DISTANCE EDUCATION IN URDU: A CASE STUDY OF SELECTED SAARC COUNTRIES

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Introduction: Distance education system is one of the most effective modes of imparting education and training for those who cannot afford formal education. Now a day there is massive rate of dropouts from the formal education system due to financial and other constraints. A large number of pupil who could not complete formal education in a formal way, try to get them educated in certain areas of education. Distance education system fulfils their educational need. Distance education system is gaining substantial popularity in South Asian countries especially in South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) regions. In its member countries as compared to formal education system, distance education system has some unique approaches, which gives central place to the learners in the teaching – learning process and provides a comprehensive learning programme for personality development by using various learning activities. A majority of youth lives in rural areas and a substantial number of colleges are located in district headquarters. They need courses more appropriate to their local context in upgrading their household occupation, agro-industries and rural enterprises such as cooperatives, rural bank, rural development and panchayati raj institutions, as also the vastly developing rural service sector, especially in the field of transport, storage and communication in Urdu medium. It was felt that a comprehensive study should be made to assess the position of distance education in Urdu with reference to SAARC countries.

Methodology: Since the data of student's enrolment were in time series, it was found suitable to compute growth rate on point to point basis to present the status of distance education in general and distance education in Urdu in particular. A detailed discussion of the methods used in this thesis can be traced in Anderson (1976), Kendall (1984) and Walker (1991). The main goal of time series analysis is to identify the nature of the phenomenon represented by the sequence of observation and the pattern of the distance education in Urdu is established, which can be interpreted and integrated with data among member countries regardless of the depth of understanding and the validity of our interpretation (theory) of the phenomenon, the present study extrapolates the identified pattern to predict future trends.

Need of Distance Education in Urdu:

The needs of distance education in Urdu may be as follows:

a   To provide educational opportunity to Urdu speaking and writing people where the human development index of these people are very low.

b   To advance the disseminate knowledge, skills, attitude, interest etc. in Urdu

language through distance education.

c	To improve the quality and standard of distance education in the promotion of Urdu at all levels.
d	To meet the needs of the learners to make distance educations relevant to the needs of the needy people of the region.
e	To make universalization of higher education a success through open universities/ institutions.
f	To remove inadequacies of the existing education system.

General Plan of the Study: The present study has been divided into five chapters as:

Chapter – I ; Distance Education : An Introduction
Chapter – II ; Review of Related Literature
Chapter – III; Distance Education in SAARC: A statistical Analysis
Chapter – IV; Research Methodology and Analysis of Data
Chapter – V; Conclusion

Research Design: The research design constitute of the following samples and variables:

Sample: A sample of SAARC countries – India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Nepal were selected for detailed analysis to find out the existing pattern of distance education in Urdu in particular.

Variables:

(i)   Name of the Institution
(ii)   Country
(iii) Year of Establishment
(iv)   Faculty Strength (Indicating Numbers)

    a.   Academic
    b. Administrative
    c. Technical
    d. Other

(v)   Student Enrollment (Indicating Numbers)
    e. 1994–95
    f. 1995–96
    g. 1996–97
    h. 1997–98
    i. 1998–99
    j. 1999–2000
    k. 2000–2001

(vi)   Number of Courses Offered
(vii) Number of Programme Offered

(viii) Medium of Instruction
(ix) Urdu Medium of Instruction Available

(x)   Number of Courses Offered in Urdu Medium

(xi)   Number of Course Offered in Urdu Language

(xii) Number of Regional Centers

(xiii) Number of Study Centers

(xiv) Personal Contact Programmes Conducted by Study Centers or Not

(xv) Study Material Provided or Not

(xvi) Tele-conferencing Facility Available or Not

Objectives:

Main Objectives of this Study are as follows:

(i)   To find out the status of distance education in different SAARC countries in brief

(ii)   To study the role of Urdu and distance education in SAARC countries

(iii) To study the use of Urdu as Medium of Instruction in various disciplines.
To study the curriculum of Urdu as a language in distance education programme

To find out the scope and limitations of distance education in different SAARC countries and

To suggest the policy prescription based on the finding of the study

Conclusion: Chapter wise highlights of the main findings of this study are as follows, chapter first presented the background of the development of distance education in SAARC countries, chapter second reviewed the literature on distance education in the international and national contacts. In chapter third presented the genesis of SAARC and scope of distance education in the South Asian region. The study analyzed the data on distance education in Urdu from selected SAARC countries. The main findings are divided into various sub-headings, viz. issues, advantages, limitations and recommendations. The chapter four had been designed primarily to conclude the study in the contest of distance education in Urdu in selected SAARC countries where the study has made and attempt to cover India