, focuses on practical issues in distance education. In this section, there are three chapters. In this section, authors of the chapters discuss some of the key trends in the design and development of distance education for international audiences and settings. For example, "wide array of technologies and strategies that can be used for distance education, while giving special consideration to the impact of human and environmental differences on the selection of approaches", "analysing of how mentoring roles evolve as the technologies enabling distance learning become increasingly interactive and accomodating of student-to-student and student-to-instructor interaction.

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About the Authors