

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF VIRTUAL EDUCATION APPLICATIONS (SUMMARY)

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The research was conducted in order to make comparative analysis of virtual education applications. The research is conducted in survey model. The study group consists of total 300 institutes providing virtual education in the fall, spring and summer semesters of 2004; 246 in USA, 10 in Australia, 3 in South Africa, 10 in India, 21 in UK, 6 in Japan, 4 in Turkey. The information has been collected by online questionnaire sent to the target mass by e-mail. The questionnaire has been developed in two information categories as personal information and institutes and their virtual education applications.

The English web design of the online questionnaire and the database has been prepared by Microsoft ASP codes which is the script language of Microsoft Front Page editor and has been tested on personal web site.

The questionnaire has been pre applied in institutions providing virtual education in Australia. The English text of the questionnaire and web site design have been sent to educational technology and virtual education specialists in the countries of the study group. With the feedback received, the spelling mistakes have been corrected and concept and language validity have been completed.

The application of the questionnaire has taken 40 weeks during March-November 2004. Only 135 institutes have replied. Two of the questionnaires have been discharged because they included mistaken coding, names of the institutions and countries. Valid 133 questionnaires cover approximately 44% of the study group.

Questionnaires saved in the online database have been transferred to Microsoft Excel and then to SPSS by external database connection. In regards of the research objectives, the data collected has been analyzed on computer and by using SPSS statistics package program. In data analysis frequency (f), percentage (%) and arithmetic mean (\bar{x}) have been used. In comparisons of country, institute, year, and other variables, che-square test, independent t-Test and one way variance analysis (F Test) have been used. Kruskal-Wallis H test and Mann-Whitney U test have been used. Although virtual education applications differentiate in choices and applications in different countries, education levels and types, after completion of the data analysis it is seen that study group consists of people whom are graduate and undergraduate level, personal users having education expectations, between the ages of 18-45 and working full time. They mostly offer programs providing undergraduate and graduate education in social sciences, giving accredited document, certificate and title. It is seen that most of the instructors have taken a planned education and they are mostly working as full time instructors and they are taking technical support. Financial resources are obtained from fees taken from students and the resources are mostly used for personnel costs. In applications central administration and organization take place and it is seen that they interfere with universities, for physical facilities they use information process centers and virtual classrooms, and for infrastructure and support services they use information process services.

It is seen that while in the teaching process they use both synchronous and asynchronous presentation technologies; in order to support course content they use e-mail, web, cd, and course book technologies to provide basic learning environment function; they prefer different environments to cover face to face education needs; they take self learning and collaboration as basis and they take projects and term paper evaluations serious; they mostly prefer multiple choice tests and they usually make virtual courses exams through the internet.

Regarding the characteristics of their institutions' applications, the study group have agreed on mostly to connection and being dependent on connection opportunities. A significant difference between their institutions' characteristics and the model for developing computer labs, when they had started to provide virtual lessons and presentation technologies used has been found. An insignificant difference between the places of virtual education, certification, accreditation, planned education of personnel and making exams through the internet was found.

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