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Tikhomirov Alexei¹, Trufanov Andrey², Abdu Naji², Kinash Nikolay², Umerov Rustem³, Umerova Zera⁴

¹International Academy of Informatization,

²Irkutsk State Technical University,

³NGO Terra Tavrida,

⁴Crimean Engineering and Pedagogical University

DL SYSTEMS IN THE ARAB WORLD: SOME ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL ISSUES

Abstract. *A brief analysis of the social and economic aspects of the development of DL systems in the Arab world has been offered. Three key elements in the provision of educational services has been considered. The problems of development and sustainable growth of distance learning systems have been discussed.*

Keywords. *DL systems, LLDL (longlife learning), quality assurance, Arab world*

Key Terms. *DL Systems in the Arab World, Single and Dual Mode Virtual University.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Efforts to promote distance education in the Arab countries are aimed mainly at removing obstacles to the development of DL systems. Lack of quality assurance and accreditation policies internationally recognized organizations inhibit the process of implementing systems to the Arab world. Modern society requires new forms of education, providing the growing requests for educational services. System to allow to remove spatial and temporal scope of traditional education, allowing you to engage in the process of increasing the number of students productively check and assess their knowledge (different programs, testing, etc.). The trainees new opportunities: entry to previously inaccessible schools (according to UNESCO in the Arab world today has more than 200 providers of higher education), the study of specific individual courses (modules), low compared to traditional education tuition costs. Distance education courses are particularly important for students with disabilities in areas geographically remote from the schools. These systems, on the one hand, actively involve students in training programs, collaboration in educational communities, on the other hand should provide maximum flexibility to students. To meet these often conflicting objectives introducing new methods of network learning. All this helps to realize the human right to education.

At the same time, the Arab states, as never before, have seen a significant increase in the number of students in higher education institutions. This increase is a result of the growing public demand for education, population growth, and commitment of Arab governments to make higher education as accessible as possible. Most Arab countries have been unable to meet the needs of all students in communication "... the lack of adequate funding". (UNESCO, Beirut Declaration, 1998, p.44). Moreover, the Arab universities are faced with the need of deep reform of university structures, providing flexible registration and availability of LLDL.

2. PROBLEM STATEMENT

The Arab world today consists of 23 countries with a total population of about 350 million people and a total area of approximately 13 million sq.km, which determines the next to Russia largest geolinguistic unit in the world [1]

Among the challenges to development in the Arab countries can be distinguished social and economic components.

Over the past 30 years, coordinated efforts of the Arab world, with the support of UNESCO and the World Bank has led to variegated DL services which might be classified at least by three modes in line with offers and forms of staff deployment :

- Distance or open education programs offered by traditional universities, Dual Mode [2];
- Single Mode Distance Education Universities;
- Virtual University.

Thus we define Dual Mode universities as those traditional entities which provide distance education as well (Campus + Staff+ Traditional Learning + DL).

Contrary, single-mode universities are those in which distance education is the sole mission in which professors and administrators are exclusively involved (Campus + Staff + DL).

Finally, virtual universities have no campuses and no faculties of their own: a virtual university makes available programs and courses offered by other institutions utilizing ICT involved (DL only).

3. RESULTS

The formation of the Arab education happened in stages. Initially, there were schools that were attached to mosques. Then, in the 20th years of XX century, in parallel with religious subjects taught basic arithmetic, geography and foreign languages. Further, in the 1950-60th a significant number of schools, institutes, colleges and universities had been built. At the present stage, the use of the experience of other countries in the region to avoiding fruitless attempts and prevent a repetition of mistakes. At the heart of this experience is an experiment to combine learning remote with traditional full-time. At the same time appeal to the UP was the result of attempts to significantly improve the public education of the people and reduce the level of illiteracy. Egyptian Universities Network (2003), Center for Distance Education Juba in Sudan with a branch in Jordan, Syria, open learning centers were one of the pioneers of this system of education. The first examples of the provision of educational services to remote methods were the only Higher Institute of Continuing Education in Tunisia (Jamlah, 1999), The Open University of Libya (2004), University Continuing Education in Algeria (2004). The first online university in the Arab region - Syrian Virtual University. Founded in 2002, the University is committed to providing world-class education, internationally accredited associate degrees and the Arab region with the U.S. and Western virtual universities, bringing them to every house in the Arab countries. SVU has agreements with leading online universities in the U.S., Europe, Canada, the students of the Arab countries can not leave their countries for study abroad, as well as SVU promotes academic quality of the education provided. [3] Government carefully study the positive and negative results to the introduction of DL systems, conduct an analysis of various forms of education in many countries around the world and aim to develop the most appropriate and effective. Certainly, the development of new ways of learning are inextricably linked to changes in policy, ideology, economics, social and spiritual life of society, on the one hand, and on the other stimulated by the development and implementation of information and communication technologies. With this in mind, the governments of many Arab countries formulate national policies on the implementation of distance education in various universities in their countries. This policy is currently in need of active incarnation of her life in a social, economic and technical means, which in turn requires a clear understanding of the applications of the tools: social, economic and technological ones.

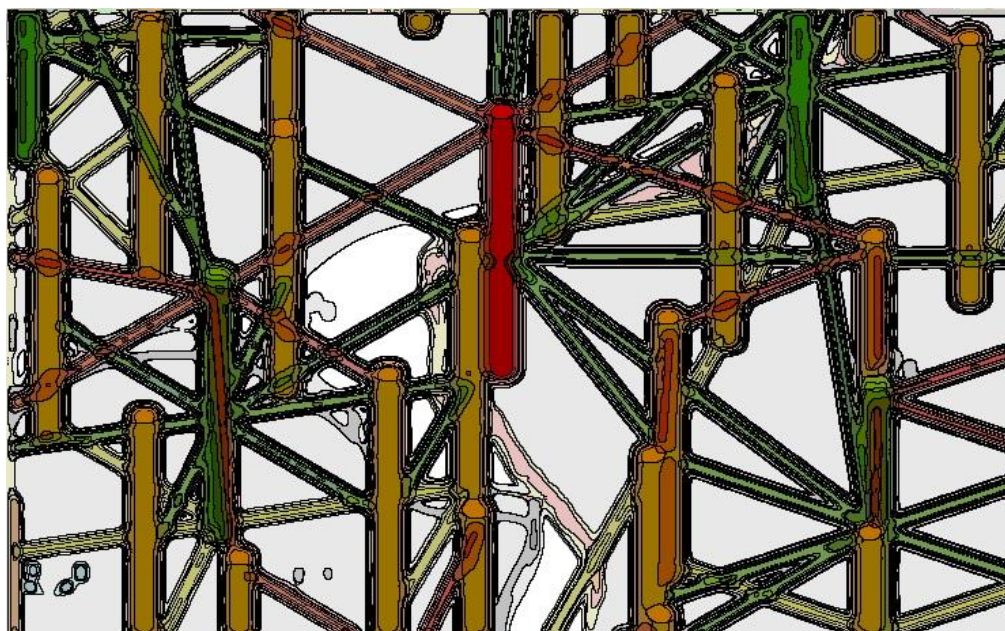


Fig. 1. Stem network model of social life in the Arab world country including distance education

The main results. Building a stem network [4] possible to demonstrate how the social network topology, and the influence of technology on the social network, in fact their relationship (see Fig.1).

Following to [5] the modeling network consists of individuals-stems , which firm nodes linked on the same thematic layers. The 3 layers are considered: Traditional social interactions (red linksr Fig.2), Internet social networks (green links), and Distance learning connections (yellow links in the Figure).

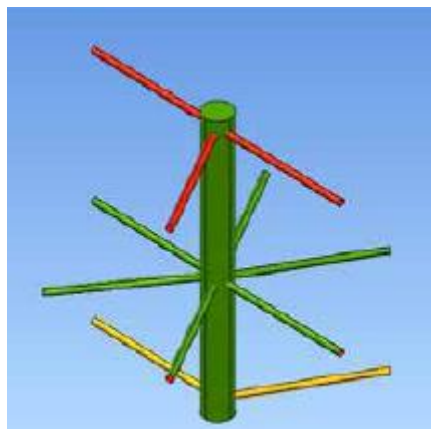


Fig. 2. Stem of the network model and three layers of links

Such a representation facilitates the full and thorough study of the social dimension of distance education.

Thus, stem model of distance education allows the problems of reliability and stability of the system. With the help of well-known mathematical techniques can calculate the most important nodes of the network, disabling that will lead to the collapse of the entire system, and as a result, raise the question of strengthening them. Speaking about the vulnerability of nodes, it is not just about terrorist acts, riots and social unrest, but also of natural disasters and the intervention of other countries in the sovereign affairs of state. Thus, at the expense of attention to this network model of

distance education as a part of the model can predict the society and carry out actions aimed at strengthening social stability.

If one uses a reflective approach [6] to networking concepts it reveals the interaction of social and technological components deeper, focusing on new approaches and models of construction of distance education. Thus, the interlayer reflection in the networks can be interpreted as a direct response to one of them to changes in the other. For example, if as a means of communication between teacher and student use traditional mail as a technological network layer of the stem - that social class would look like in one way. Other social networking layer is formed, if the Internet is used for communication. On the other hand, the new interaction in a social network component of the stem may require the introduction of new technology solutions: the respective power, communications, etc., to stimulate technological change component of the network.

The account of the economic factor. SWOT countries in the Arab world [7]:

To weaknesses can be attributed	The strengths of concern
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of technology and technology infrastructure • The absence of a sound investment climate and capital market • The economic and political dependence on Western countries such as the U.S. • Conflicts between the Arabs • Conflict "B" - the business and the bureaucracy • Lack of reliable statistics and demographic research • The lack of experimental science and technology • Existing trade barriers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arab have strong historical, religious, cultural and linguistic similarities • General and unique values and moral standards • There capital, intellectual, labor and skills • Privatization and liberalization

Tab.1. Some SWOT among Arab Contries.

Stem of the network model and three layers of links

Strengths have to make effective use of available resources and the combined potential of the economies of the Arab countries is quite competitive with other global economies. Additionally creating incentives for the Arabs abroad to help their country or return to their homeland.

Existing deficiencies are determined by the absence of clear and accurate banking and monetary systems in many Arab countries, a large external debt economy, the situation of tension between the Arabs and Israel, the internal Inter-Arab competition.

These factors affect the quality of distance education in the Arab countries. The issue of quality assurance in the Arab world due to the fact that universities and institutions that offer distance education mode have made no effort to create national standards to ensure the academic quality of all processes conducted by the University, particularly in connection with educational materials and their relevance to Arab context. National standards should be developed taking into account the social environment and economic characteristics of each Arab country. The correct economic approach will create the preconditions for the growth of the quality system to that will ultimately lead to an increase in the proportion of distance education in the Arab world.

4. CONCLUSIONS

Model of stem networks is a new, efficient tool for the study of the social component of distance education. The model in a simple and understandable form can show the main types of interaction (social, technological, their relationships, etc.) in any DL system, and also provides a number of opportunities to assess the reliability, security, and development of systems to predict. The reflexive glance clarifies mutual understanding of technological and social components of distance education.

Also, while the Arab region in the past 30 years considerable progress in the field of systems to - such progress does not necessarily mean the quality of services provided. Effective economic instruments in conjunction with the development of quality control systems, no doubt, will create conditions for a transition system to a new level.

Meaningful with the help of modern scientific approaches introduction of distance education in the Arab East will contribute to social stability and economic prosperity of this complex region.

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Олексій Тихомиров¹, Андрій Труфанов², Абду Наджі², Микола Кінаш², Рустем Умеров³, Зера Умерова⁴

¹Міжнародна академія інформатизації

²Іркутський державний технічний університет

³НГО Terra Tavrada

⁴Кримський інженерно-педагогічний університет

DL СИСТЕМИ В АРАБСЬКОМУ СВІТІ: ДЕЯКІ ЕКОНОМІЧНІ ТА СОЦІАЛЬНІ ПИТАННЯ

Запропонований стислий аналіз соціально-економічних аспектів розвитку систем ДН (дистанційного навчання) в арабському світі. Розглянуто три ключові елементи надання освітніх послуг. Обговорені проблеми розвитку та сталого зростання систем дистанційного навчання.

Ключові слова: Система дистанційного навчання (ДН), ДН упродовж всього життя, забезпечення якості, арабський світ.

Тихомиров Алексей¹, Труфанов Андрей², Абду Наджи², Кинаш Николай², Умеров Рустем³, Умерова Зера⁴

¹Международная академия информатизации

²Иркутский государственный технический университет

³НГО Terra Tavrída

⁴Крымский инженерно-педагогический университет

DL СИСТЕМЫ В АРАБСКОМ МИРЕ: НЕКОТОРЫЕ ЭКОНОМИЧЕСКИЕ И СОЦИАЛЬНЫЕ ВОПРОСЫ

Предложен краткий анализ социально-экономических аспектов развития систем ДО (дистанционного обучения) в арабском мире. Рассмотрены три ключевых элемента предоставления образовательных услуг. Обсуждены проблемы развития и устойчивого роста систем дистанционного обучения.

Ключевые слова: Система дистанционного обучения (ДО), ДН протяжении всей жизни, обеспечения качества, арабский мир.