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Can Open Learning Achieve Equality in Education for all People?

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ABSTRACT

The major objectives of universities, both conventional and distance education, is to make higher, vocational, cultural, life-long and professional education available to a large group of interested people. These universities should also try to present special attention to the disadvantaged groups, particularly the people of far - away towns, rural and women. We all aware of this reality that the conventional system is too narrow to popularize education equally for all people, and they have not been so successful in this field because of some limitations and complex interactions, such as financial, political factors, fanatic-religious ideas, cultural and traditional beliefs, language constraint, lack of suitable technologies and pedagogies and so on. Unfortunately, considering several countries in Asia and Africa, the women are the most severely under - represented in the above fields of education.

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INTRODUCTION

Culture of a society means the different ways of life in that society. According to socialists behaviors have been shaped in social life then have been transferred into the next generations through various ways. Culture not only relates to language, industry science, government, morality and religion but also can be related to the other things such as physical structures of cities, environment, and forests and so on.

In brief we can say that the culture of a society include thoughts, desires, skills, technology and etc. which all are linked to Art, customs ceremonies and also the organizations in which we live in and every body is born there and grown up. Lordes Ariz peh (1) in analyzing the culture as an important factor in international development believes that we should have more attention to the great damages to the human societies which are caused because of the lack of cultural knowledge happens as a result of daily and common existing ways. He also adds that "knowledge and science are as the main columns of culture in every society and if they ruin, the whole structure of that society will vanish". (Arizpeh, 1990:52).

It is believed that the most important role of education is to help the young in development of culture not to transfer them to the pupils because there is such a kind of stability and underdevelopment in those societies that try to transfer only the cultural inheritance of their grandfathers. By passing the time this inheritance will lose its values and hidden in history. So we should help the young generations in their social developments in order they can produce new thoughts and views. It is clear that every society needs new ideas, attitudes, strategies and new ways of living to be able to survive. Human being needs to reconsider And review his old experience to provide development for himself (Shariatmadari, 1983: 49-50).

Some parts of every cultural inheritance of each society are science and techniques used in that society. They have been discovered, invented and explored through practical theoretical in the different ages which were used mainly to solve the natural problems and to resist against the various environmental Difficulties, then by exchanging and transferring them among nations, human cultures were shaped. Then the men made so many tools and instruments in order to sustain them and deliver them to the other generations. Among the most important of them we can name the invention of Language & hand writing. On the other hand, in every community there is an institution or an organization or in the previous ages there were some traditional schools or Madressa that held the duties of education and have been in charge of all formal or informal scientific, art and technical educations in different institutes. They all change or develop according to the political, economical and social changes.(Kamaladdini, 2002: 3).

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Education is a necessity which comes from natural efforts of human being to gain and transfer the knowledge through history and it has always been a means for the improvement of human attitude to survive. If the human knowledge is well organized and coordinated with technologies, it can improve our social and environmental forces and also it can enforce these forces as well. Because of these reasons we can consider the education as an important tool. Education can sustain a society and developed it through teaching, learning and transferring the values and original beliefs to the new generations. On the other hand if education belong to a minority elites of a society, it can stabilize their situation in the society, as a result the all social systems, political parties and institutes will benefit of the power of education. (penalor, 1993:6).

If the educational policies in a society can transfer the practical skills and helpful information which are originated of the other society's experiments, to the next generations and train creativities and scientific attitudes in them, then we can be optimistic to future development of scientific research and technical innovations. (Kardan, 1996:51-56).

The opening of new universities and providing higher education facilities for the most of people considered as one of the best solution for the improvement of any society. Each government and organization which Aim to develop its own society through the higher education and scientific attitude, then it can be considered as its important duty in the developed societies. That is, the most important responsibility of a developed government is to provide as much as opportunities for his new and young people to be trained and to be taught for more productions and exploiting its natural sources. Regarding the vast increasing of population and the high speed development of technology and appearing the huger cities in the world, the distance education method can be the best strategies.

The distance education is the most suitable way to popularize the education. This method which is developing in all countries in the world is more flexible than the traditional & conventional ways of education. There are few limitations such as age, sex, geographical & occupational restrictions in distance education. In this method the students can benefit from the vast information through different multi-media, there is no limited and small room for teachers and students, such as face to face classes, but they all can be taught through the electronic & mechanical instruments such as internet, satellite, cable telephone, ... On the other hand the distance education by using the most developed technology and multi-media has been able to provide all kind of modern education and in this way to be adapted with present situation.

So if the present pedagogies and methodologies of education are suited & fixed with new technologies and the present development of industry and as whole be adapted with the present conditions of time and place, then the higher education can be supplied for all, employed or unemployed, in this way it can conclude the majority of people in each society. As a result we can transfer the scientific attitudes to the other parts of society.

The main characteristics of this educational method is a sufficient and complete learning for all and its practicability for all places It is obvious that in a correct way of using this way of education in its proper place, we can cause a correct teaching & learning in all people. This is the main factor which cause the education to be more effective and successful. Accessing the new skills and attaining to the new knowledge are according the organization principles and arranging the responsibilities which are done through the various multi-media to increase the qualifications of education. So every man, every where and in each situation can benefit of this education. Today's, using the various instruments and media such as Television, computers, and the other electronic tools are considered as the most powerful and qualified ways of teaching all over the world. However and unfortunately there are some developing countries such as Iran, my own country, which are still facing some problem.

Conclusion:

As you know the main duties of all universities are to provide the opportunities for more interested people and to offer the educational facilities to all groups of society including; the young, the old, the employee the women, and the others. We all approve this reality that the distance education universities, because of its flexible method and its electronic and mechanical abilities can be more successful and useful than the face to face universities and traditional colleges.

We all believe this fact that the conventional universities can not supply equal education for all people because of its various limitations and constraints such as, the limitation of time, financial problems, Political and religious factors, cultural and traditional beliefs We all aware that in many countries of the word the women are in a very bad situation in education and social affairs which these problems seem to be removed only through the distance education.

So we can conclude our societies can be improved only through electronic and communicative means and in this way we are able to equalize education for all people in all part of the world. The only educational method which can do such an important duty is DISTANCE EDUCATION.

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