

DISTANCE EDUCATION FOR PRIMARY AND SECONDARY TEACHER TRAINING IN TURKEY

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Abstract

This paper describe in terms of the pedagogy, course materials, delivery systems and evaluation of the two teachers training programmes viz., Pre-Bachelor Certificate and University Degree to School Teachers, offered through Anadolu University's Open Education Faculty (OEF)

Distance education has proved particularly useful for training people in remote locations who can not attend classes at Universities. Studying at home, using distance education materials, allows individual adults working in various sectors of the economy to update their skills and continue their training. Distance education programm have also become increasingly popular with people in urban areas who want to study at home in their free time or after work without the long evening commute to campus.

Structure of Distance Education in Turkey

Anadolu University in Eskisehir, Turkey, has a dynamic record of producing distance education programs. The Open Education Faculty (OEF) was established in 1982 as a branch of Anadolu University, located in the Anatolian city of Eskisehir. It remains the only higher education institution in Turkey involved in distance teaching. The OEF began in 1982 with two open education programs, one in Business Administration and the other in Economics (Barrows, 1990). Today there are programs produced not only in those subjects but in Nursing, Foreign Language, Mathematics, Sciences, Tourism, Business and Training programs for the private sector, and Teacher Training (Demiray, 1990; Melsaac, 1992; Ozer, 1991; Yangin, 1989). There are also new programs being developed in Social Sciences, Home Economics, and other branches of Teacher Training such as Foreign Language Degree Completion, Physical Education and Painting. These programs are planned for the 1992- 93 academic year.

Turkish educational programs are sent on videotape to around 3,000 Turks living in many European countries like Germany to provide students with curricula similar to that in the Turkish educational system. There are now about 400,000 students enrolled in all of these distance education programmes, a vast undertaking, indeed. The Turkish Open Education Faculty, which is coordinated by Anadolu University, provides distance education courses using printed materials, television and radio programs. In addition, contact with students is maintained through academic counseling, video education centers, student information bureaus and a newspaper entitled 'Anadolu'.

Development of Two Teacher Training Programs

Two of the most recent distance education programs are the primary teacher and secondary teacher training programs. More than 130,000 primary school and around 54,000 secondary school teachers have participated in Anadolu University's Pre-Bachelor Certificate program (Onlisans) and the University

Degree Completion Program(Lisans Tamamlama). The Pre-Bachelor Certificate Program for primary school teachers began in 1985-86 and is now being completed. The university Degree Completion Program for secondary school teachers began in 1990.

The Open Education Faculty in cooperation with the Ministry of Education, offered new distance education opportunities to solve the vast teacher training problems in Turkey. Two main problems were addressed. One problem was that until 1973, teachers who worked in primary schools were graduates of teaching high schools, and they had only six years of education after primary school. After the National Education Basic Law of 1973, students wanting to be high school teachers had, at the minimum, an education from Two Year Educational Institutes. After 1982, the task of providing secondary level teacher training was given to the universities (Yuksel,1987).

Following their education, primary school teachers were hired to work directly in schools with little opportunity for upgrading their skills. In addition to this, the National Education Basic Law, Article 1739, of the Ministry of Education, requires teachers to undertake in-service training at some time during their professional life, thereby giving them the opportunity to pursue higher education during their free time in summer or during official holidays. By 1985 there were about 130,000 primary school teachers in need of in-service training. As a result, in 1985 the Ministry of Education decided to use distance programs to solve the problem.

For secondary school teachers, the problems were somewhat different. Those who received a two or three year university education through Educational Institutes wanted to complete their four year university Diploma and receive a Bachelor's Degree. So in 1990 the University Degree Completion-Program for secondary school teachers was begun.

Pre-Bachelor Teacher Training Program for Primary Teachers.

Prior to 1985, in-service training was provided by university education faculties in many universities throughout Turkey using traditional face-to-face methods. These in-service courses usually lasted only for 15-20 days and the number of teachers who received training was not high. By 1985 there were about 130,000 teachers still in need of in-service training. At that time the Ministry of Education and OEF signed an agreement to develop in- service teacher training programs at a distance.

In 1985-86 Anadolu University's OEF registered 46,774 of the 130,000 primary teachers for in-service training. In 1986-87, there were 83,852 more teachers registered. Additionally approximately 2,500 retired teachers were registered. Within at two years period, OEF had more than 130,000 teachers registered for the in-service teacher training program. The goals of the program were to help teachers become more effective in the classroom, update their subject area knowledge and provide them with a better standard of living by rewarding them financially for participating in in-service training. The Pre-Bachelor Certificate program is a two year course of study.

Characteristics of the Pre-Bachelor Teacher Training Student.

The age of the teachers who enrolled in the program ranged from 27 to 67 years. They were all primary school teachers. Their professional experience ranged from 6 to 40 years, Forty-five percent of them were female and 55 percent were male (Ozer,1991). Fifty-eight percent worked in the countryside and 42 percent of them were in city centers. Ninety four percent of the teachers were married and 6 percent were single or divorced. One hundred sixteen of the teachers who registered for the program were from the

North Cyprus Turkish Republic. These teachers were between 23 to 30 years old and their teaching experience ranged from 1 to 7 years (AOF,1990).

Pedagogical design of instruction. Three main types of instructional materials were used for the Pre-Bachelor Certificate Program. These were print materials, TV, and Radio course programs. All the materials were prepared by well known Turkish educational experts and edited by OEF and Anadolu University educational staff. Pedagogically, the materials were designed to allow students to work independently, using printed materials which were designed especially with the distant learner in mind. Because of limited availability of other types of media for the classroom teacher, broadcast television and radio were used primarily to support the print instruction. Print materials were designed with self-study and self-examination sections which provided individuals with feedback about their performance. Students corresponded with designated experts from Anadolu University when confronted with doubts or queries.

In addition to the teachers in Turkey, teachers also participated from Western Europe, Germany, Belgium, Britain and France. Materials which were produced in Turkey were transferred to VHS and Beta Video formats for distribution to the OEF centres in Europe. Lectures were presented via broadcast televisions by leading experts in the field. These lectures supplemented the printed text. Feedback was provided by the responsible project units. Because of the large numbers of teachers trained in the short period of time, support services traditionally available to other OEF programs, such as individual counselling and face-to-face tutors, was not provided. It is hoped that in future projects this can be improved.

In the first year of the pre-bachelor program 3,222 pages of printed material covering 9 courses were sent to students. In the second year 2,946 pages for 6 courses were sent. Thus during this two year program a total of 6,168 pages of material was received by the students. TV and radio programs of approximately 15 or 20 minutes were produced for each unit. Each course contained 6 to 15 such units. One hundred ninety five TV program units (a total of 65 hours and 142 radio programs (a total of 40 hours) were broadcast during the two years that the students were registered in the teacher training Program (Demiray, 1990).

Table 1
First Year: 1985-86 Academic Year
Pre-Bachelor Certificate Program

Name of the courses	Number of units	Total T.V. broadcast time in minutes and seconds
1. Social Sciences	15	320' 42"
2. Science	15	293' 48"
3. Mathematics	15	313' 40"
4. Behavioral Science	15	314' 31"
5. Foreign Language-I	18	337' 30"
6. Principles of Ataturk	15	342' 14"
7. Turkish	12	262' 23"
8. Teacher Study Guide	6	137' 00"
9. Academic Counseling	-	- -
TOTAL	111	2321' 48" (38 hours, 41' 48")

(Source: Demiray, 1987, p. 38; Yüksel, 1987, p. 51).

Table 2
 Second Year: 1986-87 Academic Year
 Pre-Bachelor Certificate Program

Name of the courses	Number of units	Total T.V. broadcast time in minutes and seconds
1. Contemp. Technology	8	146' 13"
2. History of Civilization	6	83' 02"
3. Methods of Teaching	18	333' 29"
4. Educational Sciences	19	402' 11"
5. Principles of Ataturk	15	304' 16"
6. Foreign Language 1	18	343' 26"
TOTAL	84	1612' 37" (26 hours 52' 37")

(Source: Demiray, 1987, p. 38; Yüksel, 1987, p. 51).

The total <u>time</u> for the broadcast of tv programs during the 1985-86 academic year was	38 hours 41' 38"
The total <u>time</u> for broadcast of tv programs during the 1986-87 academic year was	26 hours 52' 37"
TOTAL 1985-87	65 hours 34' 25"
Total number of the broadcast <u>program units</u> during the 1985-86 academic year was	111
Total number of the broadcast <u>program units</u> during the 1986-87 academic year was	84
TOTAL 1985-87	195

Courses. There were 15 courses in the pre-bachelor teacher training program: 9 of them to be completed for the first year and 6 for the second. The names of the courses, unit numbers and times for TV broadcasts are shown in Tables 1 and 2.

Graduation and Drop-out in the pre-Bachelor Program. At the end of the 1985-86 academic year 41,718 students passed into the second class. Five thousand and fifty-six of the 46,774 students failed in the 1985-86 academic year, thus registering a passing rate of 89%. At the beginning of the 1986-87 academic year, there were 88,908 enrolled students including 83,852 newly registered students. At the end of the 1986-87 academic year 36,802 of 46,774 students completed their studies and were graduated from the program. In addition, 780 Turkish student-teachers who were living in Western Europe studied the courses and graduated. The graduation rate was estimated at 79%.

In the 1987-88 academic year 80,355 of the 93,198 students graduated, thus with a 89% graduation rate. Through the end of 1991 there were an additional 13,468 teachers who graduated from the program. A total of 130,625 students graduated from the OEF Pre-Bachelor Certificate Teacher Training Program for primary school teachers. The overall graduation rate, when the program was completed at the end of the 1987-88 academic year, was 92.3 %.

The Demographics were as follows. Thirty two percent of graduates were female and 68 percent were male. Twenty percent of the graduates were 41 years old or older. There were 143 students over 60 years old, and 3 of them were 67 years old. One of these was female, two of them were male (Ozer,1991).

University Degree Completion for Secondary School Teachers

This second teacher training project is a cooperative effort of Anadolu's Open Education Faculty and the Ministry of Education. The aim of the program is to provide one-year of additional education to the secondary school teachers who have previously completed a two or three year university education. The University Degree program is designed to help them to update their knowledge of the subject they teach and to promote the opportunity to continue their academic career by obtaining a university degree.

The University Degree completion Program for secondary teachers began in April,1990 by enrolling approximately 54,000 teachers in several subjects. These were, Turkish Language and Literature, History, Geography, Mathematics, Biology, Chemistry and Physics. During the 1992-93 academic year, other branches of the degree completion program like language teaching(German, French and English), Physical Education, and Painting began (Anadolu Universities, 1992).

Since 1980, when the Open Education Faculty began, the number of students who enrolled in universities, including the Open Education Faculty, increased from 300,000 to 800,000. In spite of the overall increase in numbers of students in university programs, the proportion of students accepted into traditional university programs has declined while the proportion of students accepted into Open Education Programs has increased during the past ten years. For example, out of 322,320 students who were enrolled in university programs in 1983-84, 281,703, or 87.4 percent, were enrolled in traditional universities. During that same year 40,617 students, or 12.6 percent were enrolled in the Open Education Faculty.

In 1990-91, however, 798,500 students were enrolled in both traditional and open university programs. Of those, only 434,748, or 54.4 percent were admitted to traditional universities while 363,752

or 45.6 percent were admitted to the Open Education Faculty (Anadolu Universities, 1992). These figures reflect the fact that, although nearly twice as many students have been accepted into university programs over the past ten years, the Open Education Faculty is absorbing almost half of that population. In other words, while the proportion of students in traditional university programs has decreased, the proportion of students in Open Education Faculty Programs has increased.

Pedagogical Design of Instruction.: Similar materials are used for the Degree completion program as for the Pre-Bachelor Program. The primary medium of instruction is print material supplemented by TV and Radio broadcasts. At the beginning of the program, fifty-five books were prepared and published for the seven branches of study. Each book consists of eight units. All units are written and produced by the content experts who are drawn from diverse academic communities throughout Turkey under contract to the Open Education Faculty Board of Commissioners. Lecturers on broadcast television are given by academicians connected with one of the major universities. These lectures, alongwith books which are mailed to students, comprise the major part of the instructional package. Feedback is provided through tests and self instructional materials placed at the end of reading sections in the units.

The program in each subject consists of eight units of instruction for each of seven fields or branches of study (see Table 3). The television programs which reinforce the print materials run about twenty minutes per broadcast. TV and radio programs are produced by the Open Education Faculty and broadcast by Turkish Radio and Television (TRT) on Channel 2 (or TV2) in the morning and channel 4 (or TV4) in the afternoons. Radio programs are broadcast during weekdays on Monday, Wednesday and Friday nights (Yangin, 1989). A total of 296 TV programs were produced and broadcast in 1991-92 for a total of 99 hours and 144 radio programs were produced and broadcast in 48 hours of programming.

Examinations : Examinations for both of these programs are set under the auspices of the Anadolu Computer Centre, twice a year. One of the examinations is mid-term, the other is the final examination. The examinations are weighted 30% for mid-term and 70% for the final examination. Apart from these, there is a make up examination opportunity for students who have failed. The composition of the make-up examination is similar to that of the final examination and is used in the same manner. Examinations use a multiple choice test system and are taken in 23 centres around the country.

Courses : The secondary teacher degree completion program consists of seven branches of study. The seven branches of study reflect the subject specialities of secondary school teachers who participate in the Degree Completion Program. The courses are designed to update teachers knowledge particularly in the areas of Science and mathematics. The curriculum is similar to a traditional undergraduate degree program. Each of the branches includes its own subject related to that area of study. For example, Turkish Language and Literature has 64 units of instruction covering 9 subject areas. Eight of the units is broadcast by television. Fifty-six of them are broadcast by radio. Each broadcast program, whether radio or television, is approximately 20 minutes long. All 64 units of instruction have their own print materials.

Table 3
1990-91 Academic Year
University Degree Completion for Secondary School Teachers
Television and Radio programs

Branches	Number of units	Television		Radio	
		Number of Programs	Broadcast Time	Number of Programs	Broadcast Time
1. Turkish Lang. and Literature	64	8	160'	56	1120'
2. History	64	8	160'	56	1120'
3. Geography	56	24	480'	32	640'
4. Mathematics	56	56	1120'	--	--
5. Biology	56	56	1120'	--	--
6. Chemistry	64	64	1280'	--	--
7. Physics	64	64	1280'	--	--
..Courses for all	16	16	320'	--	--
Total	440	296	5920'	144	2880'

(Source: The Open Education Faculty Degree Completion Unit, May, 1992)

Graduation and Drop-out in the Degree Completion Program : Since the degree completion program for secondary teachers is still in its beginning stages, full statistics are not yet available. Of the estimated 50,000 teachers who have enrolled 8,525 graduated in 1991 with a bachelor's degree.

Table 4
1990-91 Academic Year
University Degree Completion for Secondary School Teachers
Graduates

Branches	Number of Graduates
1. Turkish Language and Literature	4903
2. History	708
3. Geography	2322
4. Mathematics	163
5. Biology	293
6. Chemistry	70
7. Physics	66
Total	8525

(Source: The Open Education Faculty Degree Completion Unit, May, 1992)

Conclusion

Both the Pre-Bachelor Certificate Program (Onlisans) for primary school teachers and the University Degree Completion Program (Lisans Tamamlama) for secondary school teachers have realised their goal of providing additional educational opportunities for almost 200,000 teachers in Turkey for whom in-service education was previously unobtainable. If numbers are a measure of success, then the Pre-Bachelor Program was highly successful. Virtually all of the teachers who enrolled in the program completed it successfully. The opportunity to receive training beyond the six year minimum post elementary education which many had received, was very well received by teachers. At the end of the three year period of the project, approximately 130,000 teachers were educated by distance methods through the Anadolu University Open Education Faculty. This education provided a wide range of advantages to teachers by updating their knowledge, keeping their minds fresh and promoting their professional lives. Their status and their salaries have increased and they have gained promotion within the Ministry of Education structure.

It is still too early to evaluate the success of the degree completion program for secondary teachers. Because many of the teachers are at different educational levels, it is difficult to estimate the length of time all will take to complete the program. However, since there are fewer secondary school teachers in this project, it may be possible to provide more counselling and tutoring support than was previously available in the larger scale primary teacher project. It is hoped that most of the over 50,000 secondary teachers will be successful in earning their bachelor's degree and upgrading their skills. The indicators are promising. Already between 8,000 and 10,000 are preparing to graduate this semester.

The teacher training projects in Turkey have been judged successful by the Ministry of Education, Anadolu University Open Education Faculty and many of the teachers. Through the use of distance education media and materials, teachers were offered an opportunity to keep pace with developments in education and work toward improving their teaching situations without having to disrupt their teaching schedules. There is no other way that such a large number of teachers could receive this type of cost effective training.

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