

# Training needs in the use of media for distance education in Bangladesh

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**Training Needs In The Use Of Media  
For Distance Education In Bangladesh**

**By**

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1. Country Profile :

Situated in between 8.8°E to 9.2°E Latitude and 21°N to 27°N Longitude, the People's Republic of Bangladesh is an independent state having about 100 million population in about 144,000 sq. kilometer area. It is a compact piece of flat land entirely covered under national T.V. and Radio networks through ground relay stations. There is no need of sophisticated satellite broadcasting system. Almost the entire population of the country speak in one language (Bengali) and centralised education system is for the entire country. This has created an ideal situation for the effective use of mass media for educational purposes.

2. Media for Distance Education :

Before the discussion over the training need in use of media for distance education in Bangladesh, the ways in which Bangladesh Institute of Distance Education (BIDE), the only media based Institute of the country, that uses media for distance education, may be summarised as follows :-

Media Service

Support Services

- Secondary School Broadcast  
(40 min perday)
- Primary School Broadcast and Mass Education Broadcast(30 min. a day)
- Production of audio cassettes and its distribution
- Production of video cassettes
- Operation of mobile audio-visual vans
- Production and distribution of educational wall charts.

Academic Programme

B.Ed. through Distance Education.

## 2.1 Media for Support Services :

As support service to the formal and non formal education of the country ----- regular educational broadcast, operation of Audio-Visual mobile units ; production and distribution of audio cassettes, educational charts etc. among the Primary and Secondary Schools of the country, are the original basic day to day activities of BIDE. The institute possesses modest facilities for graphic works, audio/video cassette production and repairing-maintenance service for the electronic equipments of the institute and schools.

## 3. Academic Distance Education Programme :-

- 3.1 Bangladesh Institute of Distance Education (BIDE), in addition to its usual programme of media support to both formal and non-formal education of the country, in 1985 embarked upon a programme of distance education (D.E.) offering the Bachelor of Education (B.Ed) degree course for untrained inservice school teachers at the secondary level. The course is run under the academic umbrella of Rajshahi University.
- 3.2 The distance education programme has been planned in particular to cater to the urgent professional need of a huge back log of about 100,000 untrained teachers at the secondary level, in order to ensure quality education. Since the annual intake capacity of the 10 Teachers' Training Colleges (T.T.C'S) is about 2500, it has been found well nigh impossible to afford them the benefit to full training within a foreseeable future through the conventional face to face teaching system. Moreover, with the setting up of new schools, the need for more and better teachers' will go on increasing at a much faster rate.



3.3 The experimental B.Ed.course through distance education, as programmed now, consists of 4-semester work spreading over two years. The curriculum and syllabuses remain the same as in the traditional system. Modern computer system is used for record keeping and evaluation. At present the total enrolment exceeds 10,000 secondary school teachers.

4. Coursewares and support services for the experimental programme of B.Ed. through distance education :

The following coursewares, Media Materials and support services are applied for conducting the B.Ed. programme through D.E.

a) Print Media :

The major print media consists of four sets of reading material written in modular form for each of the four semesters. The format was decided in several expert committee meetings. More than 50 professional writers and editors are given contract to develop suitable course materials. The printing is done through the commercial printers, under the supervision of the specialist of BIDE. Six months reading materials of each of the subjects is bound in one volume.

b) Audio-Cassettes :

To support the reading materials, especially for languages teaching, each of the students is provided with a sixty minutes cassette for each of the semesters of six months' duration. The content of the cassette is decided by the subject expert while the production and copying is done in the studio of BIDE.

c) Radio Programme :

To supplant the print media and also to meet the students queries a half an hour radio broadcast is arranged every week. Here also the content is decided by the subject experts and counsellors, and the production is done in the studio of BIDE whereas the broadcast is done by the National Broadcasting Authority.

d) T.V. and V.C.R.

As support service, 25 minutes T.V. broadcast is being arranged fortnightly. Whereas, video cassettes on Micro Teaching Pedagogy etc., produced by BIDE within its own limited resources is being used during summer schools, in each of the eleven regional centres.

e) Tutorial Service :

Teachers of 10 T.T.C's, National Institute of Educational Administration Extension and Research (NIEAER), Institute of Education and Research (IER) etc. are appointed as part time tutors for coaching and guiding the trainees. The tutors are given modest honoraria for this purpose. BIDE arrange suitable orientation courses for the tutors and supply instructional materials to them. On 2nd and 4th Fridays\* of every month tutorial classes are organised in 10 T.T.C's and National Institute of Educational Administration Extension and Research (NIEAER). Besides, the tutors also guide them in practice teaching.

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\* Friday is the weekly holiday in Bangladesh.

f) Counselling and Guidance :

Besides the local tutorial guidance, a centrally organised counselling and guidance service for individual distant learner is arranged by BIDE, through direct correspondence, Radio Programmes, News Letter, etc.

g) Summer School :

At the end of 2nd and 4th semester summer schools are arranged at the 11 centres. In addition to the local tutors a group of experts of IER, NIEAER, BIDE etc. also attend the summer school to conduct face to face teaching.

h) Practice Teaching :

For smooth operation of the practice teaching suitable lessons are arranged through practical demonstration and with the help of video cassettes during the first summer school held at the second semester. Throughout the period of 3rd and 4th semester, the trainees continue their practice teaching in their own schools under the supervision of the tutors.

5. Training need for the use of media for distance education :

In the light of the media activities of BIDE, discussed so far, the training need for the use of media for distance education may be divided under the following broad headings.



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- a) Production of printed course materials in support of B.Ed. through Distance Education.
- b) Production of Audio/Video Cassettes to be used in mobile units as support services for both formal and nonformal education.
- c) Production of Audio/Video Cassettes as course support materials for B.Ed. through distance education.
- d) Production of Radio and T.V. Programmes for both counselling and academic purposes.
- e) Monitoring and evaluation
- f) Software development for computer to cater the programmes for general management, record keeping and evaluation of the students performance, etc.

The training arrangement is needed for three categories of staffs :-

- a) Training of the Trainers
- b) Training of the administrator and managerial staffs
- c) Training of the persons involved in actual work

The whole concept of distance education developed in Bangladesh is more or less the output of the expertised knowledge of local people. So far no prominent external assistance is received. Now the training need for course designer, course writer, script writer, camera man, director, editor, producer, system analyst

for computer programming, etc. is badly felt. Moreover, the success of the experimental programme of B.Ed. through D.E. has ushered a new era of education in Bangladesh. The Govt. of the People's Republic of Bangladesh is now going to plan for establishing an Open University taking BIDE activities as nucleus. The proposed " Open University " is expected to cover up the following fields -

- a) Teachers' Training
- b) General life long Education
- c) Technical Education and Vocational Training

To shoulder the above mentioned activities, there is the need of elaborate training of the manpower for the specialised activities connected to the production and use of media for distance education. The training need may be met through the proper arrangement in both home and abroad. Three major systems may be adopted to meet the training need.

- a) Arrangement of local training through local experts
- b) Arrangement of local training with the help of foreign experts
- c) Arrangement of trainers' and Trainees' training in abroad.

## 6. Conclusion :

Bangladesh is a fertile ground to develop its human resources through the media based economic distance education system. The successful experimental work, started through BIDE, appears

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to be quite promising. The future national plan for elaborate distance education system, can be made effective only if the proper arrangement for the efficient planning and the training for effective use of the media for distance education can be arranged. For this purpose, global cooperation in general and regional cooperation in particular, is needed.