IDEA2015

IDEA Indian Distance Education Association

XX IDEA ANNUAL CONFERENCE

on

Empowering India through Open and Distance Learning:
Breaking down Barriers, Building Partnership and
Delivering Opportunities

April 23-25, 2015
Chennai, India

PROCEEDINGS

Hosted by

TAMIL NADU OPEN UNIVERSITY
Saidapet, Chennai – 600 015
Tamil Nadu, India
www.tnou.ac.in

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TAMIL NADU OPEN UNIVERSITY

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Prof. (Mrs.) Chandrakantha Jeyabalan
Vice-Chancellor

Foreword

"Empowering India through Open and Distance Learning: Breaking down Barriers, Building Partnerships and Delivering Opportunities" is a captivating title because of its relevance and importance with regard to ODL. I compliment the Conference Director Dr. P. Thiyagarajan and his team for organizing this XX IDEA National Conference sponsored by different national institutions and more so for publishing the proceedings of the conference. I feel happy in writing the foreword of the proceedings.

The present publication seems to be a fair representation of some of the relevant issues that concern ODL systems. Meanwhile, the ODL system has also seen a lot of improvements in the recent decades due to immense developments that took place in information technology, decimation and sharing of information, publications, smart classrooms, etc. ODL system has the transformative potential in the whole system of education that enables everyone to gain knowledge and become competitive in their own sphere of activities. It helps each and every individual and households to attain a better standard of living through education and career prospects. This eventually results in creating a knowledge society that contributes towards nation building. The provision of affordable, quality and accessible higher education is still facing some big challenges in India and this is where the ODL form of education has filled some gaps. Centres that cater to the ODL system are also going forward towards new avenues of expansion where their contacts, reach and infrastructure shall be utilized efficiently and effectively. This is where the Tamil Nadu Open University has also embraced new approaches by introducing part time and full time research programmes and also by starting the face to face (regular) courses.

Qualitative expansions within the ODL system in terms of utilizing the modern digital revolution and new technologies are in addition to the quantitative expansions that are envisaged. Embracing these things will only give more credibility and wider acceptance from among the stake holders. Among the major thrust areas focused in

this conference, the sixth and seventh areas were given due importance for it relates to the qualitative aspects of ODL system. They were "Quality Assurance- Research and Development- Staff Development-Funding Questions" and "Cohabitations, Alliances and Partnership – Sharing of Resources and Experiences" respectively. These aspects will greatly impact the way ODL is functioning by improving and assuring the quality of the staff and the materials produced, and development of related aspects. Creating different types of collaboration mechanisms in sharing the resources and expertise will only elevate the whole spectrum of ODL system to the next level and for that to be realized, qualitative assessment and improvement is a must as this conference has shown effectively.

This report on "Empowering India Through Open and Distance Learning: Breaking down Barriers, Building Partnerships and Delivering Opportunities" which includes several papers contributed by the delegates of the national conference, provides a reflective assessment of the distance and open learning system and the way it shall take shape and go forward in the coming times. I would like to place on record my deep appreciation for the stake holders of this IDEA Annual Conference for initiating this national debate. I would like to congratulate all the contributors and the editorial team who were the instruments in bringing out these proceedings of the conference. I am sure that people engaged with educational endeavors at all levels would find this report as a valuable source of reference.

Date: 16.05.2015   **Prof. (Mrs.) Chandrakantha Jeyabalan**

From the Editorial Desk...

"A conference is a gathering of people who singly can do nothing, but together can decide that nothing can be done." Indian Distance Education Association (IDEA) and Tamil Nadu Open University (TNOU) bring together the luminaries among distance educators in India, nation-wide for a purposeful and fruitful meeting to explore the key strategies for Open and Distance Education in the country.

Though distance education has its genesis in various forms of non-traditional, off-campus and on-line modes of education, it has emerged basically as a result of innovations in the field of teaching-learning systems and emerging media and technologies.

The XX IDEA annual conference has been focused and reflected on different ways and means of meeting various kinds of methodological challenges, new technologies and multi-media developments, newly emerging partnerships and collaboration between emerging sectors on one hand and between the institutions functioning with similar objectives and individuals operating with identical responsibilities on the other hand. Serious debates on emerging issues regarding ODL were made at the XX IDEA conference. It was a fruitful event for the institutions and individuals who are already active in the field, those interested in learning more about the theoretical and practical considerations in the field as innovative change agents, and also for those who wish to enter the world of competence and planning to develop OL and DE programmes.

To fulfill the prime objectives of the conference 143 thematic and research papers were received and they were compiled, classified, edited and published meticulously in the book with ISBN, namely EMPOWERING INDIA THROUGH OPEN AND DISTANCE LEARNING and around 300 participants and paper presenters deliberately took part from all over the nation.

We express our deep sense of gratitude to the Hon'ble Vice-chancellor of Tamil Nadu Open University Prof. Chandrakantha Jeyabalan for her precious guidance and support. And we convey our sincere thanks to the ad-hoc members of IDEA conference.

Our heartfelt thanks to the publishers for their eminent co-ordination and for accomplishing this academic endeavour in time.

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Editorial Board

About Tamil Nadu Open University

Tamil Nadu Open University (TNOU) is the 10th Open University in the country, which was established in 2002. This university aims at benefitting the sections of people who have been deprived of and/or denied access to higher education. The community of the deprived includes the destitute, the physically challenged, the working men and women, the economically weaker and marginalised people, and the drop-outs owing to various reasons. In nutshell, it aims at reaching the hitherto unreached. Within a decade, since its existence, the TNOU has remarkably catered to the learning needs of more than 5 lakh students with over 100 programmes, through 13 schools and 7 divisions. It has a well-knitted network of student support services with 4 Zonal Centers & Constituent Community Colleges, 152 Learning Resource Centres (LRC), 165 Computer Programme Centres, 195 Community Colleges, 10 General B.Ed. Programme Study Centres (PSC), 13 Special B.Ed. Programme Study Centres, 9 Special Centres in Prisons, 33 Off-campus Centres, 3 Counselling and Psychotherapy Centres. In addition, the University has entered into a MoU with various Virtual Study Centres (VSCs).

TNOU's instructional system comprises quality print materials in Self-learning format, digital content through stand-alone CDs, face-to-face contact sessions, continuous assessment and term-end examinations. Most of the operations of the University have been brought under e-Governance for the efficiency, accuracy and transparency. The university is poised to embark on technology enhanced learning environments. This is the first university in the state to have produced self-learning materials (SLMs) and implemented Credit System, based on expected learner-input/workload. Some of its SLMs have been adopted on royalty basis by various other Universities including Dr.B.R.Ambedkar Open University, Hyderabad.

EXPLORATION OF ICT FOR THE EXTENSION OF STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES IN IGNOU

Abhilash Nayak

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Introduction

The learners in open and distance education come from variety of backgrounds with diverse abilities, learning styles, gender, culture, academic preparedness, personal support systems, and expectations. Their needs and the contexts determine the kind of support services they require. In such a system the needs of the learners are of topmost priority as they are physically, socially and academically alienated from the host institutions. Attempts have been made to bridge this gap by building the teachers into the self-instructional materials and arranging the face to face contact programmes or academic counselling sessions. The comments of Croft(1991) are relevant at this point, "....... distance students experience isolation, even alienation from the institution because of geographical remoteness and a lack of collegiality. An effective student support system is an important pre-requisite for quality distance learning ". Krishnan also reinforces this with the following words:

> *Providing support services to the distance learning population is an important part of creating the feeling of belonging for students who do not have access to traditional clues. Distance learners expect student support services to accommodate them from their point of entry (learner intake) through completion of their certificate or degree (learner transition) (Krishnan, 2012, 469).*

Though the different components of an open and distance education system are discrete and autonomous, they are required to be interdependent and well-coordinated so that the support services are not hindered. It has been noticed that the participation and performance of students who are highly motivated *and* well-prepared are more in comparison to the less-motivated and disadvantaged, which clearly demonstrate the need for a well-knit support service system. The student support service system, being the interface between the students and institution, makes up the disadvantages of a distance education system and counterbalances the absence of regular dialogue between the teacher and the taught (Sampson, 2003, p.105). Whenever there is a mismatch between the expectations of the learners and the services rendered by a system, there arise issues of high attrition and drop-out. Hence a responsible student support system should ensure that the needs of all the categories of the learners irrespective of their socio-economic background, geographical location and academic maturity are taken care of so that they are able to take maximum advantage of the services available.

In the absence of qualified, committed and competent human resources, institutions frequently fall back on Information and Communication technology (ICT) to compensate the absence of human resources and provide hassle-free, transparent and incorruptible support services. Besides being the backbone of modern teaching-learning processes, ICT has greatly transformed the student support system through timely, need-driven and qualitative interventions.

Student Support Services Extended by IGNOU

The support services of IGNOU are mainly provided through a three-tier system: the headquarters, the Regional Centres and the Study Centres. They are rendered with the help of the human resources available at all the three levels and the dedicated website of the university which holds key to the ICT-enabled support services to the learners.

The programmes are designed and developed by the teams of experts in various schools but the delivery of the programmes is taken care of by the Learner Support Centres with the help of the approved academic counsellors. The Self Learning Materials as well as the assignments are prepared by the concerned schools and printed by the Materials Printing and Production Division. The Student Registration Division deals with matters related to admissions, re-admissions, re-registrations, credit transfer and grant of equivalence to the degrees of other universities and institutions. The Student Evaluation Division, likewise, deals with the conduct of examinations, entrance examinations for professional programmes, declares results, prepares grade cards, provisional certificates and final degree certificates and conducts convocations. The Regional Centres do all the admission and examination related activities online through the links provided under the link RC services. Under this link, the Regional Centres are given the facility to upload the admission data on RDTS, enter the marks for the projects and practical marks of select courses, upload the assignment marks, change the electives, medium, address, Study Centre and Regional centres. Besides, the officers in the Regional centre also conduct most of the communication with the headquarters and the Study Centres online, either through e-mails or through the web-conferences. The grievances of the learners received through e-mails or the Student Grievances Redressal Forum are also addressed through e-mails. Apart from these, there is a Student Support Services Centre at the headquarters which takes care of the establishment, revival and closure of new Learner Support Centres, activation of new programmes and coordinates with all the divisions to sort out the grievances of the students. .

Recommendation for an Ideal Student Support Service System

In addition to the above support facilities available for the students, an effective ICT-enabled student support system should include the services at three stages like the following:

A: Pre-Study/ Pre-Admission Stage

At the pre-admission stage, students can be adequately supported by a dedicated website of the host institution by:

- Making information regarding the availability of streams and courses, fee structure, instruction and evaluation system, facilities for the disadvantaged learners available on the website
- Providing the details of the procedures for admission
- Making a dedicated counsellor available for counselling the aspiring students

During-Study
Support in the in Academic Areas

1. **Academic Calendars**: Display of Academic Calendars on the websites of the respective Learner Support Centres/Regional centres will help the learners keep track of the activities happening round the year and make their academic and personal plans accordingly so that they are able to save themselves from unnecessary stress and strain due to the overlap between their academic assignments and personal/social commitments. The calendars should include the dates for the induction meetings, the schedules for academic counselling and submission of assignments, project synopsis/reports, forms for re-registration or term end examinations and tentative schedules for Term End Examinations.

- **Peer Groups/Self-Help Groups:** There should be a dedicated link for the students of particular programmes under every Learner Support Centre to help the students form peer groups or self-help groups which would help them interact with one another and deal with

the issues and problems pertaining to the respective programmes.   Alternatively students should be encouraged to create community pages on the social media like Facebook to remain in touch with one another and discuss common issues and problems.

2. **Provision of pre-recorded digital versions of the academic counselling sessions by eminent academic counsellors:** Provision of digital versions of such resources on the university website (as is done by the famous IITs, IIMs, etc)   will help students enrich themselves through the enhancement of their knowledge. There should be adequate facility for audio-visual viewings at the Learner Support Centres.

3. **Continuous Evaluation:** In IGNOU, continuous evaluation is integrated into the evaluation system in the form of assignments in order to reduce the burden on the students. Students should be allowed to submit their assignments through internet through a link provided for this purpose and get the evaluated assignments back through it and hence save their precious time and energy in submitting them at the Learner Support Centres and getting them back after evaluation. The academic counsellors should be oriented accordingly. The University may integrate online tests with the evaluation system as a part of the assignments so that the students are able to take the tests online and get instant feedback on their performance.

4. **Summative Assessment:** The students should be provided with the old questions through a link on the website to help them have an idea of the pattern of questions that they are likely to face in the term-end examinations. Besides this, they can also be provided with model answers for the questions and the schemes of evaluation for courses under various streams to help them know the parameters used for evaluating different types of questions and prepare for the examinations in intelligent and time-saving ways.

5. **Feedback to the Students:** Students should be provided regular feedback through the link provided on the university website on their academic performance in various subjects by the academic counsellors concerned who will help them improve continuously.

6. **Feedback from the Students:** In order to improve constantly as a dynamic system, the student support system in the University should develop a strong technology-enabled mechanism to collect feedback from the students as well as other stakeholders on both academic and non-academic support services in terms of their quality, transparency and effectiveness. This can be done either through a link on the website or through   toll free SMS services.

Support in the Non-Academic Areas

Support in the non-academic areas can be extended by providing information pertaining to the facilities available:

1. **Learner Profiles** with details of each of the learners to help the learners know the profile of their peers and have better interpersonal relationships.

2. **Reports of the Old Events with Photographs/Videos and Schedules for upcoming events:** This link on the website should help the students get an idea of the events which have already been organised and the ones which are likely to be organised and prepare themselves accordingly so as to take full advantage of the opportunities available.

3. **Dedicated Counsellor for academic and non-academic counselling:** During adulthood, students undergo many socio-psychological changes and face corresponding problems which need to be addressed at the earliest. Hence an institution may make a dedicated counsellor available through the websites of the respective Regional Centres   to address the personal problems of the learners through e-mail or personal interactions, which will positively impact their academic performance.

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4. **Facilities for disadvantaged students:** Facilities available for the disadvantaged students like scholarships available and infrastructural facilities designed to meet the requirements of students with special needs should be made available to different categories of disadvantaged students like people with disabilities, students from the SC/ST/minority communities, socially and economically backward sections and help them grow with others equally and independently.

5. **Websites for Learner Support Centres:** The University should encourage and fund the creation of websites for the individual Learner Support Centres in line with the Regional centres so that each of the Study centres will be able to facilitate ICT-enabled support services at their own ends, bridge the information communication gaps and make the ICT-enabled support services really functional.

6. **Multi-Lingual Website of the University:** The website of the university, presently available in Hindi and English, should have a multi-lingual facility so that learners of other languages are able to understand and make use of the contents. This will facilitate the access and success of majority of the linguistically disadvantaged learners who are pursuing their studies in their mother tongues but are forced to make use of the present bi-lingual website.

7. **Online Payment gateway:** The students should have the facility of making all the payments for the various services rendered by the university through the online banking system through a dedicated payment gateway so that they are not required to spend their time and energy to go o the banks, make the demand drafts and submit them along with the forms. Moreover, direct remittance of the fees in the university account will also help the university save the interest lost during the transit time.

Post-Study

　　Providing support to the students at the post-study stage is as important as providing support to them during their studies. A student leaving an institution with satisfaction is a great asset to an institution as s/he can become a brand ambassador for the institution and spread the name and fame of the institution in the society.

1. **Publication of the Results:** Making the results available in time is very essential. Students of all the programmes should be able to receive the results within sixty days from the date of completion of the examinations. The Grade Cards and Provisional Certificates should reach them within fifteen days from the date of publication of results and there should be a link on website to tell them the status of their Grade Cards and Provisional certificates.

2. **Facilitating the Status of Certificates**: After completing the programmes, students usually get their Grade cards and Provisional Certificates within a fortnight. Often it so happens that students are not able to locate their certificates and hence face a lot of difficulties when they go in search of jobs. There should be a link on the website for the Certificates to help them know the status of their final degree certificates so that they will pursue accordingly.

3. **Issuance of Migration Certificates:** The website should contain a link through which the students should be able to submit the application for migration certificate online and receive the migration certificate at their residential addresses within seven days of applying.

4. **Facility for Career counselling and Campus Placement :** There should be a dedicated counsellor for each of the Regional Centres who can provide online counselling to the outgoing students on the choice of careers. In addition to this, every Regional Centre should have their campus Placement Cells with a link on the university website and

organise placement drives from time to time. This would help increase the trust and confidence of the students in the university and enhance its brand-image.

5. **Alumni Corner**: The learners should be encouraged to use the link already available on the website and the consolidated alumni data in respect of each Regional Centre should be made available. This would help the Regional centre organise Alumni Meets from time to time and facilitate networking and mutual support among the students

Some Suggestions

- Opportunities and support systems should be offered to students at par with their campus-based peers in order to help them inform themselves, take appropriate decisions and dispel their sense of alienation.

- Learner support services should take into consideration the unique and changing needs of the students being served and the institutional context, and should be revised as appropriate to accommodate changes in student population, the institution, and the environment. Only in this way can an institution be truly responsive to its clientele (Brindley, 1995, p.5)

- The number of people having technical proficiency to handle ICT-related problems is very minimum in the Study Centres and often becomes a hindrance in the use of ICT. Regular training and retraining of manpower is required to acquaint them with changing technology(Rajesh, 2003).

- The cost of maintenance, repair and replacement of computer equipments often crosses the budget fixed for it and incapacitates the Study Centres for making optimum use of these facilities. This could be avoided by having Annual Maintenance Contracts with the suppliers and service providers which will reduce the cost to a great extent(Nayak, 2010).

Conclusion

With proper infrastructure for ICT in place, higher education with the built-in support services will play a pivotal role in bringing qualitative changes in the lives of people in future by empowering them socially, economically and intellectually. Though the initial cost for the infrastructure facilities would be at a higher end, the after effects of this would be rewarding as it would enhance the quality of teaching-learning transactions, make the students knowledgeable and employable in the global market. All institutions of open and distance learning should respond to the changing needs of time, strengthen their student support services with the help of ICT and create/ facilitate the necessary infrastructure for the implementation of the ICT- enabled student support initiatives to meet the needs of the learners and exhibit their relevance. Brindley rightly says, "Institutions that want to become more competitive in the educational marketplace must reposition themselves to be service oriented and consumer driven. An institution that has the ability to respond quickly and effectively to its clientele will have the edge in what has become a very competitive market" (1995, p.12). The present model of support services, mostly based on the industrial model, is product oriented and should be immediately replaced by a " process model for student support services that measures the effectiveness of programs and services for all types of students. All support services must be designed and implemented around a commitment to the learner, regardless of delivery system"(Flyod and Casey-Powell, 2004, p.63). With committed and concerted efforts to implement all the changes suggested above, the University should be able to fulfil its mission of reaching the unreached and become a real Peoples' University.

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THE ISLAMIC RESPONSE TOTHE SECULAR EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

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Introduction

The rise of secularism meant that religious teachings in the social and political systems were replaced with man-made legislation.This article addresses the reasons that brought about secular educational systems in the West and will refute the generalisations made by the West to include Islam as a religion of rituals and spirituality that does not manifest itself in the temporal affairs. This article is to enlighten their Islamic worldview on the western secular educational systems.

The Islamic world View Islam as an Ideology

The role of Muslims in the advancement in the fields of sciences and humanities is directly related to the driving force of Islam. It is this Islamic ideology that deserves the credit and not the individual Muslims. Unlike Christianity, Judaism, and other religions, Islam is not merely a religion but rather a unique and comprehensive ideology that guides the life of the human being. The Islamic ideology, by the definition of an ideology, consists of both the idea and the method to implement the idea as a practical manifestation in reality.

The Islamic idea itself is composed of two essential components; the creed or doctrine (Aqeedah) and a system of rules and regulation founded on this doctrine (Shari'ah). The Islamic Aqeedah provides the correct and comprehensive answers to the fundamental questions regarding humanity' s existence and that of the universe. It addresses the issue of the human being's purpose in life, and links it with what proceeds life and what will come after it, thereby providing the basis for the Islamic system to properly organise human affairs. The Islamic Shari'ah provides a comprehensive law governing the affairs of human beings. It correctly establishes: , the relationship between the human being and his Creator, the personal affairs of individuals, and the various relationships (social, political, , economic, and international) that exist in society.

The Islamic methodology provides the means to apply the idea (the creed and systems) to practice.Unlike Secularism, Capitalism and Communism, Islam is built on the correct worldview that is compatible with the human being. Islam does not ignore human beings' instincts or desires, but organises them in the proper context, including the desire to acquire knowledge. The implementation of the Islamic system is neither confined to time or place no r dependent upon science and technology, and must occupy our instincts, needs and natural desires.

Islam Invites and Directs Humans to Study Reality

Islam has made it obligatory on all believers to acquire knowledge for themselves. In the very first verse of the Qur'an revealed to him, the Prophet (s.a.w) was instructed to read:
"Read! In the Name of your Lord, Who has created (all that exists). Has created man from clot (a piece of thick coagulated blood). Read! And your Lord is the Most Generous. Who has taught (the writing) by the pen. Has taught man that which he knew not. " [Qur'an 96:1-5].

The importance of reading, writing and acquiring knowledge has been explained in this verse in a most forceful and direct manner. Since it is obligatory for every believer to

obey Allah' s commandments, it was therefore announced by the Prophet (s.a.w) that learning and searching after knowledge was a sacred duty of every Muslim.

The Qur'an appeals constantly to reason and experiment which is a blessing indispensable to arrive at proper judgement.

"Say: 'Are those who know equal to those who know not?' It is only men of understanding who will remember (ie. get a lesson from Allah's Signs and Verses)" [Qur'an 39:9]

The Qur'an also directs man to study the physical world in order to understand the reality and to appreciate more the greatness of the Creator. Although Islam points to the physical world to make people think, it encourages people to discover more laws. The Qur' an is fundamentally a book of guidance and a code of life for mankind to enable it to differentiate between the right and the wrong.

The Islamic Perspective of Scientific Methodology

"And Allah has brought you out from the wombs of your mothers while you know nothing. And He gave you hearing, sight, and hearts (intelligence and affections) that you might give thanks (to Allah) " [Qur'an 16:78].

Allah reminds the human being that he is born into this world without any knowledge of the existence, but He has equipped this human with the tools -the five human senses- that he needs to explore the might of the creation in order that he may give thanks to the Creator. The Creator, Allah (swt), has taught man since his presence on earth, *"And he taught Adam all the names (of everything)" [Qur'an 2:31],* through the agency of wahi (revelation). The last revelation that is composed of the Qur'an and the Sunnah, does not establish itself in its followers by blind faith or imitation, but rather by an invitation to the human being to think deeply about his existence and his surroundings.

Islamic methodology calls human beings to ponder upon the profound nature of this universe and observe its many phenomena that establish a definitive proof for the existence of One Creator. We are constantly discovering more and more laws that make up this order. The motives and objectives of all civilisations (and the resulting urban growth world-wide) is firstly, to discover and research the resources in the universe and aspects of matter and energy that are useful to man. This is asserted in the Glorious Qur'an,

"Do they not look in the dominion of the heavens and the earth and all the things that Allah has created?" [Qur'an7:185].

The second step is then to utilise these discoveries rationally for the benefit of man. Again, this is a direct command from Allah (swt):

" See you not (O men) that Allah has subjected for you whatsoever is in the heavens and whatsoever in the earth?" [Qur'an 31:20].

For the Muslim, these processes are an act of worship that have to be guided by revelation in order to understand the reality of nature and the limitations of the human being. On the other hand, the non-Muslims seek their guidance from man-made laws that mechanistically and absurdly view the creation as a self-operated system.

Guidelines Towards an Islamic Educational System

By observing the physical world and the laws of nature, the Islamic thought, that is derived from the Qur'an and Sunnah, presents the philosophy which explains Allah's Might and Wisdom. These observations should not remain at the boundaries of the material world, but should conclude that this unintelligible universe could not have possibly come to existence by itself nor by a chance or accident, and hence should provide reflections about the attributes of the Creator. Such attributes define the Creator as a Deity above His creation,

neither matter or energy can shape His identity, nor can space or time encompass His eternal existence, confirming the Qur'anic verse :

"There is nothing like unto Him, and He is the All-Hearer, the All-Seer" [Qur'an 42:11].

The Islamic educational system does not acquire conceptions about life, death and the Universe from the materialistic and secular world, and must purify its curriculum from any materialistic ideas that contradict basic facts in Islam. However, the Islamic educational system should utilise the expertise and experience of the material systems in the fields of applied sciences and industry and reconstruct their data on the basis of Iman.

The achievements and contribution of early Muslim scholars which have been completely neglected and overlooked in the Western books on the history of sciences, should be unveiled and incorporated into the curriculum's of the Islamic educational system. Since the Islamic civilisation was the longest in the history of humanity, scientific and humanitarian branches of knowledge flourished under its rule, and Muslim scholars led the world in the fields of astronomy, mathematics, medicine, agriculture and sociology, to name a few. The unveiling of this heritage which paved the way for the emergence of the modern sciences will dignify the sense of originality and belonging in the Muslim youth.

The miraculous scientific notions in the Holy Qur'an must also be revealed to prove to people that the Qur'an contains basic scientific facts and laws of the universe that were unknown at the time of revelation and for centuries afterwards. These scientific notions are material proof to people of all creeds and tongues that the Holy Qur'an is the Word of Allah and that Muhammad (saws) is His final prophet.

The Islamic educational systems should emphasise the importance of acquainting a thorough knowledge of Arabic, the language of the Qur'an. Arabic is not only necessary to fully comprehend Islam, it is a requirement to perceive the Qur'anic world view. It is also important to encourage proficiency in the language of the community in order to effectively convey the message of Islam.

Conclusion

It is historically evident that many intellectual Muslims were able to integrate the sciences of religion with other branches of knowledge. The simple reason for that, is because worldly sciences in the Islamic Khilafah found the correct environment and methodology to cultivate and improve the quality of life. Today, worldly science s are exploited to produce a mechanistic and a materialistic human being without the aspect of humanity, that sees no error in transgressing its limits and in violating its environment.

We have long been awaiting a promising young generation that can raise themselves above dunya. A lot of hope is rested upon the shoulders of this expected generation whose mission in this world should be the establishment of Allah's prerequisites for victory and success in this world and in the Hereafter.

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BARRIERS OF OPEN DISTANCE LEARNING

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Introduction

While open distance education has been in existence for at least 100 years, the medium has changed from pencil and paper correspondence courses to real-time Internet courses. But regardless of the medium, distance courses have common characteristics and, likewise, have similar problems. This literature review examines the different types of distance education and its significance as a learning method. Student demographics are presented and their relevance to distance learning barriers established. Lastly, the nature of student, faculty, organization, and course curriculum and their respective impact on distance learning are explored.

Significance of Distance Education

In preparing to enter the next century, educators of adults face the challenge of serving a student population and society that is increasingly diverse. Moving into the next century, the adult student population is expected to be the fastest growing segment of higher education and, in fact, older students will constitute the majority. Cantelon, in his 1995 book, Facilitating Distance Education, projects "... most of higher education will take place off-campus through technological methods of delivery. While distance education is already a fact of life for most universities and an increasing number of community colleges, knowing the intrinsic problems and overcoming them will be critical to successful implementation of distance programs on a larger scale in the future. In distance learning students and teachers will find themselves playing different roles than is the norm in traditional education. The teacher is no longer the sole source of knowledge but instead becomes a facilitator to support student learning, while the student actively participates in what and how knowledge is imparted. More than any other teaching method, distance learning requires a collaborative effort between student and teacher, unbounded by the traditional limits of time, space, and single-instructor effort.

Technology has also changed the face of education. Advances in telecommunications technology has opened up the possibility of personal and group interaction in distance education. Both computer and audio conferencing permit the introduction of class discussions without the group meeting face to face. Phone calls and electronic mail replaces personal office visits. The distance learner can now have almost the same instructional contact and interaction as the student on campus. But remote access education does not need to eliminate all the benefits of human contact. In fact, the proliferation of the modem, teleconferencing, and the World Wide Web provide a rich expanse of both information and contacts that were previously unavailable. Albeit two dimensional, these media lend themselves to pure ideas and thought processes. This purity lends itself to isolation of both the cognitive and affective domains - an additional benefit of this communication medium.

Student Barriers to Distance Learning

1. Problems and barriers encountered by the student fall into several distinct categories; costs and motivators, feedback and teacher contact, student support and services,

alienation and isolation, lack of experience, and training. More so than traditional students, distance learners are more likely to have insecurities about learning (Knapper, 1988). These insecurities are founded in personal and school related issues such as financial costs of study, disruption of family life, perceived irrelevance of their studies and lack of support from employers. These pressures often result in higher dropout rates than among traditional students (Sweet, 1986).

2. A second area of concern for the distance student is the perceived lack of feedback or contact with the teacher. Because there is not daily or weekly face-to-face contact with teachers, students may have trouble in self-evaluation. Keegan (1986) believes that the separation of student and teacher imposed by distance removes a vital "link" of communication between these two parties. The link must be restored through overt institutional efforts so that the teaching-learning transaction may be "reintegrated" (Keegan, 1986, p. 120). Citing Tinto (1975), Keegan hypothesized that students who did not receive adequate reintegration measures such as electronic or telephone communication, would be less likely to experience complete academic and social integration into institutional life. Consequently, such students would be more likely to drop out (Sheets, 1992).

3. A third area of concern for distance students is the lack of support and services such as providing tutors, academic planners and schedulers, and technical assistance.

4. A fourth problem area is the feelings of alienation and isolation reported by distance students. Students of all kinds want to be part of a larger school community, and simply a member of a "correspondence" course. For many traditional students, this is an important part of their social lives.

5. A fifth problem is prevalent with newer distance students. If distance learning institutions are serious about providing equity of educational opportunity to all, then careful consideration must be given to the special needs of students undertaking distance education for the first time. Of particular importance is the design of study materials for distance students.

6. Another problem encountered by students is the lack of student training, particularly in reference to technical issues. Many adult students are not well versed in the uses of technology such as computers and the Internet. Using electronic medium in distance learning can inadvertently exclude students who lack computer or writing skills. These skills are required if computer technology is used. Students will typically be offered volumes of electronic-based information. Using this information will be a problem for some non-technical students. They must be taught how to manage, not only their study time, but the materials presented as well.

Faculty Barriers in Distance Learning
1. Faculty experience problems such as lack of staff training in course development and technology, lack of support for distance learning in general, and inadequate faculty selection for distance learning courses. Sometimes the coursework for traditional and distance students is the same. Often it is not. There can be a lot of up front effort in designing distance learning material. This can impose a burden on teachers who already have material for traditional classrooms. Computers, video equipment, communications software, and the like, present challenges and frustrations. Faculty must know how to the use these technologies if they are to teach distance courses. Training students and staff, particularly in troubleshooting problems, is imperative to success in technical distance learning.

2. Perhaps the biggest problem for distance programs is the lack of support by the faculty. The endorsement by department faculty is viewed as a critical instructional element in any distance education program. More than any other participant, faculty roles must change the most in administering distance-learning programs. This can be difficult adjustment for some teachers. They must change teaching styles to that of a mentor, tutor, and facilitator. They must meet the needs of distance students without face-to-face contact. Since the majority of distance learners are adults, teachers may need to change their teaching style. This may be challenging for teachers who are used to teaching with 18 to 22-year-olds. Faculty is responsible for changing their course content to accommodate diverse student needs and expectations. So long as college faculty feels there is a burden associated the distance education program currently in place, there will be little support for expanding distance education opportunities. There are a number of reasons for this lack of support.

3. Teachers may lack the basic skills or hardware to fully participate in distance education. The advent of computers, telecommunications, and the World Wide Web provides an unprecedented opportunity for faculty and students to learn in a cooperative environment. It is interesting to note, however, that students respond to this changing environment more adeptly than teachers do. At California State University, for example, more than 50% of the student body own home computers while less than 50% of the faculty (Syllabus Magazine, 1996). Obtaining proper equipment and training is critical in teacher acceptance of distance learning.

4. Another problem perceived by faculty is the threat to tenure and human resource staffing. Depending on the school and the academic department, courses taught as part of a distance program may not always count toward tenure considerations, thus causing a disincentive for participation by some non-tenured faculty (Oaks,1996). Additionally, if one professor can serve thousands of students there will obviously be fewer professors and fewer departments and faculties. Schools must not underestimate this resistance and should be very aware of the possibility of overburdening faculty and staff.

Organizational Barriers in Distance Learning

1. Student and teacher concerns represent the human aspects of distance programs. Organizational problems, especially infrastructure and technology problems, also present challenges. Faculties who teach distance education courses need organizational and administrative support from the institution. Funding should be provided to create an administrative unit that is to be responsible for managing the program. Institutional leaders must be committed to distance programs. Marrs (1995) agrees when he says, "Without this support, distance education is at risk of becoming a peripheral activity, without commitment from or significance to the institution."

2. Technology considerations are self-evident but are the most easily solved. Technology problems include; financing new technology, telecommunications, hardware issues, course production and technology, and Internet problems.

3. A primary concern for both learning institutions and students is availability of funds. When technology is used, the costs increase substantially for both the student and the institution. Universities must consider the initial costs as well as the continuing costs of installing, maintaining, using, and upgrading technology to support distance services. Telecommunications and connectivity costs such as those needed to use the Internet, re ongoing costs. Washington State University (WSU) did not anticipate connectivity costs and subsequent barriers in planning their distance program. This

led to additional investments in toll-free lines and computers (Oaks, 1996). Institutions must also plan to have competent computer staff to support Internet use. These staff must then be kept up-to-date on the newest, fastest, cheapest technology available; therefore, ongoing staff training costs must be considered. The student must also incur technology costs. If the Internet is used, then the student must have access to a computer, modem, and associated software. Additionally, telephone charges to the Internet service provider will be incurred. For many institutions; however, technology pays for itself in terms of allowing more students to participate, thus increasing tuition funding. This sounds good on paper but technology must not be abused to save money. Regardless of cost issues, distance education should be instituted to advance the cause of education for the institution, not as a sole effort to save money. Kinnaman (1995) cautioned "It's about a collaboration between teachers and technology that overcomes the restrictions oftime and space, enabling students to learn more in less time, and with far less overhead."

4. In addition to cost considerations, the technology itself presents many problems. One issue is inadequate telecommunications facilities. Harry (1992) mentions that "the existing telecommunications systems are inefficient and/or expensive to use, so that educational institutions are unlikely to place too much reliance on them for teaching, support, or information searching" (p. 190). That is the reason why some developing countries still use print, cassettes, and radio delivery methods. Such circumstances prevent some instructors from producing or using advanced media and providing higher quality material for students.

Conclusion

Distance learning is not new, it has not received respect in the academic community because of the number and seriousness of problems presented here. The dramatic growth of the adult learner population is making distance learning an increasingly popular choice of learning techniques. Further study of student demographics and motivators will help target the adult learner population and will help institutions develop course materials and techniques appropriately. Close scrutiny of the intrinsic problems in distance education will help overcome problems encountered by students and faculty. Understanding and mitigating technology problems are important, especially with the rapid expansion of technology. Further research into course development techniques will help learning institutions understand which methods work best in the distance-learning classroom.

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A CRITICAL ANALYSIS: RIGHT TO EDUCATION ACT

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Introduction

As we know education is the most powerful tool which can shape the destiny of an individual as well as the whole nation. If we look at the reasons responsible for demarcating the boundaries between developed and under-developed nations, education emerges as the single most vital factor spinning the wheel of progress in the developed nations. It has been established that an educated citizen not only improve the economic and social status of the nation but political scenario also. No doubt the children's rights have been given a central place in all the international as well as national bodies. As the universal declaration of human rights (1948) under its article 26 states," everyone has the right to free education at least at the elementary and the fundamental stages and it shall be compulsory". Similarly various rights of children dealing with their development as better human beings have been defined under various articles of Indian Constitution like article 24 prohibits employment of children in any kind of industry or any other harmful occupation. Article 39 prevents abuse and exploitation of the child and article 45 provides free and compulsory education up to 14 years and by the article 47 states have been made responsible for improvement in the level of nutrition, living conditions and public health. Even the group of G-8 nations has endorsed that investment in education is a paramount factor for achieving the sustainable growth.

It is disappointment that our great nation failed to eliminate the menace of illiteracy even after 68 years of independence and our policy makers have neglected this prime area of human resource development for such a long time. Because, It is and should be the prime duty of the state and centre governments to provide free Education and Health facilities to all the citizens of the country without any kind of discrimination. Anyway, because of the efforts made by our worthy educationists, academicians, NGO'S and civil society groups who followed a rights based approach that resulted in the passing of 86th constitutional amendment by the parliament and article 21A in the year of 2002 which made Right to Education a fundamental right. Subsequently, "Right to Free and Compulsory Education Act" was approved by the president of India on 26th August 2009 and got officially published in the gazette of India on 27th August 2009. India became one of the 135 countries to make education a fundamental right for its citizens when the act came into force on 1st April, 2010. It put the Right to Education at par with Right to life. This act bounds all the stakeholders like parents, schools, society, states as well as central governments to play their roles in order to provide free and compulsory education to the children between the 6-14 yrs of age. All the practitioners of education appreciate the intent of the Act and consider it as a significant step towards the universalisation of elementary education though out the country.

Main Features of the RTE Act

- All child of India in the 6 to 14 years age group; has a right to free and compulsory education in a neighborhood school till the completion of elementary education.

- Children who have either drop out from the school or have not attended any school will be enrolled in the schools and no school can reject them for taking admission.
- Private and unaided educational institutes will have to reserve 25 percent of the seats for the students belonging to economically weaker section and disadvantaged section of the society in admission to class first (to be reimbursed by the state as part of the public-private partnership plan).
- All schools except government schools are required to be recognized by meeting the specified norms and standards within 3 years, failing of which they will be penalized for up to Rs. one lakh. It also prohibits all unrecognized schools from practice and makes provisions for no donation or capitation fees and no interview of the child or parent at the time of admission.
- For the purpose of admission in a school, the age of a child shall be determined on the basis of certificate issued in accordance with the provisions of the Births, Deaths and marriages Registration Act, 1856 or on the basis of such other document, as may be prescribed.
- The National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) and state commissions will monitor the implementation of the Act.
- All schools except private unaided schools are to be managed by school managing committees with 75 percent parents and guardians as members.
- Child's mother tongue as medium of instruction, and comprehensive and continuous evaluation system of child's performance will be employed.
- Financial burdens will be shared by the centre and the state governments in the ratio of 55:45 and this ratio is 90:10 for the northeastern states.

In India acts are framed but they are not implemented with the true spirit which derails the wheel of progress of our nation. We lack in commitment, zeal and responsibility to make the act effective. Different kinds of rights require different kinds of approaches such as freedom to speech do not require the government official machinery to provide everybody a microphone. Similarly, right to religious freedom does not compel the state and central government to construct the religious places like temples and Gurudwaras, mosques etc. so that citizens could exercise their right. But the Right to Education act makes responsible all the parties to play their respective roles as state and central governments are responsible for the development of infra-structure like schools, curriculum, teacher- trainees, teachers and their recruitments, placement, new policies etc. Likewise private institutes have to welcome the children irrespective of any discrimination like caste, colour, sex, race etc. and to provide stress free environment devoid of any kind of corporal punishment.

Suggestions to Make the RTE Act Effective

The Right to Education act should not be restricted to the age of 14 years. It should be raised up to the secondary level or vocational level courses. The centre and the state government should introduce diplomas/degrees with specialization in IT , media, entertainment, telecommunication, mobile communication, automobile, construction, food processing as announced by MHRD minister on February 8,2012 with due reservation for the economically weaker sections of the society in different polytechnic and other technical institutes.

CSS (Common School System) was an essential step for attaining equality decades ago but now a days it should be changed into MSS (Model school system) based on the needs and demands of the society where education should be given free of cost and on private institute patterns. Parents need to play an important role to make RTE a

major success in India. They should be motivated through counseling and made aware about the RTE Act through media, hoardings, pamphlets campaigns, rallies etc only then we can ensure our better future generation.

New state and central schemes like mid-day meal, SSA, RMSA along with world organization UNICEF are playing a vital role in increasing the enrolment ratio and providing the basic education to Indian children. But these national and international agencies should target weaker sections of the society, economically backward, females and highly populated states of India on top priority to improve efficacy of this act. It is very essential to involve local governing bodies so as to enroll the new born babies and their record should be sent to near school. After that school authorities should follow up the child and sent the information for registration and admission to his/her parents without any discrimination or biasness. Provision for strict punishment regarding the violation of this Act should be made and the responsibilities of state government, central government, parents, teachers, and administrators, Owners of the school, children and society members should be fixed. It should be made mandatory for all the government employees; whether state or centre or person working under centre or state sponsored agency, to send their children in government or government aided institutes.

Conclusion

An active and honest participation of all the parties concerned is must to make this act successful. If we had been able to educate the entire nation then it was certain that we had already become the leading nation of the world on the sheer power of highest percentage of working age group. Unfortunately, at present most part of this working population is illiterate, unskilled who cannot contribute substantially for the progress of the nation. As it is well said that Better late than never. Every citizen of the country right from a child, teacher or parent up to Member of Parliament or minister level should honestly admit their responsibility and perform their duty. They should compel the government in implementing the Act in true sense without any further delay and poor people should be encouraged towards Education. The question of ego, materialistic attitude, selfishness and false superiority complex should be eliminated from our society. The approach of getting government teacher or any other government job and sending the wards in private institutes even by paying hefty donations and capitation fees should be discouraged. By doing so, the RTE Act will prove to be a milestone for long term vision required for development of strong Education base of the future generation of our beloved country.

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CONSTRUCTING KNOWLEDGE SOCIETIES: NEW CHALLENGES FOR TERTIARY EDUCATION

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Introduction

Developing and transition economies face significant new trends in the global environment that affect not only the shape and mode of operation but also the very purpose of tertiary education systems. Among the most critical dimensions of change are the convergent impacts of globalization, the increasing importance of knowledge as a main driver of growth, and the information and communication revolution. Knowledge accumulation and application have become major factors in economic development and are increasingly at the core of a country's competitive advantage in the global economy. The combination of increased computing power, diminishing prices of hardware and software, improvement of wireless and satellite technologies, and reduced telecommunication costs has all but removed the space and time barriers to information access and exchange. Indeed, tertiary education is central to the creation of the intellectual capacity on which knowledge production and utilization depend and to the promotion of the lifelong-learning practices necessary to update individual knowledge and skills. Another favorable development is the emergence of new types of tertiary institutions and new forms of competition, inducing traditional institutions to change their modes of operation and delivery and to take advantage of the opportunities offered by the new information and communication technologies (ICT). But on the negative side, this technological transformation carries the real danger of a growing digital divide between and within nations. Even as these new opportunities and challenges emerge, most developing and transition countries continue to wrestle with difficulties stemming from inadequate responses to long-standing problems facing their tertiary education systems. Among these unresolved challenges are the needs to expand tertiary education.

Challenges for Tertiary Education

Tertiary education matters to a country's future. In today's world of rapid societal changes, knowledge-driven economies and increasing global integration, it can make the difference between a dynamic economy and a marginalized one. For this reason, a new World Bank report, Constructing Knowledge Societies: New Challenges for Tertiary Education, urges a considered place for tertiary education within a country's overall development agenda. It calls on policymakers throughout the developing world to pursue the substantial opportunities that tertiary education, in combination with knowledge networks and new technologies, now offers for raising national productivity and contributing to economic growth.

Challenges' Faced by Tertiary Education Systems

To reap these benefits, policymakers will need to tackle a mix of old and new challenges that encumber the path to better tertiary education. On the one hand, most developing and transition countries continue to wrestle with longstanding issues of access, equity, and quality. The fundamental question is: how can we expand coverage, reduce inequalities of access and outcomes, and improve educational quality and relevance in financially sustainable ways?

Role of Govt. in Tertiary Education

A key factor that increasingly conditions the state's role in tertiary education is the rise of market forces. In response to market dynamics, public funding is being distributed in new ways through various types of funding formulae. New financing strategies seek to generate income from institutional assets, mobilize additional revenues from students and their families, and encourage contributions from institutional partners or third-parties. Importantly, public funding is increasingly supplemented by non-public sources. Many governments have encouraged the establishment of private institutions to ease pressures on the public purse and satisfy pent up demands for access. In numerous countries, private institutions have opened up greater choices for students - albeit only those able to pay or eligible to borrow - while prompting public universities to innovate and modernize. As a result, public institutions are striving for greater responsiveness to the changing training needs of employers and the evolving educational demands of students, all of which contribute to a more productive labor force. The role of government in tertiary education is therefore one of guiding the system in response to global and local changes. In this process, governmental responsibilities are essentially three:

Shape a coherent policy framework. Proactive, meaningful reforms - rooted in a clear long-term vision for tertiary education - will be needed for countries to take advantage of the opportunities presented by the knowledge economy and the ICT revolution. Provide an enabling regulatory environment. Key dimensions of such regulation, aimed at fostering institutional innovation and stimulating the private provision of education, are the rules for establishment of new institutions (including virtual universities); quality assurance mechanisms; financial accountability for public institutions; and intellectual property rights. Offer appropriate financial incentives. Mechanisms that steer institutions towards quality, efficiency, and equity goals include budget allocation formulae linking resources to institutional performance; inducements for resource mobilization by institutions; competitive funds for investments in quality improvement; and student financial assistance programs.

The World Bank's Role

The World Bank offers wide-ranging support to countries committed to developing tertiary education into an important building block for a dynamic, knowledge-driven economy. The strategic thrusts of its support include the facilitation of policy dialogue based on a sharing of global information and experience, support for reforms through program and project lending, and coalition building at the global level to address in partnership the challenges that are crucial for tertiary education development.

Facilitating policy dialogue and knowledge sharing:

The Bank can often play a catalytic role in the development of a national policy vision for tertiary education and related policy reforms. It contributes in various ways: support for local problem analysis, the exchange of reform and innovation experience among countries, consultations among stakeholders, and consensus building public communication and debate.

Supporting reforms through lending:

To ensure the effective use of financing, Bank operations are increasingly grounded in prior analyses, stakeholder consultations, and lessons learned from similar endeavors elsewhere. In general, all of these point to the importance of comprehensive reform approaches, to a careful understanding of the local political economy, and to use of positive incentives instead of conditionality's. Experience also indicates that Bank support should be tailored to a country's specific circumstances, based on strategic planning at national and institutional levels, guided by a concern with institutional autonomy and accountability, and focused sharply on building institutional capacities.

Addressing global challenges in tertiary education:

Globalization and the growth of "borderless" education raise important issues that affect tertiary education in all countries. Yet some of these are beyond the control of any one national government. The World Bank will work with partners in the international community to enable the provision of "global public goods" such as a proper international accreditation framework, legislation for foreign tertiary education providers, intellectual property regulations governing distance education programs, and unconstrained access to ICT.

Strategic Options for Tertiary Education

1. *Transition Economies* (Eastern Europe and Central Asia) Low-income Countries Small Nations
   - More flexible and less specialized curricula.
   - Shorter-term programs.
   - More adaptable regulatory framework.
   - Public funding systems that encourage institutions to respond to market demands for quality and diversity.

2. *Low income*
   - Capacity building for managing and improving basic and secondary education, including teacher and principal training.
   - Increased production of qualified professionals and technicians through a cost-effective combination of public and private non-university institutions.
   - Highly selected investments in advanced training and research in areas of comparative advantage.

3. *Small Nations*
   - Sub-regional partnerships with neighboring small states to establish a networked university.
   - Strategically focused tertiary education institutions that address critical human skill requirements.
   - Negotiated franchise partnerships between the national government and external providers of tertiary education.
   - State-negotiated provision of distance education by a recognized international provider.

Functions of Knowledge Management for Development

Knowledge in a society is voluminous, amorphous and multifaceted. Many types of knowledge are essential for the development of any society – especially a knowledge society; they are listed in the following way, namely: (a) conservation, (b) discovery and rediscovery, (c) generation and regeneration, (d) exchange, (e) transfer, (f) dissemination, and (g) application of knowledge.

Conservation of Knowledge

All societies – developed, developing, and underdeveloped – encapsulate their vast amount of knowledge individually in their members' memories, and collectively in their groups, organizations and repositories. They propagate knowledge about norms, values, culture, traditions, history, resources, agriculture, production of goods and services, health, and every facet of the people's life – the society's historical, traditional knowledge. This Figure 2: Ontology for Empowering a State for Development in Knowledge Society

knowledge may be explicit and tacit, formal and informal, oral and written, procedural and declarative, encoded and not encoded, and so on. The conservation of this collective knowledge is critical for the continuity of the society and central to its development for there is a mutual dependence between the society and its knowledge. The society sustains the knowledge and the knowledge sustains the society. When the mutuality is virtuous – positively reinforcing each other – the development will be positive; when it is vicious – negatively reinforcing each other – the development will be negative. Systematic conservation of a society's traditional knowledge can make discovery and rediscovery easier; ad hoc conservation would make it difficult, if not impossible.

Discovery and Rediscovery of Knowledge

The vast amount of a society's knowledge is encapsulated in its collective unconscious is often unknown to most people and is not easily knowable. However, in this knowledge may be present the solution to many problems of development and the barriers to the implementation of some solutions. The hidden knowledge has to be discovered anew and rediscovered as and when needed. Systematically tapping the society's unconscious by facilitating the process of its discovery and rediscovery can limit the costs of trials and errors in development. In many areas of development, ground water management is one example, it has been found that the people knew the solution and practiced it in earlier times; that solution had to be discovered or discovered to solve the problem today.

Generation and Regeneration of Knowledge

Very often the solution to a problem requires new knowledge. New problems such as urban sprawl, new diseases such as HIV/AIDS, and new concerns such as childhood obesity have arisen due to the changes on society and its environment. At the same time, new solutions have become possible due to developments in science and technology. The new solutions have to be generated in the context of development; solutions successful elsewhere have to be regenerated in the local context.

Exchange, Transfer, and Dissemination of Knowledge

Free flow of knowledge is sine qua non for effective development. However, the flow has to be managed through exchange, transfer, and dissemination mechanisms. They make knowledge accessible by and available to everyone who needs it in a controlled and systematic manner. For example, a university faculty member may exchange papers with a faculty member in another university; a researcher may transfer a technology she has developed to a company for manufacturing; and a public health organization may disseminate information on vaccination against an impending epidemic.

Application of Knowledge

Knowledge has to be translated into action for a society's development; it has to be applied to solve the problems and corrected when it does not. Availability and accessibility of knowledge are necessary but not sufficient for application. The knowledge has to become embedded in the society's practices processes. For example, all the knowledge about water conservation would be of little value unless it is incorporated into the daily habits of the people in the society by changing how they cook, wash clothes, bathe. Application also provides feedback about the efficacy of the knowledge. A successful application reinforces its efficacy; an unsuccessful application signals the need for further research.

Conclusion

In conclusion, there is a large and growing demand in India for higher education, and projections suggest that in future Indian students will be the second largest group of international students in Australia. The Indian government is committed to increasing the number of higher education places available, but cannot meet the demand; and in particular there is a shortage of high quality education institutions. It is considering options for allowing foreign higher education institutions to establish campuses in India. Australian educational institutions should develop opportunities for higher education collaboration by opening offices in India, to raise the profile of Australian higher education, and position themselves for future transnational education opportunities.

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ROLE OF EDUCATIONAL WEB RADIOS IN ENCHAINING LEARNING SKILLS OF ODL LEARNERS

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Introduction

The Higher Education in India has attained paradigm shift in the recent years because of the vast developments in the Information and Communication Technology (ICT). The Open and Distance Learning system in India is contributing at least 30% of the Gross Enrollment Ratio in the country. The ODL system now has been very popular in providing quality education with lot of skills development and professional needs at affordable cost. Many conventional students of the Colleges and Universities are taking the opportunity to pursue distance education programmes as add on courses simultaneously with regular courses, to develop their professional skills and competence in the job market. The Learner Support Services is the key criteria in the Open and Distance Learning system of education where every learner needs to be given services at their doorstep for effective learning at their own pace of time and place. Besides providing self learning materials, the ODL institutions provide several web based student support services to enrich their academic activities like CD-ROMs, Video tapes, Television programmes, Radio and internet based activities. This paper focused on the use of educational web radios in enriching the learning skills of ODL learners.

Why Educational Web Radios?

The technology of Radio was introduced in the late nineteenth centuries and it became popular in reaching people of different geography because of its entertainment programmes. The invention and use of television has surpassed the use of radios as the mindset of people has also changed towards visual media and thereafter to internet. Radio is highly capable in delivering quality educational programmes to the rural masses and the unreached people in terms of its pedagogical importance. Radio is competent to deliver high quality educational programming to highly diversified audiences spread across various geographical expanses – all at a low per unit production cost (Couch, 1997). Satyanarayana and Sesharatnam (2000) found that radio is useful in providing remedial tutorials, or some other forms of tutorial based feedback; providing corrections, alterations or updating of material, where print remake budgets are limited, or where print cannot reach students quickly enough recording of naturally occurring events. The internet radio is now popular among the prospective learners as it is easily accessible anywhere in the world and also the recorded programme can be accessed whenever they required. Further the cost of producing the radio programmes are much cheaper than the television programmes. Due to vast development in the mobile phone technology, the web radios can be accessed easily by learners anywhere. The web radios requires no spectrum regulations of the Government alike community radio set up further, the internet radio set up is cost effective. It requires source client, streaming server and streaming clients only for transformation of the audio file. With simple bandwidth speed of internet, the streaming of audios pertaining to internet radio can be accessed anywhere in the world. The digital age has revolutionized the use of internet and accessibility to common people at

affordable costs. Several community radios playing vital role in dissemination of information on climate, rain fall, the real data on Agricultural activities to the farmers around the world.

Growth of web radios in the Indian ODL system:

In our county, the SOUs and the only Central Open University IGNOU are effectively using web radios for the academic enrichment of their learners. The mega Open University IGNOU has developed web radio recently which is trying to boost its largest number of ODL learners but there is lot need to be done.

The SOUs are concerned, they already entered into the web based radio services to their learners and the following are the web radios of the SOUs in India.

1. **BAOU** offer an Internet-enabled **Swadhyay Radio**, a powerful and a highly creative resource of learning for everyone.
2. **Yashwani** web radio of **YCMOU** covers many learners because of its effective programmes
3. **Bhojvani** of **MP BHOJ University** provides useful academic services to its learners
4. **Gyan Tharanga** of **KKSHOU** – the first north east web radio covers the educational support needs of the North East Learners
5. **TNOU - WEB RADIO** is useful in delivering many useful academic contents to its learners
6. **Hello Haldwani** of **Uttrakhand Open University** (**UOU)** is popular among its learners

Usefulness of the Web radios in ODL system

1. As the Open and Distance Learning system is fully different from conventional mode and the Learner Support Services in ODL plays a mega role in the successful completion of the programmes, hence the internet based web radios are highly useful in delivering the lectures, academic inputs, speech by eminent subject specialists and also obtaining the feedback of the through e-mail and SMS modes of communication from learners.
2. Many rural and unreached learners are especially opting the ODL mode of Learning for their skill up gradation and academic career developments, therefore the internet radios can easily reach them subject to the availability of internet facilities in that area.
3. With the advancement in the use of mobile phones, smart phones and tablets, the web radio programmes can be easily accessible to the aspiring learners as a effective technology of learning at their own pace of time.
4. The web radios are mostly cost effective than the community radio stations. The community radio station can air its programmes only to the limited area of reach. However, the web radio is accessible anywhere in the world.
5. The Radio Jockeys can easily record the audio in a mobile based devices and it can be streamed through web radio live through the streaming server, hence the interaction with the learners makes it easy.
6. The Learner expects quality of the radio programmes as they never want to waste time.
7. The Radio programmes provides ample number of opportunities to the ODL learners to enrich themselves in the academic activities and also to know about the time of submission of assignments, notifications etc.

8. Many working learners are not ready to spare their time to the academic counseling sessions and the radio programme may serve them as alternative in learning activities.

Conclusion

The Student Support Services play a vital role in the Open and Distance Learning system of Education and many institutions are finding the new way of ICT enabled technologies in providing better support services to their learners at cost effective manner. With this sense, the Internet based Web Radios are very much essential in reaching the learners of various geographical conditions. The Internet Radio favors the group learning among the learning community. The success of the radio programmes are based on the quality and usefulness to its learners. The mobile based app for the internet radios can be developed by the institutions so that the learner can enjoy the learning by downloading and installing the App. in the iOS and Android devices as per their convenience. The existence of GPRS connectivity at most of the places facilitates the use of mobile based internet technology and it favors the learning activity through web radios. The Government shall also consider the reducing the rate of internet accessibility as nowadays the cost is not affordable for the poor peoples. Therefore the web radios are essentially a much useful

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NEW PERSPECTIVES – APPLICATION OF NEW TECHNOLOGIES IN TEACHING - LEARNING PROCESS

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Introduction

Man always has a desire for excellence. Science and Technology has always been instrumental in bringing efficiency and improvement in the processes and products of the human work. Educational technology is the effective use of technological tools in teaching and learning process. Electronic educational technology has become an important part of society today for the effective application. Theoretical perspectives and scientific testing may influence instructional design. The application of theories of human behavior to educational technology derives input from instructional theory, learning theory, educational psychology, media psychology and human performance technology.

Scope

Educational technology thus refers to the use of both physical hardware and software educational theoretic. It encompasses several domains, including learning theory, computer-based training, online learning and where mobile technologies are used, m-learning. Accordingly, there are several discrete aspects to describing the intellectual and technical development of educational technology:

- Educational technology as the theory and practice of educational approaches to learning;
- Educational technology as technological tools and media that assist in the communication of knowledge, and its development and exchange;
- Educational technology for Learning Management Systems (LMS), such as tools for student and curriculum management, and Education Management Information Systems (EMIS);
- Educational technology itself as an educational subject; such courses maybe called "Computer Studies" or "Information and Communication Technology (ICT)"

Components of Technology

Educational Technology encompasses
- E-learning and Instructional technology
- Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in education
- Multimedia learning and Multi-Modal Instruction
- Technology-Enhanced learning (TEL)
- Computer-Based Instruction (CBI)
- Computer Managed Instructionand Computer-Based Training (CBT)
- Computer-Assisted Instruction or Computer-Aided Instruction (CAI)
- Internet-Based Training (IBT) and Web-Based Training (WBT)
- Online Education and Video Conferencing
- Digital Educational Collaboration
- Computer-Mediated Communication

- Cyber-learning andPersonal Learning Environments
- Virtual Education and virtual learning environments (VLE) (which are also called learning platforms)
- Network learning and Digital Education.
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Open Educational Resources

Open Educational Resources are teaching, learning and research resources that reside in the public domain and are freely available to anyone over the web. They are an important element of an infrastructure for learning and range from podcasts to digital libraries to textbooks and games. It is critical to ensure that open educational resources meet standards of quality, integrity, and accuracy—as with any other educational resource—and that they are accessible to students with disabilities.

Blended Learning

Blended learning opportunities incorporate both face-to-face and online learning opportunities. The degree to which online learning takes place, and the way it is integrated into the curriculum, can vary across schools. The strategy of blending online learning with school-based instruction is often utilized to accommodate students' diverse learning styles and to enable them to work before or after school in ways that are not possible with full-time conventional classroom instruction.

Online learning has the potential to improve educational productivity by accelerating the rate of learning, taking advantage of learning time outside of school hours, reducing the cost of instructional materials, and better utilizing teacher time. These strategies can be particularly useful in rural areas where blended or online learning can help teachers and students in remote areas overcome distance.

Digital Resources

Schools can use digital resources in a variety of ways to support teaching and learning. Electronic grade books, digital portfolios, learning games, and real-time feedback on teacher and student performance, are a few ways that technology can be utilized to power learning.

Theory

Educational Psychology, E-learning (theory), Learning theory (education)and Educational Philosophies.Various learning theories may be considered in designing and interacting with educational technology. E-learning theory examines these approaches. These theoretical perspectives are grouped into two main philosophical frameworks: behaviorism and cognitivism.

Behaviorism

This theoretical framework was developed in the early 20th century based on animal learning experiments by Ivan Pavlov, Edward Thorndike, Edward C. Tolman, Clark L. Hull, and B.F. Skinner. Many psychologists used these results to develop theories of human learning, but modern educators generally see behaviorism as one aspect of a holistic synthesis.B.F. Skinner wrote extensively on improvements of teaching based on his functional analysis of verbal behavior and wrote "The Technology of Teaching", an attempt to dispel the myths underlying contemporary education as well as promote his system he called programmed instruction. Ogden Lindsley developed a learning system, named

'Celeration', that was based on behavior analysis but that substantially differed from Keller's and Skinner's models.

Cognitivism

Cognitive science underwent significant change in the 1960s and 1970s. While retaining the empirical framework of behaviorism, cognitive psychology theories look beyond behavior to explain brain-based learning by considering how human memory works to promote learning. The Atkinson-Shiffrin memory model and Baddeley's working memory model were established as theoretical frameworks. Computer Science and Information Technology have had a major influence on Cognitive Science theory. The cognitive concepts of working memory (formerly known as short term memory) and long term memory have been facilitated by research and technology from the field of Computer Science. Today researchers are concentrating on topics like cognitive load, information processing and media psychology. These theoretical perspectives influence instructional design.

Practice

Instructional design**:** 'Hybrid learning' or 'blended learning' may refer to classroom aids and laptops; is replaced with some online learning. 'Distributed learning' may describe either the e-learning component of a hybrid approach, or fully online distance learning environments. Educational media and tools can be used for:

- Task structuring support: help with how to do a task (procedures and processes),
- Access to knowledge bases (help user find information needed)
- Alternate forms of knowledge representation (multiple representations of knowledge, e.g. video, audio, text, image, data)

Numerous types of physical technology are currently used digital cameras, video cameras, interactive whiteboard tools, document cameras, electronic media, and LCD projectors. Combinations of these techniques include blogs, collaborative software, e-Portfolios, and virtual classrooms.

Conclusion

This paper describes that the technology are enabling dramatic changes in education, content, delivery and accessibility. Technology as a way to improve communication, learning and mastery of instructional material, also itcan direct the students of their own knowledge. New technologies have facilitated the exponential growth of human knowledge.

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ICT IN DISTANCE EDUCATION

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Introduction

Anyone can contact with any person from any area of the world easily. This is possible because of the interconnection between individual computers, mobiles, routers, laptops etc., technically, the hosts. This networking provides the sharing of information by means of website, e-mail, and instant messenger, and many other services. This is because of ICT. So, ICT is defined as the interconnection of stand-alone computers across and between institutions and is general set of tools and skills that can be applied to a wide range of organizations. Therefore, hardware in ICT includes server machines, interfaces, access networks, interconnecting medium (technically channels) including wireless/wired etc. and software including network services, protocols, server programs, client programs etc. Information and communication technologies are often associated with the most sophisticated and expense computer-based technologies. But ICTs also encompass the more conventional technologies , these different tools are now able to work together and combines to form our 'networked world'- a massive infrastructure of interconnected telephone services, standardized computing hardware, the internet, radio and television, which reaches into every corner of the globe'. These older and more familiar technologies are referred to under the collective heading of 'analogue media' while the newer computer and internet based technologies are called 'digital media'. However, in today's world, with increased convergence or blending of the engineering designs and with the coming together of the satellite and the computer, the dividing lines between these different media becoming.

Different Types of ICT/Media Technologies

Delivery systems. Based upon their characteristics, media technologies can be grouped into two categories, namely, synchronous and asynchronous. Synchronous media require all participants to be together at the same time even though in different locations. Asynchronous ICTs allow for participants in the learning process to be at "different times" and "different places"

Table- 1 Types of Media/ ICT Technologies used in Education

Synchronous media	Asynchronous Media
Audio – graphics	Audio and video tapes and CDs
Audio conferencing, as in a telephone conference	E-mail
	Computer file transfers.
Broadcasting radio and television Teleconferencing	Virtual conferencing
Computer conferencing such as chat and Internet telephony	Multimedia products, off line Web based learning formats

Types of Media / ICT Content: Just as we can divide ICT technology into two types, educational content-general awareness and instructional content. Table – 2 describes the different feature of educational and instructional content.

Table-2: Types of Educational Content

Educational	Instructional
Broad audiences awareness orientation	Clearly defined target Enrichment, Clear Objectives.
Nature of learning is board, multidimensional, multidimensional, even incidental process and summative methods.	Target related format and treatment Evaluation critical, through formative.

Opportunities Provided By ICT

ICT could be a powerful tool in providing learning environment where teachers and learners are partners, and where learners have scope and prospect for choice in the nature and form of their learning. ICT- supported learning environments offer many opportunities both for teachers and learners including:

- Provision of improved access to education;
- Flexible modes of content presentation and delivery;
- Presentation of content and information in authentic contexts;
- Provision of a myriad of information sources offering many wide and diverse perspectives on content and information;
- Interactive and engaging learning settings;
- Communicative elements to support the independent learner;
- Collaboration, communication and co-operation between learners for active and engaging learning environments;
- Support for customized educational programmes to meet the needs of individual learners;
- Place, time, and independence for learning; and
- Provision of tools that can enhance students cognitive powers and processes.

The value of using ICT in forming and sustaining learning partnership is based on its capability in providing for many different types of learning activities, and its capacity to sustain the forms of communication needed to maintain the partnership. There is an emerging pattern in higher education for new technologies to be used in the delivery of student-centered courses and programmes.

ICT in Education

ICT is a generic term referring to technologies which are being used for collecting, storing, editing and passing on information in various forms.. A personal computer is the best known example of the use of ICT in education, but the term multimedia is also frequently used. Generally, the following functions of the use of ICT in education are described in literature:

1. ICT as object. It refers to learning about ICT. Mostly organized in a specific course. What is being learned depends on the type of education and the level of the students. Education prepares students for the use of ICT in education, future occupation and social life.
2. ICT as an 'assisting tool'. ICT is used as a tool, for example, while making assignment, collecting data and documentation, communicating and conducting research. Typically, ICT is used independently from the subject-matter.
3. ICT as a medium for teaching and learning. This refers to ICT as a tool for teaching and learning itself, the medium through which teachers can teach and learners can

learn. It appears in many different forms, such as drill and practice exercises, in simulations and educational networks.

4. ICT as a tool for organization and management in schools.

Conclusion

To summarize, when using ICTs in your adult learning work, make sure and

- Mix, supplement with different media
- Mix and experiment with formats and treatments
- Greater emphasis upon substance, less on style
- Use of graphics, animation
- Summarizing and recap of main points
- Build in interactivity

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THE ROLE OF ODL IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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Introduction

Since time immemorial education plays an important role in molding human behavior. In common parlance education is termed as any act or experience which has a constructive effect on the human mind and improves the physical as well as mental ability of a person. In the technical terms education is a process of transmitting knowledge, skill from one to another generation. Education is a lifelong process. It is the sum total of our experience and unlike our conventional system is not limited to the four walls and a definite stage or age. In this context the concept of Distance and Open Learning was emerged as an alternative of our conventional educational system. The conventional education system is limited to the four walls and covered only for those people who are in direct contact with the institution. But the distance or the open learning covers those who are unreached. In simple terms, distance learning, is a field of education that focuses on the pedagogy, technology, and instructional system designs that aims to deliver education to those students who are not physically "on site" like in a traditional classroom or campus. It is a flexible form of learning process where a student can study from home, work, on the move or wherever else is convenient. It is worth mentioning here that first of all the University of London introduced the distance learning process in the year 1858. Again it is termed open, because unlike our traditional system of education the age of a student does not become barrier in getting education or a higher degree.

ODL Mission

- Evolve flexible and robust curricula to widen educational access, deepen knowledge frontiers and create entrepreneurial skill sets.
- Reach the rural communities through lifelong learning programmes for livelihood improvement.
- Establish networked environments for quality assurance.
- Foster private-public partnerships.
- Bridge the digital divide and implement 'anywhere, anytime' learning environments.
- Coordinate and implement standards in ODL.

Open Education in India

Education has been recognized as a major contributing factor to improve the human mind in the social, cultural and intellectual aspects of human being. In India where more than 100 crores people are living and termed as an emerging super power of international field but still its education level does not met the international requirements. It is worth mentioning here that India has a rich history in the field of higher education since most ancient times.

It needs mention here that with having 483 universities (39 Central Universities; 255 State Universities; 59 private universities; 130 deemed universities), and over 16,885 colleges including 1,798 colleges for women, India's higher education system is the third largest in the world, after China and the United States. In addition to this there are 1173 polytechnic institutes (UGC, 2007) but still the current ratio of enrolment in the educational institution is

below 9 % which is less than the average of lower middle income countries in the world. The drop out is higher than the rest of India. In this perspective the distance and open learning contributed a lot towards providing a quality higher education to all because of its flexible and innovative as well as low cost characteristics.

Open and Distance Learning in India

The history of distance and open learning traced back to the innovative idea formulated by the Delhi University to provide some courses in the year 1962. After that Punjabi University also took some initiative in this field. However, in an organized mood the open learning got its impetus with the opening of National Open University in 1982. Again with the Establishment of Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) in 1985 make a registered a remarkable progress in this field. Now IGNOU becomes one of largest Open University of the world. Now India has more than 10 mono-mode open universities and 65 centers for distance education in dual mode delivery. In terms of providing education in distance mood South India occupied a predominant position. A significant initiative is taken by the government of India in 1992. It established the Distance Education Council (DEC) as the apex body for the promotion, coordination and maintenance of the standards of distance education.

EDUSAT and Teacher Training in Tamil Nadu:

The main role of EDUSAT has been to change the way teachers are trained in pedagogical methods. There is an up-linking facility in Anna University, Chennai, and there are down-linking facilities in all the DIETs, BRCs, and Government teacher training institutes. This technology has made it possible to bring the best teaching learning resources to teachers in remote rural areas. Satellite Interactive Terminals (SITS) have been provided; 424 SITs have been distributed to 385 BRCs, 9 TTIs and to the State Project Directorate, the DTERT and the School Education Department. The Learning Centres which have SITs not only bring quality elementary education inputs to remotely situated teachers, but can also, once the schools are networked through EDUSAT, be used for E-governance, healthcare and community welfare. The technology can eventually bridge regional, rural and urban divides by bridging the digital gap between the developed and the developing segments of the student population. The linkage of EDUSAT with a large-scale teacher training initiative is implemented in 2005-06. EDUSAT facilities in 412 centres were used for teacher training. First, resource persons and experts in subject areas and non-scholastic areas were identified, and then through a series of workshops, modules were prepared. These were printed and supplied to individual teachers. Three types of training were first taken up: A type (annual refreshers), B type (BRC level training) and C type (Cluster level training). The 6-day A type program focused on Activity-based Learning cards, self-learning material for the primary level, and on content enrichment and teaching methodology for Science, Tamil and English for the upper primary level. Over 40 lakh teacher training days (all teachers receiving 18 days of training) were thus possible. (Activity Based Learning was introduced first in the Chennai corporation schools and it has now been extended to 402 blocks all over Tamil Nadu.)

Conclusion

Open education is a collective term to describe institutional practices and programmatic initiatives that broaden access to the learning and training traditionally offered through formal education systems. The qualifier "open" of open education refers to the elimination of barriers that can preclude both opportunities and recognition for participation

in institution-based learning. One aspect of openness in or "opening up" education is the development and adoption of open educational resources.

Institutional practices that seek to eliminate barriers to entry, for example, would not have academic admission requirements. Such universities include The Open University in Britain and Athabasca University in Canada. Such programs are commonly distance learning programs like e-learning, MOOC and Opencourseware, but not necessarily. Where many e-learning programs are free to follow, the costs of acquiring a certification may be a barrier, many open education institutes offer free certification schemes accredited by organisations like UKAS in the UK and ANAB in the USA where others offer a badge.

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STAFF TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT AT OPEN AND DISTANCE LEARNING

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Introduction

Education is important to the both individual and society. Literacy has become a necessary prerequisite for appearing in public without shame and fully functioning in society. Particularly the demand for education is especially high in the developing world. Distance education is able to deal with large numbers more cost-effectively than traditional education and has proved to do so also in developing countries. It promotes educational opportunity and social justice by providing high-quality university education to all who wish to realize their ambitions and fulfil their potential (Sen, 1999).

Open and Distance Learning (ODL)

Today two terms that are being used almost inter-changeably are 'Open Learning' and 'Distance Education' and they are often combined to be known as Open and Distance Learning (ODL). Open learning is a philosophy and Distance Education is the mode used for translating it into reality as the two are complementary to each other.

The Open University is open to people, places, methods and ideas. For most courses there are no previous qualifications required to study, one has to be aged 18 when joins the course starts but there is no upper age limit. Now-a-days all the conventional universities are being encouraged to take up distance education programme and every state is establishing an open university (Swaminadhan, 2013). So, single mode (Open Universities), and dual mode institutions (Conventional and Distance mode) are came into existence to provide quantity and quality in education. India has one of the largest Distance Education systems in the world, second only to China.

Growth of ODL system

The growth of distance education has been exponential over the last four decades in our country. With the establishment of Dr BR Ambedkar Open University, Hyderabad in 1982, a new chapter in the distance education system began when full-fledged Open University with the mandate to provide distance education was established. This was followed by the establishment of Indira Gandhi National Open University in 1985. The 17 Open Universities on date have a strong network of about 11000 study centers and about 70,000 academic counselors to support the learning needs of students. The Open Universities offer all kinds of programmes ranging from vocational to general to professional to technical. Distance mode programmes in dual mode Universities started with the Delhi University which started offering programmes as correspondence courses in the year 1962. As on date there are about 250 distance education institutions in the dual mode universities and institutions which are offering programmes through distance mode There are about 22 lakhs students who have enrolled in the DEIs of dual mode universities.

ODL occupies a special place in the Indian higher education system because of its major contribution in enhancing the gross enrolment ratio and democratization of higher education to large segments of the Indian population particularly to reach out to the unreached and to meet the demands of lifelong learning which has become more of a necessity in the knowledge society.

Quality Assurance

Quality is a characteristic of the products and services an organisation offers. In the context of education, 'quality' has been placed high on the agenda of educational leaders, policy makers, and practitioners, and is in line with consumers ever increasing demand for quality education. Quality Assurance has been defined as "systematic management and assessment procedures adopted by higher education institutions and systems in order to monitor performance against objectives, and to ensure achievement of quality outputs and quality improvements"(Harman, 2000, p.1). To be simple quality assurance involves pro-active measures taken to avoid faults. At a practical level, quality assurance involves a continuous cycle that comprises setting standards for a key activity, carrying out the activity, judging achievements against the standards, planning for improvement and taking action to implement desired changes. For this, RPTIM (Readiness, Planning, Training, Implementation and Maintenance) model is best for identifies what happens before, after and during the planning and training and specifies the practices that should be used in designing staff development programs.

Quality Assurance Techniques in ODL

Over the past few years, there has been significant growth of quality assurance (QA) activities aimed towards improving higher education on institutional, national, regional and global levels. Numerous reports have been published to share ideas, experiences, and articulate the 'how and how not to' and 'best practices' of QA implementation in Distance Education contexts from around the world (Deshpande & Mugridge, 1994; Tait, 1997). The major quality assurance methods in most open and distance learning programmes are, peer review, performance indicators, customer feedback and a philosophy of continuous improvement. The experience of the Open University in the United Kingdom provides a number of examples of long-standing quality assurance activities that have become standard practice in a number of distance teaching universities around the world. These include: the course team, who collaboratively and without hierarchy work and rework drafts of materials; developmental testing of course materials before general availability; monitoring of correspondence teaching; monitoring of learner assignment turnaround times; inspecting and supporting tutorial and counselling staff face-to-face activities; and collecting feedback from learners (Mercedes et al., 2014).

Staff Training and Development

Since the roles of the distance education lecturer are crucial to the success of the distance education programmes, there is need to ensure that the lecturers are adequately prepared for these roles through quality initiatives. Beaudoin (1990: 21) argues that teachers used to traditional education practices have to "acquire new skills to assume expanded roles not only to teach distance education learners, but also to organise instructional resources suitable in content and format for independent study". One way of achieving quality in ODL is providing training and regular in-service education for lecturers to ensure that they can cope with the technological developments in open and distance learning by the following ways:

- Teaching in virtual environments demands mastery of several teaching competencies. Although the most accepted ones are pedagogical, in order to successfully teach online it becomes necessary to acquire and develop some other competencies, sometimes referred to as peripheral roles (social, evaluator, manager, technologist, advisor/counsellor, personal, and researcher) (Denis et al., 2004). So, professional development programmes should be based on a balance between central and

peripheral roles to better train online teachers and increase the quality of their teaching (Una Cunningham , 2014).

- Though we are discussing about online, e-learning and MOOC, unless teaching assistance is available, it is not easy to afford online students the same right to speak as campus students (Michele T. Cole et al., 2014). So, the ODL institutes should provide live e- content classes or online discussions on the material provided to them. And for this the staff should be through and consideration of practice and performance for teacher teams and individual teachers to encourage collaboration and knowledge sharing.

- Extensive evidence of quality teaching for the teachers should be gathered by using peer assistance and review programs. Because the researches indicate that partially Online courses will be satisfactory than fully online courses. Though convenience is there at fully online courses, but interaction will be lacking. Students will be benefited with partial online courses (Engin Kursun et al., 2014).

- Teachers who are more effective in increasing student engagement, learning and achievement should be identified and certification should be provided. The best practices of Effective administrator and teacher leadership, Job-embedded professional development and professional learning communities should be taken care of because, in an investigation of faculty perspectives on barriers, incentives, and benefits of the OER, the faculty opinion to publishing their course materials for free within open educational resources (OER) is positive in nature but legal issues were perceived as an obstacle to effective application **(Webster-Wright, 2009).**

- The research on professional development for teachers has shifted in the last decade from delivering and evaluating professional learning and the conditions that support it (Webster-Wright, 2009). Staff development can be viewed as the activities and programs (formal and informal and on or off campus) that help staff members learn about responsibilities, develop required skills and competencies necessary to accomplish institutional and divisional goals and purposed, and grow personally and professionally to prepare themselves for advancement in the institution or beyond the campus. Professional development orientation and workshops to make teachers to be more effective should be provided. More experienced or senior staff those are trained in open and distance learning techniques can be assists the new or junior staff (Beaudoin, 1990).

Other Suggestions

- Training of both new and existing staff in open and distance learning programmes is essential to the development of the competencies. The universities should feel that training as an investment rather than a cost, and give high priority in organisational plans and funding allocations.

- Taking new roles by the staff, especially if open and distance learning is unfamiliar. And make clear role descriptions, expectations and reporting lines.

- Adapting to new ways of teaching and communicating.

- Using new technologies which alter familiar processes of teaching and communication.

- Providing training how to be responsible for supporting learners at a distance through induction and orientation.

- Developing better skills in teamwork, co-ordination, and the management of schedules and records.

- All staff periodically should get training to ensure maintenance of skills and standards and their continuing professional development.
- Courses on the aspects of open and distance learning should be studied by the staff.
- The effectiveness and efficiency of training programmes should be evaluated.
- Practice exercise by the staff on the aspect of the major issues facing organisations in assuring quality, the strategies and techniques available for assuring quality should be organised.
- Successful Collaboration, focus on student learning, continuous teacher learning, teacher authority to make decisions regarding curriculum, the processes of their own learning, and aspects of school governance.
- Opportunities for face-to-face meetings.
- Frequent performance monitoring and review.
- Continual updating on changes in policies and procedures.

Conclusion

Without good teachers even the best system of education is bound to fail, whereas with good teachers the defects of the system can be largely overcome. So, well-coordinated and systematic step by-step processes of staff induction, staff development, caring for staff, adequate funding and results based incentives were vital to quality in an ODL institution.

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CHOICE BASED CREDIT SYSTEM: AN ANALYSIS

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Introduction

The Indian government recently made Choice-based Credit System (CBCS) mandatory for all 400 public universities at the undergraduate and postgraduate level beginning in the academic year 2015-2016. This is good news as every student should have the right to choose subjects of interest. CBCS will encourage students to learn in an interdisciplinary manner, in which teachers from varied disciplines design a curriculum, instruct the class and grade teams. Students can opt for courses of their choice, learn at their own pace, take additional courses and get more than the required credits. Under CBCS, students will be able to pursue three types of courses -foundation, elective and core. Students must pursue core subjects every semester and are free to pick electives from a pool of subjects unrelated to their disciplines. This means if you are a computer science student, you can still opt for history as an elective. CBCS has the facility to transfer the credits from one institution to another provided there are provisions in the rules of the autonomous colleges and the universities to accept transfer of credits. As creative and performing arts are becoming popular in campuses, credits can be thought of for such activities too. Though the students will choose courses of inter-disciplinary nature, the required courses for majoring in a subject will ensure depth. Professionalism and quality consciousness are the basis for every change. With faculty advising, CBCS can offer a very flexible and open system for a quality up gradation of higher education. This new approach reflects the government's understanding of the uniqueness of every student. Both students and teachers have high expectations from these new guidelines.

Choice-Based Credit System

Choice-based credit system (CBCS) has several unique features: Enhanced learning opportunities, ability to match students' scholastic needs and aspirations, inter-institution transferability of students (following the completion of a semester), part-completion of an academic programme in the institution of enrolment and part-completion in a specialized (and recognized) institution, improvement in educational quality and excellence, flexibility for working students to complete the programme over an extended period of time, standardization and comparability of educational programmes across the country, etc. The CBCS imminently fits into the emerging socio-economic milieu, and could effectively respond to the educational and occupational aspirations of the upcoming generations. In view of this, institutions of higher education in India would do well to invest through and resources into introducing CBCS. Aided by modern communication and information technology, CBCS has a high probability to be operationalised efficiently and effectively - elevating students, institutions and higher education.

Recommendations of University Grants Commission

UGC chairman has written to vice chancellors of central, state and deemed universities asking them to adopt the recommendations of the Prof A.Gnanam committee on academic and administrative reforms. The recommendation also includes introducing of semester system, examination reforms and inter-institution credit and transfer of students. Interestingly, UGC has linked the implementation of the recommendations with the grants to the universities..To implement CBCS, the committee said, institutions of higher education

need to review curricular contents, term papers and assignments of various programmes. There will be provisions for core-credits and elective or optional credits for different levels of academic programmes. Core-credits would be unique to the programme, and earning them would be essential for the completion of the programme. Elective-credits are likely to overlap with other programmes or disciplines of study. As a part of academic reform, institutions of higher education need to pay serious attention to the procedures for merit-based admission. The candidate's answer-sheets need to be assigned confidential codes before being sent for evaluation and the committee recommends that the assessment of student performance should be carried out through a combination of internal and external evaluation.

The UGC has been constantly persuading the universities to introduce academic reforms like introduction of semester system, CBCS and grading, to bring about qualitative improvement in higher education in the country. According to an official release on March 4, 2015 as many as 18 UGC-funded central universities have introduced Choice Based Credit System (CBCS) at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels to bring about qualitative improvement in higher education. Other central universities are in different stages of implementation of CBCS, The UGC would also conduct eight regional workshops from March 20 to April 16 so that all the universities can be prepared and assisted in the implementation of CBCS,

Semester System and Choice Based Credit System

The Indian Higher Education Institutions have been moving from the conventional annual system to semester system. Currently many of the institutions have already introduced the choice based credit system. The semester system accelerates the teaching-learning process and enables vertical and horizontal mobility in learning. The credit based semester system provides flexibility in designing curriculum and assigning credits based on the course content and hours of teaching. The choice based credit system provides a 'cafeteria' type approach in which the students can take courses of their choice, learn at their own pace, undergo additional courses and acquire more than the required credits, and adopt an interdisciplinary approach to learning, It is desirable that the HEIs move to CBCS and implement the grading system.

Examination and Assessment

The Higher Educational Institutions (HEIs) are currently following various methods for examination and assessment suitable for the courses and programmes as approved by their respective statutory bodies. In assessing the performance of the students in examinations, the usual approach is to award marks based on the examinations conducted at various stages in a semester. Some of the HEIs convert these marks to letter grades based on absolute or relative grading system and award the grades. There is a marked variation across the colleges and universities in the number of grades, grade points, letter grades used, which creates difficulties in comparing students across the institutions. The UGC recommends the following system to be implemented in awarding the grades and CGPA under the credit based semester system.

Fairness in Assessment

Assessment is an integral part of system of education as it is instrumental in identifying and certifying the academic standards accomplished by a student and projecting them far and wide as an objective and impartial indicator of a student's performance. Thus, it becomes bounden duty of a University to ensure that it is carried out in fair manner. In this

regard, UGC recommends the following system of checks and balances which would enable Universities effectively and fairly carry out the process of assessment and examination.

- In case of at least 50% of core courses offered in different programmes across the disciplines, the assessment of the theoretical component towards the end of the semester should be undertaken by external examiners from outside the university conducting examination, who may be appointed by the competent authority. In such courses, th question papers will be set as well as assessed by external examiners.
- In case of the assessment of practical component of such core courses, the team of examiners should be constituted on 50 – 50 % basis. i.e. half of the examiners in the team should be invited from outside the university conducting examination
- In case of the assessment of project reports / thesis / dissertation etc. the work should be undertaken by internal as well as external examiners.

Computation of SGPA and CGPA

The UGC recommends the following procedure to compute the Semester Grade Point Average (SGPA) and Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA):

1. The SGPA is the ratio of sum of the product of the number of credits with the grade points scored by a student in all the courses taken by a student and the sum of the number of credits of all the courses undergone by a student.
2. The CGPA is also calculated in the same manner taking into account all the course undergone by a student over all the semesters of a programme.
3. The SGPA and CGPA shall be rounded off to 2 decimal points and reported in the transcripts.
4. Transcript (Format): Based on the above recommendations on Letter grades, grade points and SGPA and CCPA, the HEIs may issue the transcript for each semester and a consolidated transcript indicating the performance in all semesters

Conclusion

To conclude it can be said that Education is not the end of process. But a well designed system of evaluation is a powerful Educational device. Choice Based Credit System is essential for Higher Education. This system increases the sincerity among the teacher as well as the students. It has improved the academic carrier of many students who were not even much sincere and good percentage holder. In CBCS the span of time which can be allotted for increased so that course of study can be properly acquired by the student. Betterment system should be introduced because the students can better their performance. No one will dispute that the vision and the plans are challenging but it remains to be seen whether the present teaching faculty can reorient itself quickly to the changed academic scenario. Also, unless the government responds positively to these changes and lifts its blanket ban on filling up teaching posts, these plans are in danger of remaining just that-proposals on paper.

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WOMEN'S EDUCATION IN INDIA

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Introduction

"If you educate a man you educate an individual, however, if you educate a woman you educate a whole family. Women empowered means mother India empowered" - Jawaharlal Nehru

Women constitute almost half of the population in the world. But the hegemonic masculine ideology made them suffer a lot as they were denied equal opportunities in different parts of the world. The rise of feminist ideas has, however, led to the tremendous improvement of women's condition throughout the world in recent times. Access to education has been one of the most pressing demands of theses women's rights movements. Women education in India has also been a major preoccupation of both the government and civil society as educated women can play a very important role in the development of the country.

India is poised to emerge as one of the most developed nations by 2020, more literate, knowledgeable and economically at the forefront. No doubt, women will play a vital role in contributing to the country's development. Women power is crucial to the economic growth of any country. In India this is yet to meet the requirements despite reforms. Little has been achieved in the area of women empowerment, but for this to happen, this sector must experience a chain of reforms. Though India could well become one of the largest economies in the world, it is being hindered due to a lack of women's participation.

Importance of Women Education in India

Women education in India plays a very important role in the overall development of the country. It not only helps in the development of half of the human resources, but in improving the quality of life at home and outside. Educated women not only tend to promote education of their girl children, but also can provide better guidance to all their children. Moreover educated women can also help in the reduction of infant mortality rate and growth of the population.

Obstacles: Gender discrimination still persists in India and lot more needs to be done in the field of women's education in India. The gap in the male-female literacy rate is just a simple indicator. While the male literary rate is more than 75% according to the 2001 Census, the female literacy rate is just 54.16%.

Women Empowerment through Education

Women Empowerment is a global issue and discussion on women political right are at the fore front of many formal and informal campaigns worldwide. The concept of women empowerment was introduced at the international women conference at NAROIBI in 1985. Education is milestone of women empowerment because it enables them to responds to the challenges, to confront their traditional role and change their life. So that we can't neglect the importance of education in reference to women empowerment India is poised to becoming superpower, a developed country by 2020. The year 2020 is fast approaching; it is just 13

year away. This can became reality only when the women of this nation became empowerment. India presently account for the largest number no of illiterates in the world. Literacy rate in India have risen sharply from 18.3% in 1951 to 64.8% in 2001 in which enrolment of women in education have also risen sharply 7% to 54.16%. Despite the importance of women education unfortunately only 39% of women are literate among 64% of the man. Within the framework of a democratic polity, our laws, development policies, plan and programmes have aimed at women's advancement in difference spheres. From the fifth five year plan (1974 – 78) onwards has been a marked shift in the approach to women's issues from welfare to development. In recent years, the empowerment of women has been recognized as the central issue in determining the status of women. The National Commission of Women was set up by an Act of Parliament in 1990 to safeguard the right and legal entitlements of women. The 73rd and 74th Amendments (1993) to the constitution of India have provided for reservation of seats in the local bodies of panchayats and Municipalities for women, laying a strong foundation for t heir participation in decision making at the local level.

Research Centers for Women Studies:

Continuous research into factors affecting the education of women must be launched and supported by appropriate educational research organizations and governmental departments. In service and pre-service education of teachers should be delved into, thereby helping the teachers develop skills to combat stereotyping and raise awareness of the constraints that gender stereotyping imposes on the development of young girls and of society.

- Poverty alleviation programmes should be well articulated, vigorously pursued and objectively carried out so that poverty level of parents will be reduced. This will enable parents to give equal opportunities to their children.
- The clauses in the National Policy on Education (NPE) relating to equal opportunities for all Nigerians should be genuinely executed.
- Political leaders are very important on the issue of women empowerment. There must be sincere action on the part of our leaders that they are actually interested in solving this problem through meaningful programmes. Whatever plans are initiated in this direction should be fully implemented and reviewed periodically. This allows for amendments where necessary.
- Positive attitudes towards women empowerment on the part of all Nigerians would accelerate the process.
- The Universal Basic Education should be vigorously pursued. Adequate data relating to planning facilities and human resources in the form of teachers must be met.
- Schools should be located closer to communities, and community participation especially locally active women should be encouraged. This serves as a precursor to educational growth in the locality.
- In addition, various steps should be taken to rehabilitate girls or women that have taken to social ills like prostitution, fraud and drugs.
- For a well informed citizenry, women and girls need to be encouraged to attend school and to stay in school for longer years to learn science and technology subjects if they are to contribute their best to national efforts for self reliance and national development. It has become apparent under the present economic hardships (realities) that the stereotype image of man as the family's sole bread winner is no longer always true.

- Similarly, the misguided stereotypical division of work into men's and women's jobs must be discarded. The persistence of this misleading sexist categorization of jobs in homes, amongst teachers, and employers of labour is a major discriminatory factor in the tendency among girls and women to acquire inadequate and insufficient education.
- Women, on the other hand must organize themselves to meet the challenges of a positive and meaningful role in the struggle for national emancipation, development and progress through the acquisition of functional education which will usher in a new lease of life in order for us to face squarely the challenges of national development in the 21st century.

Educational Equality

Another area in which women's equality has shown a major improve ment as a result of adult literacy programs is the area of enrolment of boys and girls in schools. As a result of higher participation of women in literacy campaigns, the gender gap in literacy levels is gradually getting reduced. Even more significant is the fact that disparity in enrolment of boys and girls in neo- literate households is much lowered compared to the non- literate householders.

Conclusion

According to the Country Report of the Government of India, "Empowerment means moving from a weak position to execute a power." Education of women in the education of women is the most powerful tool of change of position in society. Education also brings a reduction in inequalities and functions as a means of improving their status within the family. To encourage the education of women at all levels and for dilution of gender bias in providing knowledge and education, established schools, colleges and universities even exclusively for women in the state. To bring more girls, especially from marginalized families of BPL, in mainstream education, the government is providing a package of concessions in the form of providing free books, uniform, boarding and lodging, clothing for the hostilities midday meals, scholarships, free circles and so on.

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CURRENT DEVELOPMENTS IN OPEN AND DISTANCE LEARNING

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Introduction

Through the many documents regularly emitted by those dedicated to this activity, it is comparatively easy to describe factual developments in the head of open and distance education in different places in the world. However, it is much more difficult to produce judgments of value about their quality. Quality is a subjective rather than an absolute concept and may be examined from different analytical perspectives: consumers' satisfaction level, intrinsic value of scientific and technical content of learning materials, soundness of learning strategies, efficiency of organisation and procedures, adequate use of advanced technologies, reliability of student support mechanisms, etc. These parameters should be put into the context of specific objectives, nature of target populations and availability of different kinds of resources. In a specific geographic, social, economic and cultural situation a given set of solutions might be judged as adequate and deserving the qualification of "good practice", while in a different context it could be considered of rather poor quality. The selection of examples in this article is the sole responsibility of the authors: neither should the chosen cases be considered as clearly better than any other one, nor missing cases be interpreted as lack of appreciation or a negative judgment. Finally, the authors are aware of the risks of interpreting trends and trying to extrapolate them into the near future: readers should use their own judgment in accepting (or forcefully rejecting) these projections.

Functions of an ODL System

Taking as an example of an open university as a fully integrated, dedicated ODL system, we can list the major functions or system capacities for performing the corresponding tasks (Trindade, 1999):

Specification of programme objectives

- Content
- authoring
- Production of learning materials
- Selection and enrolment of students
- Distribution of information and learning materials Tutoring and student support
- Assessment and certification
- General and special monitoring

These functions have been listed more or less in the chronological order in which they occur, from the inception of a new programme until the end of its trust academic year of operation. Obviously, a number of sub-tasks are embedded in some of these items. For example, conducting a human and material resources feasibility study is part of specifying objectives and the target population, designing the main learning strategies is a sub-task within curriculum development, and selecting media is part of both authoring and production of learning materials. Monitoring is a major aspect of quality assurance, as it provides information and data suitable to have a retroactive effect in improving the performance of all the other functions. Most items in the list do not require further detailing or comment; we

shall just deal with the ones deserving a special analysis in the present context.

Student Support Mechanisms

In a conventional learning situation, interpersonal interactions are usually dined as teacher/student, student/teacher and student/student relationships, and depicted in a triangular pattern. In an entirely distance learning mode, direct contacts of this kind are, except on rare occasions, almost always com-promised; some virtual substitutes have to be introduced. Students, prone to be affected by unsolved scientific or pedagogic difficulties in their learning process, by discouragement and demoralization or by doubts that they are following the right path in the process of knowledge acquisition, should not be forced to work in isolation. Student support mechanisms are designed to overcome these difficulties. By creating opportunities for contact between students and the teaching system, questions can be asked and answered, advice provided and moral support given whenever needed. Mail and telephone have been used as means for these inter-actions, as well as study centers where students can meet teachers and tutors at mutually arranged times.

Technological Facilities

A distance teaching system needs to have the best technological infrastructure it can a lord, namely in data processing for academic and administrative management, and internal circulation of information and technologies for producing and publishing learning materials. However, in distributing these materials and assuring good communications with students, some other considerations must be taken into account.

In the case of a system aiming at providing education to the largest possible population of users, there is a risk of using technologies that are not available to the majority of the target population. This would create social and economic discrimination, with the possibility of excluding the less-favored part of the universe of potential users from the corresponding benefits.

This is the current situation in developing countries, where information and communication technologies are not widely distributed throughout the population. In many cases, even conventional mail is slow and erratic and telephones scarce and unreliable. A way out of this dilemma is to put distance education into a small number of selected resource centers, where a suitable concentration of the necessary technologies can be made locally available to users (Buitendach, 1997).

Flexibility of Learning Strategies

Learning strategies can be more or less adequate and efficient according to the cognitive pro les of users. Pro les can range from intellectual-minded persons, at ease with the ordination and abstractions, to the pragmatic and application-driven students, who prefer to deal with concrete situations. There are also other possible, intermediate pro les to be considered. Some students are naturally more autonomous and creative in their learning activities so they feel at ease with innovative approaches, with alternative options, and even with the challenge of trying to construct knowledge by themselves. Others prefer a solid and sure approach to axed objectives and clear and straight content (Kolb, 1984). In most courses, it seems possible to design different learning strategies suitable for these different kinds of users, albeit serving the same objectives and including approximately the same nature of content. There is obviously a need for fundamental research on these kinds of issues, dealing with meta-cognitive pro les, with the process of learning itself and with the devising of alternative learning strategies, for the sake of improving the overall efficiency of learning.

Options on Learning Materials and Processes

In Europe and the United States there has been some divergence of outlooks about the nature of ODL materials. Following the positive in sequence of the pioneer British Open University (http://www.open.ac.uk), most ODL systems in Europe place a strong emphasis on the conception and production of high quality learning materials, having embedded an instructional design suitable to facilitate autonomous self-learning. This type of learning is, of course, very ex-pensive and even more so when, besides textbooks, audio, video and multimedia, interactive materials are also produced.

Many United States ODL systems have adopted a different approach, closer to the concept of the asynchronous, remote classroom. Lectures in universities, made by eminent teachers and scientists, are recorded and then broadcast to distance learning students. This live instruction is complemented by the same textbooks used by intra-mural students. In a variation of this approach, systematic and intensive use of videoconferencing multiplies the number of remote classroom sites, operating in a bilaterally interactive, synchronous mode. An-other approach uses compurter conferencing via Internet, linking a teacher to any number of students. However, when the number of remote sites and the number of students involved increases significantly, the capacity for meaningful teacher-student interaction is naturally compromised.

The Internet in ODL Operations

The extraordinary expansion and accessibility of the Internet and the World Wide Web over the last decade seems to over ODL operators a very valuable tool to further the educational aims of people in our contemporary world. If we look around we realize that it is about the Internet that profound academic debate now takes place.

The usually asynchronous nature of the medium and its vast reach make it a powerful tool for both students and teachers around the world who are interested in the same held on knowledge. However, the expression Internet-based learning that we have heard frequently in recent times is, from our point of view, a term we should avoid. We believe that all technologies should be considered as mere tools in the service of distance learning, rather than a seemingly essential factor involved in the learning process. Actually, any tool implies much more than just using intensively a given communication facility: it comprises all the human factors and qualified work involved in conceiving appropriate learning materials; devising a sound pedagogical strategy; providing students, individually, with efficient support mechanisms; assessing their progress; and certifying their results.

Virtual Universities

Another interesting approach to the problem of increased demand for higher education has recently begun to appear: the so-called \virtual university". This term intends to mean that, contrary to usual expectations, such institutions have no campus (in a physical sense): ODL students live in a virtual environment, despite their possibility to contact each other, as well as their teachers and tutors, in cyberspace. This situation can occur in a single-mode institution or in dual- and mixed-mode ones; or it can encompass, within the same institutional setting, any number of collaborating organizations.

There is no conceptual difference between a virtual university and other kinds of ODL institutions, just an instrumental one. Virtual systems make an intensive use of ICT technologies, such as WebCT or Lotus Learning Space, to distribute selected learning materials, facilitate access to alternative sources of information and data, make possible teacher-student (as well as student-student) interactions, and enable tutoring and assessment

of results. ICT technologies are also used for giving lectures, organizing seminars and discussing content.

Conclusion

At present, globalization has touched many ends of human activity and introduced many different ways of facilitating day-to-day life. Examples include: direct dialing and instant telephone communications between many places on the planet; e-mail correspondence among increasing numbers of people; access to the Internet for information and data, entertainment, getting things done or having problems solved, shopping and conducting business; getting immediate cash in a foreign country through an ATM; and use of credit cards for shopping or payment of services in many different regions of the world. Globalization also means quicker international travel, explosion of trans-national tourism, higher degree of mobility of people and merchandise, and worldwide discussion of news, styles and ideas. It will also mean better opportunities for learning.

As ODL systems proliferate, quality assurance will become a major issue. Taking into account our proposed definition of ODL, it is acceptable to evaluate separately its different features, as to their intrinsic quality. Learning materials, with respect to both their scientific content and pedagogic strategies; student support mechanisms; communications; organization and logistics | all are features to measure and appraise. Self-evaluation of institutions through permanent and generalized monitoring are necessary tools for achieving quality assurance.

Another approach to evaluating quality is by means of peer evaluation, a common form of assessment in higher education. However, the universe of peerage should be restricted to those belonging to the ODL community. This is not a defensive approach: the fact that ODL methods are in essence different from classroom teaching makes those not familiar with that methodology poor judges. Moreover, it is a well-known fact that in many cases and in different regions of the world, conventional universities have been strong opponents to the creation of distance teaching universities.

A pragmatic approach to counter the opposition to ODL is to judge quality in terms of consumer satisfaction. The full specification of objectives to be attained in a given programme will provide users with a yardstick to assess not only their own performances, but also the reliability and adequacy of the teaching system or institution they have chosen. Their subsequence when entering the profession and their potential to succeed in it will react, in the medium term, the quality and value of these qualifications.

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USAGE OF INTERNET IN DISTANCE EDUCATION

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Introduction

Distance education is different from the traditional education. Distance education is that educational information and instruction is taught to learners who are physically distant from the source of that information and instruction. Distance education, also called distance learning, provides learning chances to people who could not afford time or money for traditional classes or who lived in remote areas far from schools. Because of the expansion of the Internet in recent years, the Internet has become the most important tool for delivering distance education.

The Internet and Distance Education

Distance learning programs involve many kinds of technology. The Internet and World Wide Web (WWW) are the primary means of presenting educational information. Once learners have subscribed to, or signed up for an Internet provider, they gain access to the educational materials and services designed for the Internet and WWW. The educational information is stored electronically; thus learners with access to the site can download or use the information as long as it is stored there. This makes it easy for learners to work at their own pace and to visit the site as frequently as they like.

The Web can provide learning information in many different interesting formats. It can present information in sound bits, such as music, voice or special effects. Graphics may be also presented in a special type of artwork such as animation or video. In addition, Learners can also use another very convenient tool on the Internet: hypertext links. Hypertext links can take viewers to a thematically related piece of information within the same document or Web site, or to information found at another site (Porter 1997).

Distance education is basically teaching outside the traditional classroom setting or teaching students from a distance. The modern version of distance education specifically refers to taking classes by accessing the Internet with personal computers. There are various ways that this is accomplished. A teacher can transmit information digitally to students who receive the education on personal computers. There are software programs that are designed to transmit education over the internet to students automatically. Teachers in classrooms may require students to access a class website for assignments and education materials. There may be classes where students never meet in the same location and all instruction is received only through the Internet. Some distance courses are interactive, some are not. When teaching occurs in real time, that is when students in a distance education class receive information at the same time it is being transmitted, the process is referred to as "synchronous." When students log on to their class websites for instruction at various times that are convenient to each student, the process is known as "asynchronous".

Why is Distance Education used instead of Traditional Teaching?

Not everyone can attend school to get an education. Some people have jobs to work during typical classroom hours. Some people live far from campus and do not have the means or the time to travel to classes. Some people have disabilities that prevent or make attending

classes unreasonably difficult. When distance education is used in addition to classroom teaching, it enhances the curriculum by adding current or additional information or making class assignments. Distance education is used extensively in places like remote area where students are scattered over distant geographical areas that would otherwise prevent attending classes. Education is an important commodity and the Internet has broken many barriers to providing an education to people who would not otherwise get the opportunity to get an education.

Media and Technology Use for Distance Education
- Direct Human teaching using smart class rooms
- Over-head projector
- Lectures/Seminars/Telecommunication
- Text Print
- Text and other supporting printed materials
- Audio
- Radio broadcasting
- Audio Cassettes
- Radio Programs
- Cassettes Programs
- Television Tele-Broadcasting
- Telecast Programs
- Video-Conferencing

On-line Communications: In view of the importance that is attached to computer net working, the department is seriously thinking to make some of its courses available through on-line wherever internet facilities are available. The government of India is prepared to invest in this process of development and already internet and e-mail awareness has increased in the country and facilities are available in most places of the country.

Virtual Classroom: A virtual classroom is similar like a real classroom as it has a schedule which is implemented online where teachers and learners interact together using computers linked to Internet. Any means of live or pre-programmed Internet broadcast of information meant to function in a teaching capacity. The virtual classroom facility in distance learning institutes is an additional student support service to interact with faculty members. It is an online learning space where students and faculty members interact and Symbiosis Centre for Distance Learning has successfully implemented this facility for the learners. Virtual classroom can be compared to the actual classroom, the only difference between them is, virtual class is live Internet broadcast, where teacher and students are separated by different geographic location and they interact with each other by way of multimedia resources.

TV Channel Broadcast Educational Programs
Private satellite TV channel broadcast educational programs to reduce dependency on the government own channel too. A topics-wise TV programs schedule must be sent to the students. It will be very helpful for distance students if the said programs are broadcast after 8 pm so that learners can listen to the program and benefited. Broadcasting should be regular and followed by announcement of the topic for the next day broadcasting. The quality of presentation should be ensured. TV presentation must be attractive. In order to avoid

monotony repetition of a single program several times should be stopped. Discussion should be on each critical topic of each course for effective learning.

Instructional uses of Internet

- Instructing the students using PowerPoint slides, Word documents or Web pages and using hyperlinks for better concept clarity.
- Helps in improving pronunciation of students by using microphones, headphones, speakers, specially prepared software and special dedicated websites.
- Video conferencing, chat and email helps in better communication, hence better concept clarity. Also concept of E-tutor has given access to teachers instantly and given teachers a better chance to earn.
- Current syllabus can be viewed through website of the concerned school board; made available to students if teacher has made a website and uploaded using Internet; and updating- using web could be done easily.
- Readymade software could give practice material to students
- Encouraging the students to surf web pages and gather relevant detailed information through web pages.

    The Internet helps the teacher to improve in planning and delivering information. It gives a new dimension for teaching, such as

Providing Students with Motivation

    Generally students need some motivation. Allowing the students to use the Internet in their learning is a motivational push to students who are bored by the traditional ways of information delivery, and thereby expedite the transfer of information from the short-term memory to the long-term memory.

Questioning and Discovery

    Teacher should encourage and provide the students with avenues to ask questions. Good questions by the teacher can excite interest in a rather boring subject. Using the Internet for educational activities provides a different avenue for discovery through questioning, and for critical evaluation of information.

Communicating and Using Knowledge

    The constant use of knowledge enhances understanding and long-term memory. Using knowledge in different settings give you a better understanding of the different shades of meaning of the concepts involved in a giving learning situation. Communication is a way of using knowledge. It is a source for re-enforcement. The Internet promotes fast communication across geographical barriers, and therefore gives students an opportunity to communicate early in life with a broad range of people not imagined possible before.

Well Designed Lesson Plans

    The resources and communication capabilities of the Internet provide an opportunity for you to creatively design integrated lesson plans and assignments that combine problem solving, writing, critical thinking, discovery, and exploration. Properly designed, such lessons allow and encourage the students to ask questions and be involved in the learning process, and be the creators of their own knowledge.

Professional Development

Professional development is a key to updating skills and for career advancement. The teachers can use the Internet to join a group discussion, subscribe to a news group, take classes, and keep in touch with professional colleagues for the professional development.

Ease of Lesson Presentation

If the teacher publishes a lesson on the Internet, it allows teacher to color code or graphical presentation and also use hyperlinks to direct students to related materials. Thus the Internet will enhance the quality of the classroom's presentation.

Conclusion

Distance education provided an opportunity for everyone to access for knowledge. Education is the only way for social and economic upliftment of the nation, which is improved through the distance education. Technology had made these processes even simpler with high penetration in remote areas. With educated society, India became the global power in these multipolar worlds.

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ROLE OF ODL IN PROMOTING INCLUSION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITY

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Introduction

In the context of globalization, the ODL institutions employ a variety of approaches in the teaching learning process, especially designed to meet the needs of the ever-changing global scenario. Quality Instructional design is more accessible to the learners by offering a lot of flexibility in place and pace of learning and selection of courses. Learners will be exposed and provided with a holistic curriculum, which prepares them for the competitive employment market besides ensuring lifelong learning. Open and Distance Learning has witnessed significant importance in national policies of human resource Development. Enrolments in Open Universities have increased fast and it's expected that Open and Distance Learning would take up Substantial share of the planned expansion of higher education. Open Learning has an important role to play by exploring new frontiers and developments in Open and Distance Learning. The prominent users of this mode are worldwide in general and Asian region in particular. The growth of the ODL system in India and throughout the world has been phenomenal, particularly during the last two decades. Rapid changes have taken place in the practice of ODL, mainly driven by changes in Information and Communication Technologies (ICT).

Ensuring that individuals with disabilities can participate in distance learning courses can be argued on ethical grounds. Many people simply consider it to be the right thing to do. Others are more responsive to legal mandates. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 and its 2008 amendments mandate that no otherwise qualified individuals shall, solely by reason of their disabilities, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination in public programs. The ADA applies to Internet-based programs and services. Clearly, distance learning programs must make their offerings available to qualified people with disabilities.

Education of disabled has marched a long way; from special to integrated and now, from integrated to inclusive. Education for all" is the slogan of this millennium. Providing education to the un-reached including people with various disabilities is one of the prime goals of the conventional, correspondence and distance education institutions. Quality education not only ensures an all-round development but also produces masterminds who can contribute for the growth of the nation. The growth and development does not mean the development of a single individual rather of the development of all sections and all groups in the society. The educational needs of people with various disabilities can be addressed through open and distance learning system to a large extent. One way of defining Distance Education is to provide education to anyone, anytime and anywhere with the use of multiple media and technology. Here, an attempt has been made to explore the ways and means for accommodating students with disabilities in distance education through inclusive practices. Here inclusiveness refers to universal accessibility or accessibility for all from every prospects; starting from the admission in a course/ programme till successful completion of it.

Inclusive Curriculum Development and Course Designing

Inclusive education can be defined as 'the disabled and non-disabled young people learning together in colleges and universities, with appropriate networks of support' (Bradley & Healey, 2004). Here, inclusion means enabling students to participate in the life and work of mainstream institutions to the best of their abilities in accordance to their needs. At the same time, accessible Curricula refers to the designing of programmes/courses and educational materials barrier-free (fully accessible for all) without affecting the content and standard. If course content is well designed, disabled students will be able to gain access to it. It will enable them to receive the same learning experience as their classmates get. A consequence of this approach is that if the course materials are made accessible for students with disabilities, it increases their usability. While designing the curriculum, special attention must be paid to the accessibility aspect of any DOL programme (this is different from designing and developing special programmes only for the disabled). For example, a Bachelors Degree Programme of any distance teaching institution must be made accessible to people with disabilities, if they wish to do the programme. The blind or learners with low vision, for example, will not be able to use the print medium. In such a situation, the Braille version of the courses or audiocassettes may be made available to the learners. Similarly the mentally retarded and the learning impaired would need special considerations regarding the media of learning and support services.

Different modes of instruction

- **On-Site Instruction:** The interactive video sessions, proctored examinations, and retreats for students in some distance learning courses require place-bound meetings. In these cases, the facility should be wheelchair accessible. The furniture should be flexible enough to accommodate wheelchair-users and accessible restrooms and parking should be available nearby. Standard disability-related accommodations, such as sign language interpreters, should be provided when requested. Instructors should speak clearly; face students when speaking to facilitate lip-reading; and read aloud and describe text and other visual materials for those who cannot see them.

- **Internet-Based Communication:** Some distance learning programs employ a real-time communication in their courses. In this case, students communicate synchronously (at the same time), as compared to asynchronously (not necessarily at the same time). Besides providing scheduling challenges, synchronous communication is difficult or impossible for someone who cannot communicate quickly. For example, someone with a learning disability who takes a long time to compose her thoughts or someone whose input method is slow may not be fully included in the discussion. In addition, some synchronous software erects barriers for individuals who are blind. Instructors who choose to use synchronous tools should plan for an alternate method of communication (e.g., email) when not all students in a group can fully participate using the synchronous tool.

- **Documents:** Students who are blind or who have specific learning disabilities that affect their ability to read may require that printed documents and electronic versions (e.g., PDF, Word, Power Point) be available in accessible formats. Making the content of printed materials available in an accessible web-based format (HTML) may provide the best solution.

- **Videoconference:** Ideally, whenever a video presentation is used in a distance learning course, captioning should be provided for those who have hearing impairments and audio description (that describes aurally the visual content) should be provided for those who are blind. If a video publisher does not make these options

available, the distance learning program should have a system in place to accommodate students who have sensory impairments. For example, the institution could hire someone local to the student to describe the visual material to a blind student or to sign audio material for a student who is deaf. Real-time captioning (developed at the time of the presentation) or sign language interpreting should be provided for video conferences when requested by participants who are deaf.

- **Tele-conference:** Sometimes, online courses include teleconferencing opportunities for discussion in small groups. This mode of communication creates scheduling challenges for everyone. It is also inaccessible to a student who is deaf. Instructors who use teleconferencing for small group discussions should allow alternative communication (e.g., email) that is accessible to everyone in a specific group. Or, a student who is deaf might be able to participate in a teleconference by using the Telecommunications Relay Service (TRS), where an operator types what the speaker says for a student who is deaf to view on his text telephone (TTY) and translates his printed input into speech. However, this system might be too slow to allow participation in lively conversations. Another accommodation approach involves setting up a private chat room on the web. A transcriptionist types the conversation for the student who is deaf to view. The student can also type his contributions into the chat room and they can be voiced by someone in the group who is monitoring the chat room.

Use of assistive technology in instructional design

With the help of assistive technology we can make education more open and accessible for the people with special needs. Assistive technology help in enhancing the lives of people with certain limitations in all aspects, but its use in the field of education is more desirable. We can apply these technologies as the major support service providers in all teaching learning process. These can be used in all aspects of education, according to the institutional or individual requirements. For example, the institutions can apply the universal design principles along with the help of special technologies in all instructional activities, from preparing the study materials till the assessment of the learners.

- **Blind:** Students who are blind obviously cannot see the display on a computer monitor, television screen or read a print book. In the information age, information is stored digitally rather than stored in print. Digital information is largely display independent. This means that a computer with special adaptations can provide learners who are blind with excellent access to information.
- **Low vision:** Students with low vision have varying degrees of difficulty seeing a computer monitor, a computer screen and in reading print. Special screen magnification software provides these students with access to information technology. This software permits them to make the text and/or graphics on the monitor from two to twelve or more times its size.
- **Learning disabilities:** Students who have visual and cognitive processing problems cover a wide variety of different problems. For many, they are helped most by learning special study techniques and skills. Screen magnification software can help because, when the material on the screen is enlarged, what is on the screen becomes simplified. Instead of a jumble of many items to look at, the user can focus on a few items. The ability for the user to change colors and fonts on the display can frequently be helpful.
- **Motor impairments:** Students with motor impairments may have difficulty in holding a book, turning pages, holding a pen and in writing. Voice recognition

software and other forms of alternative input devices permit these learners to use a computer. This means that they also have excellent access to information technology. Similar special devices will permit them to control a television.

- **Deaf and hearing-impaired:** Students who are deaf and hard- of- hearing have no problems seeing the computer monitor or the TV screen. They have problems with sounds and spoken communication. They may also have problems with the language because, for those who are users of American Sign Language, English is not their first language. The advantage of computer communication for many students is that, as studies have shown, it is halfway between spoken and written language. It tends to use shorter and simpler sentences. The major problem in distance learning for the deaf is audio and the audio portion of video.

- **Support Mechanisms during Assessment**: Assessment and examination policies, practices and procedures should provide disabled students, the same opportunities as their peers in order to demonstrate the achievement of learning outcomes. Institutions should consider implementing procedures for supporting alternative assessment and examination arrangements when and wherever necessary. Access to examination centers, the duration to write or answer the questions, time limit to complete the programmes successfully etc. must be flexible and helpful.

Conclusion

Creation of inclusive environment for students with disability in open and distance learning which increase the rate of enrollment of students with disability in higher education level. It helps them to become a productive citizen and to attain the goal of "Education for All". So the ODL institutions stay ready and prepared to accommodate all types of people with disabilities, make constant support, purposive follow-ups on students with disability should be quality assured on the inclusive practices.

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THE ROLE OF DISTANCE LEARNING IN EMPOWERING THE HUMAN RESOURCES

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Introduction

Human Resource Development (HRD) cannot be defined in obsolete terms, as it is ever evolving. Earlier it was termed as "training" and then it became widely used as "training and development" and then finally to HRD. In all these phases of development, HRD has maintained a distinct feature and which is the expansion of knowledge and skill for personal as well as organizational development. HRD implies the development of those attributes in man that can lead him to a life without any wants. The developments that can make him stand at par with the others and hold his head high. It can be summed as "the total knowledge, skills, creative abilities, talents and aptitudes of an organizations work force, as well as the values and attitudes of an individual involved" (Arya and Tandon, 1998). HRD focuses on the development of an individual's skill and prepare him for productive usage. The term has been used more in the policy matters and hence has become a cliché. The five year plan of India has also mentioned the importance of HRD on national economy and growth. Academic studies in the field of HRD have emphasized the potential of higher education for the growth in economy as well as reduction of poverty. The focus of every nation and worldwide organizations has been on the development of HRD. It is the important factor that determines the nation's development.

Distance Education and its role in HRD

The emergence of Distance Education in the scenario is a testimony to the fact that higher education in the conventional mode has been in troubled waters. Some of the problems in Higher Education (formal mode) are given below:

- Expensive/ Elite dominated

No diversification of courses:

- No scope for development of individual skill/vocational training
- Privatization of higher education
- Lack of wide accessibility
- Inequity

Education is a key factor to human growth whether it is cultural, social and economic. Distance Education is an approach which supplements the higher education, for those who are away from the higher education till date. It is in a way an educational sub-system to cover large portion of people who have potential yet not provided opportunity. The characteristics of Distance Education is beneficial to common people and to employed personal because to pursue a course from such institutes one need not have to physically present in a classroom set up. The system is more open to students, to study according to their convenience, here student teacher relationship is also more open and flexible and left scope to consult, discuss and offer solution and suggestions. The student may be geographically isolated but integrated to the course which one is pursuing. Technology has got its immense role in education today and distance education has embraced it from the very beginning. In Indian history, the emergence of distance education can be traced in 1962 when The University of Delhi established the School of Correspondence Course and Continuing Education. Due to the good response, many states of India introduced correspondence courses through the establishment of Directorates of Distance Education or Institutes. This paved the way for the establishment

of the National Open University in 1985, known worldwide as Indira Gandhi National Open University. But the first Open University was the Andhra Pradesh Open University in 1982, which later became the Bhim Rao Ambedkar Open University in 1992.

Open and Distance Learning in India

The open and distance education system is a crucial vehicle in the sustained development of a knowledge society. However, as India prepares to face the knowledge challenges of the 21st century, higher education presents a rather dismal picture. According to the Ministry of Human Resource Development, India, only about 10% of the population in the relevant age-group is enrolled in higher education, and a mere 5% graduate with degrees. With the rapid growth of the service, knowledge and associated sectors in the economy, it is imperative that the populace is equipped to contribute to and benefit from these developments. This requires a radical overhaul of the higher education system, with regard to access, enrolment and most importantly, quality. Failure to address this need and foster more inclusive growth will adversely affect India's future economic prospects and the welfare of its citizens. We believe that this crisis in higher education gives us the necessary impetus for radical change. Existing 'brick and mortar' campuses alone cannot cope with the current and future demand for higher education, given the limited resources for their construction and management. Even so, it is imperative that the state provides and commits to universal access to higher education. Open and distance education (ODE) holds the promise to address questions of access and provide new, alternative forms of capacity building. The National Knowledge Commission (NKC) was established by the Prime Minister of India in 2005 to recommend and undertake reforms in order to make India knowledge based economy and society. The most important part of this mandate, therefore, is to build excellence in the educational systems in order to meet the knowledge challenges of the 21st century and increase India's competitive advantage in the fields of knowledge. The open and distance education system forms a crucial component of higher education systems.

The most challenging problem which India and developing countries all over the world, have to face in coming decades will be to provide food, health, and economic security to millions of our population. This requires a careful matching of scientific and technological vectors with social dynamics. Building up sustainable regenerative capacity of the land and water resources to provide basic food and economic security to the people at large, without compromising on the ecological and environmental integrity is the challenge before all of us. In this context, it is absolutely imperative that we make use of advances in Science and Technology for building up the carrying capacity of the country on a sustainable basis. All the developed countries have achieved universal literacy. That is over 95% of the adults can read, write and count. The female literacy levels are also equal or even higher in these developed countries. The completion of school education of the school-eligible age children in the developed countries is near-universal, over 85%. The post-school higher education opportunities are there for between 50 and 80% in all developed countries. In spite of our significant efforts and achievements in the post-independent era in our country even now one-third of the adult population is illiterate, only 12% of the school eligible age children complete 10th standard, and only 10% of the university eligible age group gets enrolled in our colleges and Universities. These educational gaps are characteristics of all developing countries. About 10% of the relevant age-group in India currently enrolled in higher education, whereas in developed countries corresponding figures stand between 30%-50% of the relevant population. Out of this 10%, the ODE system in India accounts for about 20% of the total enrolment. Distance education has been particularly helpful for women. In South Africa, 4 out of every student enrolled in higher education study at a distance. In India,

women make up 40% of distance students compared with 28% in the conventional face-to-face mode. The Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) was established in 1985 by an act of Parliament (IGNOU Act, 1985) as the first national university to impart open and distance education and also the nodal agency to coordinate, encourage and set standards for the same. Its degrees are recognized to be at par with other universities by the UGC (as of 1992). In addition, IGNOU also allocates and disburses funds for open universities and distance education systems in India through the Distance Education Council (DEC). Authority to do so has been granted to IGNOU under Clause 16 and Statute 28 of the IGNOU Act 1985.

Merits and Demerits of ODL Merits of ODL

1. It makes education open to many people irrespective of age, sex, religion, location, qualification and time; thereby providing access to education for all.
2. It provides opportunities for employees to combine education and work.
3. It provides affordable, cost effective and flexible educational opportunities to many.
4. It is a veritable instrument for lifelong education.
5. It provides opportunities for drop-outs of the formal school system who are still interested in learning to continue their education.
6. It increases access to education for women irrespective of cultural and religious background.
7. It reduces inequalities in educational services.
8. It provides speedy and efficient training for target groups.
9. It provides technology for learning and research.

Demerits of ODL

Although the advantages of ODL are numerous, it also has some demerits.
1. The probability of deceit and fake candidates taking into account the Nigerian system (corruption).
2. Poor communication net-work, where the internet is malfunctioning, the speed of the progress of ODL can be retarded.
3. Possibility of certificate racketeering in a country where deceit and corruption are the order of the day.
4. Prospect of transmitting error to all parts of the country and the world if the preparations of the fundamental documents are not well done.

ODL for Sustainable Development

The past 20 years have seen a growing realisation that the current model of development is unsustainable. In other words, we are living beyond our means. Our way of life is placing an increasing burden on the planet. The increasing stress we put on resources and environmental systems such as water, and land and air cannot go on forever. Especially as the world's population continues to increase and we already see a world where over a billion people live on less than a dollar a day. A widely used and acceptable international definition of sustainable development is: 'development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs'. Globally, we are not even meeting the needs of the present let alone considering the needs of future generations. Distance education is an educational process in which a significant proportion of the teaching is conducted by someone removed in space and/or time from the learner. Open learning, in turn, is an organised educational activity, based on the use of teaching materials, in which constraints on study are minimised in terms either of access, or of time and place,

pace, method of study, or any combination of these. The term 'open and distance learning' is used as an umbrella term to cover educational approaches of this kind that reach teachers in their schools, provide learning resources for them, or enable them to qualify without attending college in person, or open up new opportunities for keeping up to date no matter where or when they want to study. Open and distance learning often makes use of several different media. Students may learn through print, broadcasts, the internet and through occasional meetings with tutors and with other classmates. The emergence of the system of ODL is an inevitable and phenomenal evolution in the history of educational development internationally. Unlike the formal system of education which has its inherent limitations with regards to expansion, provision of access, equity and cost- effectiveness, the growth of open and distance mode of education has now made education to be flexible, learner-friendly and multi-perspective in approaches to teaching and learning. This has helped to enhance creativity, leadership and integrated development of human personality.

Recommendations

1. The universities should have comprehensive orientation for the school-based students before starting the programme.
2. There should be progressive review of university curriculum to reflect changes and to meet the needs of the society.
3. There should be regular national and international academic conferences, workshops and seminars to review curriculum on ageing.
4. Periodical assessments by concerned authority to ensure universities have the required standard for social welfare curriculum.
5. It is imperative to explore the use of distance education for human resource development in various aspects of human endeavour.
6. ODL should not be seen as a cost–saving educational measure, which can be implemented without serious planning and good implementation but rather it should be seen as an educational innovation that requires greater attention to planning and guided implementation for the development of manpower.
7. For a sustainable learning outcome in ODL, there must be quality course materials for the students, which is one of the criteria considered in setting up a new programme; it is also used by the public to determine the quality of education the students are expected to receive.
8. Aside from domestic conventional universities, collaborative activities should be encouraged with foreign universities which could in the final analysis lead to the sharing of infrastructure, ICTs, and intellectual resources.
9. The learning programs should be selected very carefully, taking into consideration the market demands as well as the felt-needs of the learners.
10. Human resource training must be undertaken for developing and maintaining the systemic ability to allow one to learn as one wants, where one wants, when one wants and what one wants. We have to create a human resource cadre with the capability to develop, provide and maintain updated and inappropriate infrastructure for each program, as well as the general infrastructure.
11. Teacher training packages should be devised and administered directly for in-service upgrading, without intermediaries. Teachers should receive special training to serve the needs of learners with disabilities.
12. Efforts must be made to provide support to faculty and teachers in the form of forums where they can exchange and discuss their ideas and experiences.

13. To meet the global challenge and global economy by producing effective manpower, quality of ODL should be ensured.

Conclusion

The emergence of the system of ODL is an inevitable and phenomenal evolution in the history of educational development internationally. It is the process of teaching in which the learners are separated in time and space from the instructor (teacher). It utilises a variety of media and technologies to provide and enhance quality education for a large number of learners wherever they may be. It is fundamental to the achievement of sustainable development. We must accept that ODL has become a viable alternative to the traditional mode of learning in developing countries, particularly in their human capital development efforts and consequently, raising their respective socio-economic status. It is important because it allows education to break out of the vectors of access, quality and cost.

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FUTURE TECHNOLOGIES IN EDUCATION

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Introduction

No generation is more at ease with online, collaborative technologies than today's young people—"digital natives", who have grown up in an immersive computing environment. Where a notebook and pen may have formed the tool kit of prior generations, today's students come to class armed with smart phones, laptops and iPods.

This era of pervasive technology has significant implications for higher education. Nearly two-thirds (63%) of survey respondents from the public and private sectors say that technological innovation will have a major impact on teaching methodologies over the next five years. "Technology allows students to become much more engaged in constructing their own knowledge and cognitive studies show that ability is key to learning success" - Susan Henderson.

Online degree programmes and distance learning have gained a firm foothold in universities around the world. New technologies are also affecting other areas of campus administration. Social-networking tools are helping to build connections with alumni and support career service activities. E-marketing campaigns expand the reach and success of recruiting and fundraising efforts, and drive down the cost of direct-mail campaigns. And automated, self-service programmes reduce administrative requirements, streamline course registration and enhance academic life.

Education in Future

Finally, we will peek into the crystal ball and predict the future of technology and education. Technologies that are now available in most Commonwealth countries increase the potential to support learners and educators, and can help remove the barriers of time and distance. New information and communications technologies (ICTs) do not replace all previous ones, nor do they replace the need for good educational design and delivery. In the 21st century, technology will play an increasing role in all stages of education. Institutions will adopt innovative solutions that will change the way students learn, communicate, produce, collaborate, and study both on and off campus—solutions that will also improve interactions among faculty, staff, and students.

Appropriate Technologies for Future

Creating innovative services from current and future technologies requires a powerful, reliable, and expandable and secure IT infrastructure that has adequate bandwidth, quality of service, and storage. However, appropriate technologies can provide additional possibilities for learner support, interactivity, and access to education. Using technology can change the way teachers teach. Some teachers use technology in 'teacher-centered' ways...On the other hand, some teachers use technology to support more student-centered approaches to instruction, so that students can conduct their own scientific inquiries and engage in collaborative activities while the teacher assumes the role of facilitator or coach.

Technology # 1: Virtual Learning

Virtual learning is much more than simply online learning. It encompasses learning that takes place outside of the school…everywhere really…and brings it into the school. It basically delivers educational content online and helps students, parents and teachers have access to information anywhere. Examples of virtual learning and methods in which it is delivered are "virtually" endless. It can be through a totally online approach or a blended learning method which is a combination of classroom and online education. It can also be delivered as MOOC's (Massive Open Online Course). Blogs, websites, Thinkfinity, Moodle, Edmodo, Khan Academy and Social Media are all utilized consistently and with growing effectiveness. In fact, these are only the tip of the iceberg. Added to this is the BYOD movement (Bring Your Own Device) which has picked up momentum as a method of cost saving and staying current in technology. Things which were once discouraged and taboo at school, such as cell phones, and tablets, are now encouraged in many districts. Virtual learning delivers educational content and experiences in ways we never even dreamed about in the past. This is surely not a passing trend, and will only continue to grow in the future.

Technology # 2: Edutainment

Higher-education content and entertainment (edutainment) are becoming more inter-twined. The first indications of this took place on iTunes and YouTube, sites commonly used for entertainment content only. Professors are now combining the two, using various videos that contain both educational and entertainment value in podcasts and posting course content on education channels to create a more engaging learning environment. Computer gaming is emerging in teaching and learning as well, and more than 120 schools have a presence in Second Life, using these virtual spaces for socializing, teaching, learning, and branding.

Television broadcasting companies such as the BBC, MTV, NBC, and ABC are quickly developing methods to integrate broadcast media with higher education. This trend supports the marked increase in the use of multimedia devices on college campuses where content is accessible not only through computers, but also through TVs and Smartphone. Campuses are evaluating the benefit of broadcasting campus TV programs over IP networks.

Technology #3: Mobile learning

College students today depend heavily on their mobile phones and PDAs. One-third of the 97 percent of college students who own a cell phone no longer use land lines to make voice calls. The freedom, convenience, and cost savings that mobile phones provide are invaluable to students, whether they are living away from home or commuting daily to and from school, home, and work.

With the proliferation of mobile phones on campus, colleges everywhere are compelled to capitalize on feature-rich phones that are capable of much more than just voice calls. Adoption of the BlackBerry, iPhone, and other smart devices that have Internet access allows students and faculty to perform a wide range of tasks virtually anywhere they have cell phone service. These tasks range from administrative (registration), to academic (downloading class materials), to social (instant messaging), to functional (checking transportation schedules).

Mobile phones are also being used to access computer files from a remote location. With services like Soonr (www.soonr.com), students who have forgotten to bring an assignment to class can prove to their professor that they have finished the assignment by using their cell phone to access the completed work on their dorm-room computer.

Mobile applications such as Twitter and City Sense help students schedule meetings or study dates remotely. For example, students can facilitate text blogging, helping mobile

classmates map each other's location quickly. Mobile learning is also on the rise on college campuses that are exploring using PDAs and smart phones to deliver courseware, field data, short tutorials, and classroom polls.

Technology # 4: Social media for learning

People often learn as much from one another as they do from the course materials. And better than 50 percent of the workforce (and growing) is plugged into social networks as a way of life.

Technology # 5: Environmental / Outdoor Education

We are in an era of experiential learning. Environmental education fits the bill for so many of our students. Also, it teaches them harmony with Mother Earth in a time which is seeing a scourge of pollution, depletion of resources and changing climates. We need this generation to take up this cause, and the jobs will be there in the future for them to do just that! We can say that this one as the very future of our children could depend upon it.

Technology # 6: E-Learning

E-learning is a way for teachers to learn new knowledge and skills using computer network technologies. The technologies provide not just text, but also sound, video, simulations, and collaboration with other learners who may be scattered around the country or the world. Currently, most e-learning is delivered using the World Wide Web; however, future e-learning could include delivery via mobile handheld devices, cell phones, and digital video devices.

Technology #7: Active Learning

Active Learning includes a range of teaching and learning activities. These strategies, supported by decades of classroom research, may be thought of as a continuum from low risk to high risk for both teachers and students. Some of these more familiar ones:

1. *Collaborative learning:* Collaborative learning is a method of teaching and learning in which students team together to explore a significant question or create a meaningful project. A group of students discussing a lecture or students from different schools working together over the Internet on a shared assignment are both examples of collaborative learning. Simply, any kind of work that involves two or more students is known as Collaborative learning. "Collaborative learning" is an umbrella term for a variety of educational approaches involving joint intellectual effort by students, or students and teachers together. Usually, students are working in groups of two or more, mutually searching for understanding, solutions, or meanings, or creating a product.

2. *Cooperative learning:* Cooperative learning represents the most carefully structured end of the collaborative learning continuum. Cooperative learning, which will be the primary focus of this workshop, is a specific kind of collaborative learning. Cooperative learning Defined as "the instructional use of small groups so that students work together to maximize their own and each other's learning" (Johnson et al. 1990). In cooperative learning, students work together in small groups on a structured activity. They are individually accountable for their work, and the work of the group as a whole is also assessed. Cooperative groups work face-to-face and learn to work as a team. in small groups.

3. *Problem-based learning :* Problem-based learning (PBL) is a student-centered pedagogy in which students learn about a subject through the experience of

problem solving. Problem-based learning is a style of active learning. Students learn both thinking strategies and domain knowledge.

4. ***Team Learning:*** Team learning focuses on the abilities of a group working together. It involves the interaction of people learning from each other as well as from the task at hand. The learning takes place through the transfer of skills by observing others in action, collective problem-solving and experimentation, questioning assumptions and reviewing outcomes as a group.

Conclusion

It is no secret that education is slow to change, especially in incorporating new technologies. This is described by Jukes and McCain (1997) as paradigm paralysis, the delay or limit in our ability to understand and use new technology due to previous experiences. It takes new experiences to replace the old ones, and this simply takes time. Unfortunately, education can no longer take the time it wants. The trends in technology are creating a future that is arriving faster than education is preparing for it. We must therefore ask what these trends are and how education will adapt to them. To answer these questions, the techniques of H.G. Wells will be used. Wells, the father of futures studies, "had a gift for seeing how all the activities of humankind -- social, cultural, technological, economic, political -- fit together to produce a single past, and by extension a single future" (Wagar, 1993, pg. 52). First we will take a brief look at our past to formulate an understanding of the trends of today. This will be followed by a detailed analysis of these trends.

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VISION INDIA- WOMEN'S EDUCATION AND ODL

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Introduction

Development of a nation depends on the educational progress of that nation. Dr. A. P. J. Abdul Kalam envisioned India among world's first five economic powers in 2020. This can be achieved by knowledge society. There is a close relationship between economy of a country and higher education. The percentage of enrolment in higher education can be increased only by acknowledging the potential of the women and including them for building up of the nation. Human resource cannot be developed by excluding women's higher education. Higher education should be reachable to women easily. This paper explains how Open and Distance Learning can help women improving higher education.

Women Sex Ratio and Higher Education

In population census of India 2011, it was found that the population ratio is 940 female per 1000 male. In law of nature, female and male ratio should be equal. But due to social, economical, and cultural reasons, the female sex ratio is declined. The main reason for the decline of sex ratio in India is due to gender discrimination, lack of education, poverty, lack of awareness and negative attitude towards female among public. It is pathetic to note that, in domestic animals such as cattle man expects female to be born. But in human being his expectation is reverse. Already female gender ratio is less. Now table 1 showing numbers of girls per hundred boys enrol in higher education given below show poor enrolment of women in higher education.

Table-1

YEAR	NO. OF GIRLS PER 100 BOYS ENROLED IN H. E.	PERCENTAGE OF GIRLS ENROLED IN H. E.
2005-06	62	38
2006-07	62	38
2007-08	63	36.6
2008-09	65	39.4
2009-10	67	40
2010-11	78	44
2011-12	80	44.4

Data Source: AISHE- Ministry of Human Resource Development.

From this table one can understand that though there is a gradual increase in percentage of enrolment of women in higher education, there is disparity. So in order to attain gender equality, women's enrolment should be accelerated.

ODL and Higher Education

Open and Distance Learning mode play a vital role in providing higher education to women in India. Thus contribute much for the development of the nation. All students who successfully complete their school studies will not get the opportunities to pursue regular, formal mode of higher education. Enrolment in higher education in India through regular and distance mode for the year 2012-13 is given in table 2**.**

Table-2

MODE	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL	% OF TOTAL
Regular	14347637	1148655	26096292	88%
Distance	198066656	1552064	3232730	12%

Data Source: AISHE 2012- 13- MHRD

Two inferences shall be drawn from this table.

1. In Open and Distance Learning mode, 12 percent of the total candidates are enrolled for pursuing higher education. Considerable numbers of candidates are benefited with the help of ODL. There are only 13 state open universities, 1 national open university and about 200 Directorate of Distance Education in dual mode universities in India. But in regular mode there are more than 650 universities and nearly 20,000 colleges. So the contribution of ODL in higher education is appreciable at low cost.
2. Another important fact to be noticed relevant to the topic is, the men and women percentage of enrolment in distance mode. It is 56% and 44% respectively. So the disparity in enrolment of men and women is visible. This difference must be minimised.

Reason for Women's less Enrolment in Higher Education

1. *Poverty:* "Education offers the best strategy to break the cycle of poverty, misery and violence" says Sir. John Daniel (2005), former V. C. of U. K. Open University. 29.5% of the Indian population lives below poverty line as defined by the Rangarajan Committee. Those spending over Rs. 32/- a day in rural areas and Rs. 47/- in town and cities should not be considered poor. All others live below poverty line. This is defined by an expert panel headed by former RBI Governor C. Rangarajan. That means one of the every three Indian is poor. With this money, people will find difficulty even to meet out the very fundamental requirement- food to live. Then how will they think of higher education. Poverty should not be an obstacle in pursuing higher education.
2. *Dowry System:* Due to some social evils like Dowry system, parents who are lower middle class will not be willing to spend on higher education. The economically poor parents are not ready to shell out hard earned money for both education and marriage for their daughters.
3. *Early Marriage:* Prohibition of child marriage act says that a girl in India cannot marry before the age of 18. According to UNICEF, 47% of girls are married by 18 years of age and 18% are married by 15 years of age. These marriages are often performed without the consent of the girls. In India, parents arrange marriages for their daughters at early age. These women are prevented from pursuing higher education.
4. *Male Dominated Family System:* In many families, male dominate. The women are not allowed to think independently. Their hidden potentials are not considered. They are portrayed as a person meant for doing domestic works. Their interest in doing

higher education is suppressed. Perfection in them is not allowed to manifest. They are not allowed to learn to earn.

How ODL can contribute for Women's Education?

The Indian National Policy on Education (NPE) proclaims, 'the education system will play a positive interventionist role in the empowerment of women'.

Open and Distance Learning plays a vital role in providing women's education. In spite of all sorts of hindrances, women can pursue their higher education through ODL.

1. *Free Education:* Poverty of women should not be a stumbling block for higher education. No doubt Open and Distance learning universities offer courses at low cost. But still universities can consider free education to the deserving rural women hailing from families below poverty line.

2. *Vocational Education:* Apart from producing knowledge society, open universities should produce citizens with adequate skills for their livelihood. Vocational Education Training teaches to catch fish. IGNOU and other state open universities have launched vocational training. Mobile repairing, soft skills, fundamentals of computer application, leadership development etc which are suitable for women shall be organised. Vocational Training Education can be more attractive, job oriented. It should be extended to all open universities. This will certainly attract the enrolment of women as it supports the economic condition of families.

3. *Child Marriage:* A female child who marries in early ages will lose the opportunity to access to higher education due to family responsibilities and burden. Child marriage is a social evil. So, social awareness programme shall be conducted.

4. *Employability:* Women normally expect education based on employment. ODL can offer such programmes to attract women in higher education.

5. *Research on Women:* Open Universities can encourage research scholars who intend to do research on women's education and their development.

Conclusion

The planning commission has constituted a working group on higher education for the formulation for the XII plan. One of the objectives of working group on higher education is to increase the gross enrolment ratio by 30% by the year 2020. This objective cannot be achieved by excluding women. ODL is emerging as an important role player in providing higher education. ODL can cater to needs of higher education especially for women. The vision of planning commission cannot be achieved with the help of formal educational universities alone but along with Open and Distance Learning system by giving inclusion and priority for women's Higher Education.

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SUITABLE TECHNOLOGIES FOR FUTURE EDUCATION

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Introduction

The literature dealing with ICT and pedagogy shows the powerful impact technology can have on the teaching and learning process. The research indicates that collaboration and communication skills are enhanced by the use of computers just like they build our knowledge and thinking skills. Research points out that students are more engaged when exploring, experimenting and expressing themselves this is precisely how technology can help teaching and learning. Analysing some of the contributions that new technologies can make to teaching and learning, we find the following:

- ❖ Students who use new technologies concentrate more than students in traditional settings
- ❖ Stimulation of the development of intellectual skills
- ❖ Contribution to the ways of learning knowledge, skills and attitudes
- ❖ New technologies spur spontaneous interest more than traditional approaches.

All these positive aspects must be considered but we also must be aware that the benefit of using new technologies for students is greatly dependent on the teachers' attitude to the presence of ICT in the teaching and learning process. This attitude is very much related to the training that the teaching staff receives and the confidence in the use of ICT. Many schools have introduced new resources and programs for ICT. We should be fully aware that effective integration of ICT into a daily pedagogic routine and/or classroom activity takes time and requires support.

If the integration is successful, very often one can find pupils consistently displaying high levels of interest, motivation and enjoyment when involved in activities which utilise ICT as well. If teachers redesign their approach in a creative and innovative way including ICT for classroom activities and for the students to explore themselves, usually they respond well to the challenges of taking more personal responsibility for their own learning, such as time-limited challenges and research exercises. ICT can also empower the collaboration and working in pairs or groups on shared tasks. There are very good examples of 'peer assistance' in shared ICT-based tasks.

The best ICT-based collaborative group tasks and longer-term assignments are open-ended and challenging and students tend to find these relevant for developing personal skills which are harder to explore in a traditional teaching scenario.The Knowledge Generating House intends to be a portal that provides a mutual exchange of ideas between the several practitioners of the educational system. Reinforce innovation capacities and expanding learning opportunities of young talents by letting them exploit their intellectual capital and learn through creative expression, generate new ideas and solutions in real-life innovation with experts. The portal will contain within itself a place for collaborative learning, a space for uploading sketches of academic studies, thesis portfolios for future innovative use and an area dedicated to the individual creativity assessment.

The best way to exploit its facilities in the teaching and learning process is by searching for a real-life problem submitted by an expert or uploading new questions and asking students to collaborate by sharing ideas and commenting on each other's' solutions to find the best answers through peer assessment. It is best if the teacher is a facilitator in the process who helps students to evaluate the possible outcomes on their own.

New perspectives evolving through ICT

1. The development of new capabilities in the students; acquiring new skills and attitudes towards ICT has a crucial importance in our society that has been drastically modified by new information technologies

2. The transformation of the traditional curricula to embrace methodologies that are computer-related; the development of new content, tools, multimedia learning objects, new assessment methods, all these have been the subject of serious change to respond to, and embed ICT.

Both objectives have an implicit demand for new skills and competencies for teachers working in primary and secondary schools and in higher education institutions. Not only the teaching skills are redefined but we also need to rethink the curriculum structure to meet new strategies and methodologies. Analysing how ICT is used in classroom activities can produce significant changes both in the nature of the knowledge gained, and in the nature of the processes involved in acquiring this knowledge. One cannot think of success with the use of new technologies in education if the classroom setting remains unchanged. Fortunately, nowadays a more integrated vision with ICT and the whole educational strategy, content and activities are regarded as important in the majority of institutions that have a systematic and sustained approach to the use of ICT.

The sharing ideas about ICT based learning systems three models are described. The aspects considered are the educational theories used, the main characteristics of ICT-based systems from the point of view of their use in the classroom and the interaction between the students and the systems. It can be considered that learning is an activity. The first way that computers had been used in education was in drill and practice programs, allowing students to exercise the development of very specific abilities. They include some gaming to encourage participation and questioning for the assessment of their acquired knowledge. These types of computer-based activities are usually used in an after-class context for personal development and training and are unfortunately not integrated in the classroom.

Another example of an associative model approach is the tutorial design of courses. In this design, learning comes from reinforcement and association with an assessment of performance. This assessment can be formative where feedback is used for identifying processing errors and a recast of the instruction. Again, the use in the classroom is limited since it is not a tool to help students in their work, but a tool that can somehow substitute a teacher.

The Student Centered Model

Progressively constructivist theories changed the paradigm so that now the computer serves the aims in learning to a focus on the students' attitudes and behaviours. The computer in this sense is understood as the tool that transforms a student internally at the cognitive level; this is what results in learning.The use of ICT in this model is to empower learning as the transformation of experiences into emotions, skills, attitudes and knowledge.

One can approach this model using reflective case-studies, problem-based learning activities, experiential learning and other task-oriented activities. These activities allow

students to build their own paths and mental structures. It also enables them to set goals together with the teacher or facilitator, design the means how to achieve these goals and continuously review how far they progressed compared to the previously agreed criteria. This new approach will strengthen their self-esteem, and ensure stability. They are empowered to have a view of themselves, and relevant self-reflection. Apart from a more realistic view, it makes them more resistant to some of the more common psychological hazards (such as depression, addiction, and aggression)

The Participative Model

The tools available nowadays allow us to explore social interactions through ICT that is changing our learning process to a wider experience in terms of social interaction. There are new forms of distribution, collaboration and communication, access to communities of practice and so on.In the participative model, the design of new tools should also include the use of pictures, figures, drawings, films and sound, and should also offer learners the opportunity to interact with a variety of screen based objects to enable them to access knowledge from a different and more constructive perspective.

Conclusion

Our young students today are highly engaged in web 2.0 tools and social environments. If we focused on education, taking advantage of their natural motivation towards these tools we can make them work directly on the content, modifying it, rating other users' content and allowing the community to build itself and their knowledge. In order to keep the focus on the learning, and not on the technological means chosen, it is important to define a good ICT-friendly learning environment; where teams are the fundamental learning unit, not individuals and bear in mind that the technology should serve the workforce - us, not the opposite.

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SOME OF THE NEW PERSPECTIVES OF ICT- ESPECIALLY IN EDUCATION

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Introduction

The project aims to benefit from the emerging powers of modern information and communication technologies to stimulate processes of change within the broader objective of rethinking education and learning.

Today's world is rapidly moving towards a more open and global society, bringing opportunities for economic growth, peace, human rights and international partnership, but also creating new sets of problems related to changing patterns of labor, multi-cultural societies and environmental disruption. Knowledge is dynamic: what is true today may have no value tomorrow. At the same time, access to information is perceived to be vital to economic development and power. The increasing variety of media sources and growing amount of accessible data create a situation in which the individual or community at the receiver end is increasingly becoming responsible for the selection of relevant, useful and accurate information, a responsibility requiring critical media awareness. While information and communication technologies more and more allow for many people to also generate and disseminate information, and thus play an active role in the processes of interaction between professionals, laymen, learners, policy makers, peers, etc., it requires skills and knowledge and access to resources to effectively do so.

The need to learn how to learn

We are living in a world that is dramatically different from our world just six years ago, the time it takes to for an individual to complete primary school. The rate of change is so dramatically that it no longer suffices to teach our children what we think is important. Rather than us preparing our children for their life tomorrow, we have to give this task in the hands of the coming generations themselves.

Flexible delivery mechanisms

As learning can no longer be viewed as a ritual that one engages in during only the early part of one's life with an occasional refresher course but rather a continuous necessity, opportunities for learning need to be provided that are more flexible and open to the specific needs of individuals or groups of learners. People should have the opportunity to engage in learning whenever and where-ever required without being hindered by barriers such as age, distance, and time, social, economic or cultural circumstances.

The main objectives when introducing ICT into teaching and learning through the years have been:

1. The development of new capabilities in the students; acquiring new skills and attitudes towards ICT has a crucial importance in our society that has been drastically modified by new information technologies;
2. The transformation of the traditional curricula to embrace methodologies that are computer-related; the development of new content, tools, multimedia learning objects, new assessment methods, all these have been the subject of serious change to respond to, and embed ICT.

Both objectives have an implicit demand for new skills and competencies for teachers working in primary and secondary schools and in higher education institutions. Not only the teaching skills are redefined but we also need to rethink the curriculum structure to meet new strategies and methodologies. Analyzing how ICT is used in classroom activities can produce significant changes both in the nature of the knowledge gained, and in the nature of the processes involved in acquiring this knowledge. One cannot think of success with the use of new technologies in education if the classroom setting remains unchanged. Fortunately, nowadays a more integrated vision with ICT and the whole educational strategy, content and activities are regarded as important in the majority of institutions that have a systematic and sustained approach to the use of ICT.

Firstly, for sharing ideas about ICT based learning systems three models are described. The aspects considered are the educational theories used, the main characteristics of ICT-based systems from the point of view of their use in the classroom and the interaction between the students and the systems.

The transmission model or associative model

It can be considered that learning is an activity. The first way that computers had been used in education were in *drill and practice* programs, allowing students to exercise the development of very specific abilities. They include some gaming to encourage participation and questioning for the assessment of their acquired knowledge. These types of computer-based activities are usually used in an after-class context for personal development and training and are unfortunately not integrated in the classroom.

Another example of an associative model approach is the tutorial design of courses. In this design, learning comes from reinforcement and association with an assessment of performance. This assessment can be formative where feedback is used for identifying processing errors and a recast of the instruction.

Again, the use in the classroom is limited since it is not a tool to help students in their work, but a tool that can somehow substitute a teacher.

The student centered model or cognitive model

Progressively constructivist theories changed the paradigm so that now the computer serves the aims in learning to a focus on the students' attitudes and behaviors'. The computer in this sense is understood as the tool that transforms a student internally at the cognitive level; this is what results in learning.

The use of ICT in this model is to empower learning as the transformation of experiences into emotions, skills, attitudes and knowledge.

One can approach this model using reflective case-studies, problem-based learning activities, experiential learning and other task-oriented activities. These activities allow students to build their own paths and mental structures. It also enables them to set goals together with the teacher or facilitator, design the means how to achieve these goals and continuously review how far they progressed compared to the previously agreed criteria. This new approach will strengthen their self-esteem, and ensure stability. They are empowered to have a view of themselves, and relevant self-reflection. Apart from a more realistic view, it makes them more resistant to some of the more common psychological hazards (such as depression, addiction, and aggression.

The participative model

The tools available nowadays allow us to explore social interactions through ICT that is changing our learning process to a wider experience in terms of social interaction. There

are new forms of distribution, collaboration and communication, access to communities of practice and so on.

In the participative model, the design of new tools should also include the use of pictures, figures, drawings, films and sound, and should also offer learners the opportunity to interact with a variety of screen based objects to enable them to access knowledge from a different and more constructive perspective. It provides students with the opportunity to investigate open ended problems – problems, which do not have a closed defined answer – this is what new technological tools offer.

The ICT-skilled employment approach:

ICT using sectors are identified by their employment of ICT-skilled personnel, in other words through the degree of actual ICT usage, rather than through the investment in ICT capital as in the previous approach. Industries are then ranked according to the degree of the ICT-skills specialization of their workforce, or the share of the industry's 'ICT-skilled employment'. This approach effectively corresponds to a different way of looking at the ICT specialization of industries.

The definition of ICT skills First, ICT skills need to be defined as It is important to bear in mind that while the term "skills" refers to a set of capabilities, it may have different meanings for an employer or a jobseeker. Three categories of ICT competencies are distinguished:

- ICT specialists, who have the ability to develop, operate and maintain ICT systems. ICTs constitute the main part of their job – they develop and put in place the ICT tools for others.
- Advanced users: competent users of advanced, and often sector-specific, software tools. ICTs are not the main job but a tool.
- Basic users: competent users of generic tools (e.g. Word, Excel, Outlook, and PowerPoint) needed for the information society, e-government and working life. Here too, ICTs are a tool, not the main job. This paper uses the first category for the narrow measure of ICT-skilled employment, and the sum of all three categories for the broad measure of ICT-skilled employment.

ICT-skilled employment and productivity

In view of the debate and measurement problems concerning the productivity gains realized in ICT sectors as well as ICT-induced productivity gains in other sectors, the broad measure of ICT-skilled employment is related to productivity measures, for as many sectors as possible.

Conclusion

To end this paper we would like to draw the following conclusions and make some observations based on our current experiences with the pilot project in Zimbabwe and other experiences around the world.

- An expanded vision on lifelong learning requires a perceptual change among teachers to see themselves as learners, as well as facilitators of learning processes that focus on developing capacities among learners to construct their own knowledge base for future development. Teacher development programmes should therefore focus on professional growth and educational reform, rather than on knowledge transfer and skill training.
- Teacher development could be stimulated through networking and collaboration among peers, researchers and learners. The emerging powers of modern

communication and information technologies to enhance communication and facilitate access to information could play an important role to build such partnerships.

- However, past experiences taught us that introducing ICTs in education is a complex process and its success does not only depend on the technology itself, but rather on sets of attitudes and expectations of the different actors involved, as well as on the organizational and managerial context in which the technology is being introduced.

- In most developed countries, academic research formed the basis for electronic networking. After its growing success, the commercial sector came in and took over. In most African countries, however, the development and growth of the Internet is a process driven by commercial interest, and specific policies and programmes will be required to ensure democratic participation of the public sector and in particular the poorly resourced educational institutions.

- Introduction of networking technology in industrialized countries followed the introduction of computers in education. In Africa, however, these processes take place simultaneous, offering both an opportunity to have access to the latest equipment, where computers in most Dutch schools, for example, are too old for access to the World Wide Web, and a challenge to address the general lack of basic computer skills among teachers as well as learners.

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ASSESSMENT OF ONLINE EDUCATION PRACTICES AND MODELS

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Introduction

The importance of instructional strategies to the success of the online environment has precipitated the creation of best practices guidelines for all aspects of the instructional process, including the planning and management of online instruction, online teaching techniques, and online student assessment and evaluation techniques. This report reviews the current literature on successful strategies for online teaching in two sections. They are,

1. Overview of the Principles, Guidelines, and Benchmarksϖ for Online Education: This section leads into a discussion of specific best practices for online teaching with a review of the variety of guidelines and principles of online education. Special emphasis is placed on current and future trends in effective online pedagogy.

2. Best Practices in Online Teaching Strategies: This sectionϖ reviews proven strategies for three major components of the instructional process: the planning and management of online instruction, the actual teaching process, and student assessment and evaluation. Section Three: An Exemplary Program and Examples of Effective Practices: The final section provides examples of an award-winning online education program and the teaching practices of three award-winning instructors.

Three Forms of Presence for which to strive in Online Learning Environments:

There are three forms of presence for which to strive in online learning environments.

1. **Social presence:** When participants in an online course help establish a community of learning by projecting their personal characteristics into the discussion — they present themselves as ─real people. There are at least three forms of social presence:
   a) *Affective.* The expression of emotion, feelings, and mood.
   b) *Interactive.* Evidence of reading, attending, understanding, thinking about others'responses.
   c) *Cohesive.* Responses that build and sustain a sense of ‗belongingness,' group commitment, or common goals and objectives.

2. **Cognitive Presence:** The extent to which the professor and the students are able to construct and confirm meaning through sustained discourse (discussion) in a community of inquiry. Cognitive presence can be demonstrated by introducing factual, conceptual, and theoretical knowledge into the discussion. The value of such a response will depend upon the source, clarity, accuracy and comprehensiveness of the knowledge.

3. **Teaching Presence:** Teaching presence is the facilitation and direction of cognitive and social process for the realization of personally meaningful and educationally worthwhile learning outcomes.

Online Teaching/ Learning Benchmarks

- Student interaction with faculty and other students is an essential characteristicϖ and is facilitated through a variety of ways, including voice-mail and/or e-mail.

- Feedback to student assignments and questions is constructive and provided϶ in a timely manner.
- Students are instructed in the proper methods of effective research, including϶ assessment of the validity of resources.

Course Development Benchmarks

- Guidelines regarding minimum standards are used for course development, design, and delivery, while learning outcomes – not the availability of existing technology – determine the technology being used to deliver course content.
- Instructional materials are reviewed periodically to ensure they meet program϶ standards.
- Courses are designed to require students to engage themselves in analysis, synthesis, and evaluation as part of their course and program requirements.

Principles for Online Teaching

a) *Visible:* The online classroom differs from the traditional classroom in that text largely replaces in-person, face-to-face, verbal communication. This different dynamic makes it easier for students to feel as if the instructor is not participating in learning, thus making it more likely that students take a passive role as well. A lack of visibility may lead to students' critical attitudes of the instructor's effectiveness and lower levels of affective learning. Visibility can be demonstrated through public and private communication channels, such as:

  - A section of the course website with personal and professional information about the instructor. o Timely return of assignments and feedback.
  - Regular course website updates and postings, and well as regular updates to a shared assignment calendar.
  - Mass and personal email communications with all students.

b) *Organized:* Because online learners generally choose to take an online course because they assume it will provide more flexibility for their busy schedules, they also need to know what is expected of them so that they can organize their time to meet course requirements. This increased time management responsibility of the learner also means that there is an increased organization responsibility on the instructor. In order to meet the needs of students, it is suggested that online instructors:

  - Require students to take an online self-assessment and report what they think are the characteristics of a successful online student.
  - Prepare syllabus and assignment due dates carefully and well in advance so that students know what to expect and when.
  - Prepare a documents of ―Do's and Don'ts for the course, including the rules of web etiquette, posting comments in discussion forums, and communicating concerns to the instructor.
  - Anticipate the need for a non-instructional venue for online discussions.
  - Use different formats for online resources and label each clearly so that students can select a format that is most useful to them (i.e. pdf, html, doc, ppt).
  - Fully use the capabilities of the available educational technology to enhance student learning.

c) **Compassionate:** Online environments can be surprisingly intimate, especially since email provides a combination of privacy and distance that does not exist in traditional

classrooms. This intimacy increases the need for instructors to be compassionate of students' feelings and needs. This can be accomplished through:

- Permission for students to communicate directly with the instructor.
- Discussion forums in which students introduce themselves and provide personal information, or use ―ice-breaker techniques to get students to share personal information with each other.
- Reminding, if necessary, student of the class expectations of conduct, participation, and the instructor's response to unanticipated problems.

d) **Analytical:** Instructors need to manage the online learning assignment to ensure that students are completing assignments and achieving learning outcomes. This includes the timely return of assignments as well as the analysis of student data. While many course management systems provide tools for assessment and analysis, it is the instructor's responsibility to determine if the assessment if appropriate to the subject. Suggested strategies include:

- The use of smaller and more frequent assignments throughout the course to reduce test anxiety and provide learners with opportunities to process course concepts and content.
- The use of satellite offices, if possible, to administer face-to-face exams.
- Specify the format and file naming conventions for assignments submitted online to help easily organize and alphabetize assignments.

Conclusion

The online instructor sets the tone for student performance through teacher-student interactions. Consequently, instructors should attempt to model best practice strategies to assist student learning. Ways in which instructors can model good online learning and behavior include: o Introductions in which the instructors shares personal information with students both formally and informally.

- Model responsibility by returning assignments within the communicated established time period. o Model the right way students should communicate online.
- Use public and private communication to ensure visibility.
- Plan for and implement an activity at the end of the course that brings closure to the class, reinforces what was learning, and acknowledges the contributions of students.

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USE OF NEW TECHNOLOGIES IN EDUCATION

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Introduction

Today's world is a world of information explosion. This information explosion is taking place in such a fast speed that even a literate person is feeling as if he or she is illiterate being not able to cope up with such an information explosion. Globalization and technological change processes that have accelerated in tandem over the past years have created a new global economy "Powered by technology, fueled by information and driven by knowledge".

New technologies including ICTs are a potentially powerful tool for extending educational opportunities, both formal and non-formal, to previously underserved constituencies – scattered and rural populations, groups traditionally excluded from education due to cultural or social reasons such as ethnic minorities, girls and women, persons with disabilities, and the elderly, as well as others who for reasons of cost or because of time constraints are unable to enroll on campus.

Use of New Technologies in Education

ICT helps students to explore knowledge to learn the content through self study. Teacher can help the students by ensuring the right direction towards effective learning. Situational learning, Programmed learning, many Online learning courses are some of the example of self learning strategies that are being utilized with the help of ICT.

ICT encompasses all those gadgets that deal with the processing of information for better and effective communication. In education, communication process takes place between teachers, students, management and administrative personnel which requires plenty of data to be stored for retrieval as and when required, to be disseminated or transmitted in the desired format. The hardware and software like OHP, Television, Radio, Computers and related software are used in the educational process. However ICT today is mostly focused on the use of Computer technology for processing the data.

In this context, the uses of ICT enabled new technologies in education can be listed down as follows

1. ***ICTs promote learning anytime, anywhere.*** One defining feature of ICTs is their ability to transcend time and space. ICTs make possible asynchronous learning, or learning characterized by a time lag between the delivery of instruction and its reception by learners. Online course materials, for example, may be accessed 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. ICT-based educational delivery (e.g., educational programming broadcast over radio or television) also dispenses with the need for all learners and the instructor to be in one physical location. Additionally, certain types of ICTs, such as teleconferencing technologies, enable instruction to be received simultaneously by multiple, geographically dispersed learners (i.e., synchronous learning).

2. ***ICTs help in accessing remote learning resources.*** Teachers and learners no longer have to rely solely on printed books and other materials in physical media housed in libraries (and available in limited quantities) for their educational needs. With the

Internet and the World Wide Web, a wealth of learning materials in almost every subject and in a variety of media can now be accessed from anywhere at any time of the day and by an unlimited number of people. This is particularly significant for many schools in developing countries, and even some in developed countries, that have limited and outdated library resources. ICTs also facilitate access to resource persons – experts, researchers, professionals, business leaders, and peers – all over the world.

3. ***ICTs prepare individuals for the workplace.*** ICTs enhance the students learning and make them adjust in their job places. One of the most commonly cited reasons for using ICTs in the classroom has been to better prepare the current generation of students for a workplace where ICTs, particularly computers, the Internet and related technologies, are becoming more and more ubiquitous. Technological literacy, or the ability to use ICTs effectively and efficiently, is thus seen as representing a competitive edge in an increasingly globalizing job market. Technological literacy, however, is not the only skill well paying job in the new global economy will require? EnGauge of the North Central Regional Educational Laboratory (U.S.) has identified what it calls "21st Century Skills," which includes digital age literacy (consisting of functional literacy, visual literacy, scientific literacy, technological literacy, information literacy, cultural literacy, and global awareness), inventive thinking, higher-order thinking and sound reasoning, effective communication, and high productivity.

4. ***ICTs improve the quality of education.*** Improving the quality of education and training is a critical issue, particularly at a time of educational expansion. ICTs can enhance the quality of education in several ways; by increasing learner motivation and engagement, by facilitating the acquisition of basic skills, and by enhancing teacher training. ICTs such as videos, television and multimedia computer software that combine text, sound, and colourful, moving images can be used to provide challenging and authentic content that will engage the student in the learning process and also provide the opportunity to connect with real people and to participate in real world events. The transmission of basic skills and concepts that are the foundation of higher order thinking skills and creativity can be facilitated by ICTs through drill and practice. ICTs have also been used to improve the quality of teacher training. For example, institutions like the Cyber Teacher Training Centre (CTTC) in South Korea are taking advantage of the Internet to provide better teacher professional development opportunities to in-service teachers. The government-funded CTTC, established in 1997, offers self-directed, self-paced Web-based courses for primary and secondary school teachers. Courses include "Computers in the Information Society," "Education Reform," and "Future Society and Education." Online tutorials are also offered, with some courses requiring occasional face-to-face meetings.

5. ***ICTs transform learning environment into learner centered.*** Research has shown that the appropriate use of ICTs can catalyze the paradigmatic shift in both content and pedagogy that is at the heart of education reform in the 21st century. If designed and implemented properly, ICT-supported education can promote the acquisition of the knowledge and skills that will empower students for lifelong learning. When used appropriately. ICTs – especially computers and Internet technologies – enable new ways of teaching and learning rather than simply allow teachers and students to do

what they have done before in a better way. These new ways of teaching and learning are underpinned by constructivist theories of learning and constitute a shift from teacher-centered pedagogy – in its worst form characterized by memorization and rote learning – to one that is learner-centered.

a. **Quick access to information.** Information can be accessed in seconds by connecting to the internet and surfing through Web pages.

b. **Easy availability of updated data**. Sitting at home or at any comfortable place the desired information can be accessed easily. This helps the students to learn the updated content. Teachers too can keep themselves abreast of the latest teaching learning strategies and related technologies

c. **Connecting Geographically dispersed regions**. With the advancement of ICT, education does not remain restricted within four walls of the educational institutions. Students from different parts of the world can learn together by using online, offline resources.

d. **Catering to the Individual differences**. ICT can contribute in catering to individual needs of the students as per their capabilities and interest. Crowded class rooms have always been a challenge for the teacher to consider the needs of every student in the class.

e. **Wider range of communication media**. With the advent of ICT, different means of communication are being introduced in the teaching learning process. Offline learning, on line learning, blended learning are some of the resources that can be used in educational institutions. Collaborative learning, individualized learning strategies can enhance the quality of group as well as individual learning. With the real society, this can ensure the applicability of knowledge.

f. **Wider learning opportunities for pupils.** Application of latest ICT in education has provided many options to the learners to opt for the course of their choices. Many Online courses are available for them to select any as per their aptitude and interest. Students can evaluate their own progress through different quizzes, ready to use Online tests. This can ensure fulfillment of the employment required in the job market thus minimizing the problem of unemployment. It can also provide more efficient and effective citizens to the society as per the changing needs.

g. *ICTs enabling the e-Learning environment.* E-learning is a way for teachers to learn new knowledge and skills using computer network technologies. The technologies provide not just text, but also sound, video, simulations, and collaboration with other learners who may be scattered around the country or the world. Currently, most e-learning is delivered using the World Wide Web; however, future e-learning could include delivery via mobile handheld devices, cell phones, and digital video devices.

6. *ICTs can empower teachers and learners.* It is generally believed that ICTs can empower teachers and learners, promote change and foster the development of '21st century skills, but data to support these beliefs are still limited. There is widespread belief that ICTs can and will empower teachers and learners, transforming teaching and learning processes from being highly teacher-dominated to student-centered, and that this transformation will result in increased learning gains for students, creating and allowing for opportunities for learners to develop their creativity, problem-solving abilities, informational reasoning skills, communication skills, and other

higher-order thinking skills. However, there are currently very limited, unequivocally compelling data to support this belief.

7. ***ICTs are very rarely seen as central to the overall learning process.*** Even in the most advanced schools in OECD countries, ICTs are generally not considered central to the teaching and learning process. Many ICT in education initiatives in LDCs seek (at least in their rhetoric) to place ICTs as central to teaching and learning.

8. ***An enduring problem: putting technology before education.*** One of the enduring difficulties of technology use in education is that educational planners and technology advocates think of the technology first and then investigate the educational applications of this technology only later.

Conclusion

This is the age of technology. Everyone and everything seems to have something to do with computers and communications. Our future generation is already showing signs of becoming totally computer and technology dependent. It is a fact that over the years, education has become increasingly complex, with more and more information communicated to the student. In this environment it is important for students to have an interesting, interactive and experimental mode of instruction that will make learning enjoyable and easy. ICT based education is definitely the direction towards which the whole world is progressing. ICT use in the classroom in developing countries is still in its fancy. Its overall effectiveness needs to be enhanced by better software and hardware as well as greatly increased availability of each. The rate at which ICTs will be used to enhance education, in TVE, science and in other fields, depends mainly upon state and national monetary commitment, followed by the willingness of individual institutions to provide good in – service programs. Though there is no one formula for determining the optimal level of ICT integration in the educational system, creative teachers at all levels of education have always found ways to incorporate innovative teaching aids and strategies in their classes. However, ICTs should be used currently in conjunction with well planned classroom teaching.

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A STUDY ON THE COMMUNITY MONITORING OF TOILET FACILITIES IN GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS UNDER THE RIGHT TO EDUCATION ACT

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Introduction

Education is globally recognized as a fundamental human right, and people with access to education can develop the skills, capacity and confidence to secure other rights. The right to education thus acts as an enabling right that functions as the voice through which rights can be claimed and protected. UN Convention on Right of the Child states that schools should meet their needs which are their rights. Mostly Indian schools give more importance to teaching learning process alone and other educational related facilities are missed or neglected. Many schools are working with minimum school buildings with no proper toilet facilities, compound wall, and portable drinking water and play grounds. The Right to Education Act (RTE), enacted in 2009, emphasizes on school infrastructure facilities and ensures stakeholders participation through School Management Committees (SMCs) which is one of the main focus areas of the act. Owing to the important role of these SMCs it is essential to study the effectiveness of their perception on basic facilities at schools. Thus, this study tries to understand the perception of SMC members and parents on the available toilet facilities in schools and also to assess the intervention level of SMC members and parents in this particular issue.

State of Sanitation and Toilet Facilities in India

District Information of School Education (DISE report 2014), **a**t the national level, 19.15 percent of primary schools do not have separate toilets for girls, 6 percent of all primary schools do not have drinking water facility while 58.4 percent of all primary schools do not have a hand-washing facility near their toilets. Study by the Right to Education Forum said 95% of schools across India do not comply with their infrastructure standards. It showed that while one in 10 schools lack drinking water facilities, 40% lack a functional common toilet. Another 40% lack a separate toilet for girls. Annual Status of Education Report (ASER 2014) report nationally in 2014, 65.2% of schools visited had toilet facilities that were useable. In 2013, this figure was 62.6% and in 2010, it was 47.2%). The proportion of schools visited where girls' toilets were available and useable has gone up from 32.9% in 2010 to 53.3% in 2013 to 55.7% in 2014. In four states, more than 75% of schools visited had useable girls' toilets. These states are Gujarat, Kerala, Himachal Pradesh and Haryana.

Sanitation Facilities - A Basic Right of the Child

UNICEF says the Adequate, well-maintained water supply and sanitation facilities in schools encourage children to attend school regularly and help them achieve their educational goals. Inadequate water supply and sanitation in schools are health hazards and affect school attendance, retention and educational performance. Adolescent girls are especially vulnerable to dropping out, as many are reluctant to continue their schooling because toilet facilities are not private, not safe or simply not available

Poor sanitation issues are very important issues in many third world countries. India is country for children with nearly 30% children population as per the 2010 census report.

Children spend more time in schools and schools should meet their essential needs. But the above studies show that even after the advent of RTE act our schools have failed their commitment. Poor hygienic environments are also major causes for disease and children deaths. India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi has also states that "if the government wants to promote girl child education, they have to improve the basic facilities that in the absence of toilets, girls who enrol in primary school do not continue for too long and this is also one of the major reasons for girl child drop out.

Supreme Court of India ensures good sanitation facilities and toilet facility for children as the fundamental human rights. International and domestic laws along with landmark judgments related to child rights are reinstating that quality education means including portable drinking water, proper sanitation, play ground, barrier free access to the above and several other children's related facilities. Scottish Government (2007) says that "the quality of the school building is an important message of respect to the student, e.g. clean, secure toilets demonstrate trust." The supreme court of India says that separate toilets and drinking water facilities "are essential for basic human rights that enhance the atmosphere where the education is imparted. It can also be put in the compartment of basic needs and requirements in schools."

Right to Education Act on Basic Needs in Schools

The Right to Free and Compulsory Education Act (RTE Act) 2009 was passed by the Parliament in August 2009. After receiving Presidential assent, it was notified for implementation from April 1, 2010. This act requires the state to provide free and compulsory education to all the children from the age of 6 to 14 years and has the potential to herald an era of inclusive growth in India. Right to education act 2009 emphasized the "Right of children to compulsory education" including good infrastructure and environment such as schools building, separate toilet for girls and boys, safe drinking water and barrier free campus. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights UDHR-1948) , article 25.1 states that "everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services" .

RTE Act and SMCs

The RTE Act rights recognize that the role of parents and community involvement are very much essential towards ensuring quality education of our society. It has made special provisions for the School Management Committee (SMC)s in assisting in the implementation of the RTE Act to its fullest. The SMCs comprises mainly of parents, in fact, 75% of the SMC members should be parents. In the other 25%, 1/3 should be from the elected members of the local authority, 1/3 from amongst the teachers and 1/3 from amongst the local educationists. In case, there is no educationist in the area, 1 student should take the place. The total number of the SMC members depends on the strength of students in the school. (Thapa, 2009).

The composition of the SMC as described in the Act is as follows

" A school …shall constitute a School Management Committee consisting of the elected representatives of the local authority, parents or guardians of children admitted in such school and teachers: Provided that atleast three fourth of members of such Committee shall be parents or guardians: Provided further that proportionate representation shall be given to the parents or guardians of children belonging to disadvantaged group and weaker section: Provided also that fifty percent of Members of such Committee shall be women (GOI 2009a, pp.7)

Background and Need for the Study

Till today most of the stakeholders are not aware about good environment and sanitation in schools as children's rights and are not concentrating seriously. When the Right to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009 (RTE Act) mandated the formation of School Management Committees (SMC) in every government-funded schools, it was to encourage community and more particularly, parental involvement. Such community participation will be crucial to ensuring a child friendly "whole school" environment through separate toilet facilities for girls and boys and adequate attention to health, water, sanitation and hygiene issues. The Act clearly explained the functional role of the SMC and wanted it to be accountable for children's education at school level (GOI, 2009a, pp, 7). The model rules under this Act specially demarked the duties of parents and teachers in proper functioning of the schools (GOI, 2009b, pp. 8).

Review of Literature

Mbula (2014) in a study on *"Access to improved sanitation: implication for sustainable implementation of hygiene practices in secondary schools in Machakos county Kenya"* has established that availability of sanitation facilities in public secondary schools was a significant factor in determining the extent of implementation of hygiene practices in such schools and indeed any other learning institution. Availability of sanitation facilities accounted for 60.1 percent of the change in the level of implementation of hygiene factors in secondary schools.

Tiwari (2014) in a study on the "awareness of a national mission: Swachh Bharat: Swachh Vidyalaya in the middle school students of private and public schools" , argues that the school sanitation and hygiene depend on a process of capacity enhancement of teachers, community members, SMCs, Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and Community Based Organisations (CBOs) and education administrators. Water, sanitation and hygiene in school aims to make a visible impact on the health and hygiene of children through improvement in their health and hygiene practices, and those of their families and the communities. It also aims to improve the curriculum and teaching methods while promoting hygiene practices and community ownership of water and sanitation facilities within schools. It improves children's health, school enrolment, attendance and retention and paves the way for new generation of healthy children. It is the role of policymakers, government representatives, citizens and parents to make sure that every child attends a school that has access to safe drinking water, proper sanitation and hygiene facilities. This is every child's right.

Methodology

The study is qualitative in nature and employs in-depth interviews and focus group discussion methods administered by the investigators. Using purposive sampling the investigators selected a village from Manur block in Tirunelveli district. The village had government primary school run by the local government and Schools Management Committee (SMC) formed and functioning. The sample included 20 parents of the children studying in the school. Out of the 20 parents 6 were part of the SMC. An interview schedule with open ended questions was used as a tool for gathering information from the respondents prescribed by the RTE Act. Focus group discussion was also conducted among the respondents.

Analysis and Interpretation of Data

1. The study finds that all the respondents irrespective of their roles as SMC members were not aware of their roles and responsibilities specified by the RTE Act. The study shows that 10 out of the 15 SMC members do not know their role in SMCs. They state that "We are SMC members but we do not know what we do as members. Nothing is told to us". Even the parents who are not part of the SMCs do not know that they have the right to visit their children's schools to monitor the available facilities.

2. It was found that all the respondents agree that there are adequate drinking water facilities and it was not a problem.

3. The data reveals that 34.3 % respondents have not even visited their children's schools toilets to observe the facilities available.

4. Regarding the cleaning of the toilets, the study finds that 17.1 % of the respondent's state that the toilets at school are cleaned monthly once and 28.6 % respondent's state they are cleaned weekly once and 17.1 % people state that the toilets are cleaned on daily basis and 31.4 % respondents stated that they are not aware of the process itself. This shows that respondents do not have the exact knowledge of the cleanliness aspects of the toilets. One of the respondents state that "Toilets are cleaned once in a month. Sometimes people from the Panchayat clean them and sometimes children are asked to do it".

5. 28.6% parents say that there are no separate girls toilets and that they are not safe and other parents says don't know about the facilities available. As stated by a respondent "The toilets are surrounded by bushes and do not seem safe for girls". Moreover, 88.6% parents stated that they do not complaint these issues to the head of the school owing to different reasons like considering it as not so important and underestimating its consequences at short and long term.

The study finds that the SMC members are not aware of their roles and responsibilities outlined by the RTE Act. Most of them occasionally or rarely visit schools and even during such visit they are found not observing sanitation facilities in schools including hand washing drinking water facilities. The parents are concerned of the cleaning of toilets more in comparison with other issues.

Discussion

Now right to health and good sanitation are part and parcel of fundamental rights and guaranteed by constitution of India and various domestic laws and judgments. But various statistical reports like the above study reflect that mostly Indian schools lack toilet facilities which are maintained properly with adequate facilities for smooth functioning. The right to education act mentions the need for functional toilet facilities including water availability and regular cleaning. When the parents and SMCs member who form majority of the communities are not aware of these rights prescribed in the act it is difficult fro them to confront situations in asserting their rights. This study recommends awareness programs for parents and SMC members on community participation in ensuring the fullest implementation of the act.

Conclusion

Good school environment is creating good teaching learning climate in schools. Poor hygiene in home as well as school can be a factor contributing to several diseases. UNICEF and government of India stress the need in ensuring proper sanitation facilities for each and every citizen, especially children in educational institutions. SMC is the basic grass roots

level intervention body at the schools. So strengthening SMCs is essential in ensuring good school environment. This study recommends that systematic record keeping and monitoring of attendance of teachers and students, ensuring proper drinking water facility, functional sanitation and toilet facilities for children and teachers are some of the major aspects where SMCs have a definite role to play. This provides more scope for further discussions and participation towards development of the schools with a child friendly and child centered approach which is the need of the hour. The SMCs when utilized properly can be of high potential and when utilized fully they can be speedy and steady growth in the education of our future generation

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MOVING FROM TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER TO KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE RELEVANCE OF RESEARCH

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Introduction

The analysis and policy orientations set out in this Communication constitute a starting point for discussions on a common framework for knowledge transfer in order to create a level playing field and a more coherent for knowledge transfer. Academics from the Arts and Humanities are much more likely than those in other disciplines to report that their research is of no relevance for external organisations; are less likely to have had their research applied in a commercial context; but are more involved in research with relevance for non-commercial external organisations. Languages academics are the most likely and Creative Arts and Media the least likely to report that their research is of no relevance to external organisations.

Arts and Humanities Academics Engaged in Widespread Knowledge Exchange

When the knowledge exchange process is broadened beyond the narrow confines of technology transfer, a richer and more varied range of modes of engagement and interaction are apparent. There is a high level of varied connections involving people-based, problem-solving and community-based activities linking academics in the Arts and Humanities with external organisations. This broad pattern of connections is similar to that of all academics – although academics from the Arts and Humanities are proportionately more likely to have community-based connections compared to other disciplines.

Wider Collaboration: Academic Interactions with the Private, Public and Third Sectors

A Range of Partners

Nearly a third of academics from the Arts and Humanities are engaged with private sector businesses and nearly a half of academics from Creative Arts and Media engaged with the private sector. In terms of public sector engagement, around two fifths of Arts and Humanities academics have connections with the highest proportion in Creative Arts and Media. Academics from the Arts and Humanities are more likely than other academics to interact with the third sector. Nearly a half of all Arts and Humanities academics have such connections, rising to over a half in the case of the Creative Arts and Media. Within Arts and Humanities Creative Arts and Media has the highest proportion of academics engaging with the private, public and third sectors.

Academics Connect to Strengthen Their Research

For both Arts and Humanities and other academics the highest rated motivation for connecting is to gain insights into their research area. The creation of student project and job placement opportunities is scored relatively highly as a motivation in Arts and Humanities. The motivation to secure personal income is rated least by academics from all disciplines.

Impacts on Research and Teaching

More than two thirds of academics from the Arts and Humanities who engage with external organisations believe that it has given them new insights into their research work. This is similar to other academics. Over three quarters of academics from the Creative Arts and Media who engage with external organisations believe that it has given them new insights into their research work. Over half of academics from the Arts and Humanities who engage with external organizations believe it has had a positive impact on their teaching through the way they present their material. In terms of the employability of students, just under a third of academics from the Arts and Humanities who engage with external organisations believe it has had a positive impact.

These proportions are very similar to those reported by non-Arts & Humanities academics. Creative Arts and Media academics are more likely to report positive impacts from other Arts and Humanities disciplines. The evidence from the survey of academics shows that engagement with external organizations strengthens the two core missions of academics – research and teaching.

Industry and Research Institution working together towards a Knowledge Economy

The need for sharing knowledge between research institutions and industry has become increasingly evident in recent years. Historically, research institutions were perceived as a source of new ideas and industry offered a natural route to maximising the use of these ideas. However, the past decade has seen a significant change in the roles of both parties. Many companies are developing open innovation approaches to R&D, combining in-house and external resources, and aiming to maximize economic value from their intellectual property, even when it is not directly linked to their core business. In particular, they have begun to treat public research as a strategic resource.

In parallel, it has become clear that research institutions need to play a more active role in their relationship with industry in order to maximize the use of the research results. This new role9 requires specialist staff to identify and manage knowledge resources with business potential, i.e. how best to take a new idea to market, ensure appropriate resources (funding, support services, etc.) to make it happen, and to obtain adequate buy-in by all stakeholders.

Creating the Conditions for Successful Knowledge Transfer

It has been recognized that the involvement of business in the governance of research institutions can help to orient research and education activities towards the needs of society, bring expertise to support knowledge transfer activities, and signal willingness to introduce innovation-oriented approaches in all activities. Such interaction has helped to facilitate inter-sectoral mobility, namely through temporary staff exchanges as well as through the hiring of young graduates by industry. Furthermore, many European research institutions have set up knowledge transfer offices in recent years, aiming to improve collaboration and exploitation of research results and their uptake by business. Their success is largely dependent on the skills and competencies of their staff as well as the strategic role assigned to them and their managerial autonomy.

The personnel working on knowledge transfer must possess a wide range of skills in order to carry out their tasks effectively.

However, relatively inexperienced staff is often appointed to such positions. Continuous professional development exists in a limited number of countries but it is often inadequate in terms of cost and/or delivery. The Commission is currently studying ways to

address this problem. looking to create an accreditation scheme for existing knowledge transfer officers based on Interactions between the public research base and industry have been gradually increasing over the past decade. These can vary from contractual research to collaborative research or even to structured partnerships Most of these interactions involve the transfer of knowledge between the stakeholders concerned, and enhance the socio-economic impact of publicly-funded research, e.g. by creating new useful products, new jobs and sometimes new companies. by Member States should be reflected in the *National Reform Programmes*, and the exchange of good practice will continue to be promoted by the Commission their experience and track record.

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A STUDY OF PERCEPTION OF VALUES AND LEADERSHIP BEHAVIOUR OF SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS IN THANJAVUR DISTRICT

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Introduction

Education aims at the total development of the students. Education is a dynamic mission which gives practical training to become leaders suited to our democratic country. The teachers of secondary school level organize a number of curricular, co-curricular and extracurricular activities in order to develop personality of students. The secondary school level has the age group of students between 10 and 15. It is a period wherein all the skills and talents of the students are shaped up. In order to organize suitable experiences to students first the teachers are to possess good skills and talents, especially the teachers act as a role model to the growing students. It is essential for every teacher to possess a good style of leadership. The teachers of secondary level possess variety types of values. It is a great need that the teachers are to have good value traits and also inculcate the same to students. The researcher decided to conduct a short research project to know the value perception and leadership behaviour of teachers of secondary level in Thanjavur district.

Significance of the Study

The Teacher have to play a pivotal role in inculcating these values among teachers. So values are very essential for teachers and they must know how to inculcate values among teachers. Hence study on values among teachers and also their leadership becomes a significant work. A vital study is necessary to know their present status of level of values and leadership behaviour for the betterment of school education and society. Hence the study attempts to study the perception of values by the secondary level teachers. It also tries to assess the leadership behaviour of teachers.

Objectives of the Study

- To study the level of values of teachers of secondary level.
- To study the percentage of teachers belonging to different types of values and leadership styles.
- To study whether there is any significant association between the sex of the teachers and the leadership behaviour.
- To study whether there is any significant association between educational qualification of teachers and value perception and leadership behaviour.
- To study whether there is any significant association between experience of teachers and value perception.

Methodology

The researcher followed the normative survey method to conduct the research in Thanjavur district. The researcher himself prepared a Teachers value inventory and leadership behaviour scale with the guidance of the experts committee. The teachers values inventory consisted of 25 statements, in which six possible answers. One answer corresponding to one value. The leadership behaviour scale consisted of 18 statement, in which six items are suited to autocratic type of leadership behaviour and another six items are suited to democratic type of leadership behaviour and the last six items are suited of laissezfair type of leadership behaviour. The researcher selected stratified random sampling

technique, in which the different strata are sex, experience, place of living, qualification and income. The researcher has selected a total of 300 teachers using the above sampling technique. The teacher's values inventory and leadership behaviour scale was administered to 300 teachers. The data were carefully tabulated and statistically analyzed for drawing conclusion.

Analysis of Data

Table – 1. Experience and Types Of Values

Experience	Types of Values						
	Economic	**Aesthetic**	**Scientific**	**Social**	**Political**	**Religious**	**Total**
up to 10 years	57	46	28	25	26	20	202
10 – 20 years	20	22	8	14	9	14	87
20 & above	3	2	2	2	2	0	11
Total	80	70	38	41	37	34	300

Chi-square value = 7.006 which is less than the table value 18.307 at 0.05 level. Hence there is no significant association between experience and types of values of teachers.

Table – 2. Qualification and Types Of Values

Qualification	Types of Values						
	Economic	**Aesthetic**	**Scientific**	**Social**	**Political**	**Religious**	**Total**
UG	22	20	21	35	35	27	160
PG	22	15	20	25	34	24	140
TOTAL	44	35	41	60	69	51	300

Chi-square value = 1.269, which is less than the table value 11.070 at 0.05 level. Hence there is no significant association between Qualification and types of values of teachers.

Table – 3. Sex and Leadership Styles

Sex	Leadership Styles			
	Autocratic	**Democratic**	**Laissez Fair**	**Total**
Male	28	92	8	128
Female	54	106	12	172
TOTAL	82	198	20	300

Chi-square value = 3.659, which is less than the table value 5.99 at 0.05 level. Hence there is no significant association between Sex and leadership styles of teachers.

Table – 4. Qualification and Leadership Styles

Qualification	Leadership Styles			
	Autocratic	**Democratic**	**Laissez Fair**	**Total**
UG	45	104	11	160
PG	37	94	9	140
TOTAL	82	198	20	300

Chi-square value = 0.513, which is less than the table value 5.99 at 0.05 level. Hence there is no significant association between Qualification and leadership styles of teachers.

Findings

1. It is found that majority of the teachers are of Economic, Social and Aesthetic type in the academic as well as in the personal life.
2. It is found that 27% of the teachers are of autocratic type and 67% of the teachers are of democratic type and 6% of the teachers are of Laissezfair type.
3. There is no significant association between the variables such as sex, educational qualification, experience and type of value perception and leadership behaviour of teachers of secondary level.
4. It is also found that the locality wherein the teachers live and the community that they belong have some degree of association with the types of values of teachers.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the teacher training programme should take in account to develop democratic type of leadership behaviour. Extracurricular activities like N.S.S, Red Cross and Rotary activities are to be organized. If the democratic type of leadership behaviour is developed among teachers they would be good role model for the students to follow the democratic leadership behaviour and become suitable citizens of our India which is democratic in nature. Visit to centers of creative arts, museums may be arranged to enhance the aesthetic value.

Conclusion

Based on the research it is concluded that majority of the teachers are of Economic, Social and Aesthetic value type of teachers. Who give complete freedom is meager in number, but this would help the students to enjoy total freedom and that may help for creative nature of the students. Anyhow autocratic types of teachers are to be changed as democratic type slowly.

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RIGHT TO EDUCATION

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Introduction

The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act or Right to Education Act (RTE), is an Act of the Parliament of India enacted on 4 August 2009, which describes the modalities of the importance of free and compulsory education for children between 6 and 14 in India under Article 21A of the Indian Constitution India became one of 135 countries to make education a fundamental right of every child when the act came into force on 1 April 2010

History

Present Act has its history in the drafting of the Indian constitution at the time of Independence but is more specifically to the Constitutional Amendment of 2002 that included the Article 21A in the Indian constitution making Education a fundamental Right. This amendment, however, specified the need for a legislation to describe the mode of implementation of the same which necessitated the drafting of a separate Education Bill. A rough draft of the bill was composed in year 2005. It received much opposition due to its mandatory provision to provide 25% reservation for disadvantaged children in private schools. The sub-committee of the Central Advisory Board of Education which prepared the draft Bill held this provision as a significant prerequisite for creating a democratic and egalitarian society. Indian Law commission had initially proposed 50% reservation for disadvantaged students in private schools

Highlights

The Act makes education a fundamental right of every child between the ages of 6 and 14 and specifies minimum norms in elementary schools. It requires all private schools to reserve 25% of seats to children (to be reimbursed by the state as part of the public-private partnership plan). Kids are admitted in to private schools based on caste based reservations. It also prohibits all unrecognised schools from practice, and makes provisions for no donation or capitation fees and no interview of the child or parent for admission The Act also provides that no child shall be held back, expelled, or required to pass a board examination until the completion of elementary education. There is also a provision for special training of school drop-outs to bring them up to par with students of the same age.

The RTE act requires surveys that will monitor all neighbourhoods, identify children requiring education, and set up facilities for providing it. The World Bank education specialist for India, Sam Carlson, has observed: The RTE Act is the first legislation in the world that puts the responsibility of ensuring enrolment, attendance and completion on the Government. It is the parents' responsibility to send the children to schools in the US and other countries. The Right to Education of persons with disabilities until 18 years of age is laid down under a separate legislation- the Persons with Disabilities Act. A number of other provisions regarding improvement of school infrastructure, teacher-student ratio and faculty are made in the Act.

Status of Implementation

A report on the status of implementation of the Act was released by the Ministry of Human Resource Development on the one year anniversary of the Act. The report admits that 8.1 million children in the age group six-14 remain out of school and there's a shortage of

508,000 teachers country-wide. A shadow report by the RTE Forum representing the leading education networks in the country, however, challenging the findings pointing out that several key legal commitments are falling behind the schedule. The Supreme Court of India has also intervened to demand implementation of the Act in the Northeast It has also provided the legal basis for ensuring pay parity between teachers in government and government aided schools. Haryana Government has assigned the duties and responsibilities to Block Elementary Education Officers–cum–Block Resource Coordinators (BEEOs-cum-BRCs) for effective implementation and continuous monitoring of implementation of Right to Education Act in the State.

Precedents

It has been pointed out that the RTE act is not new. Universal adult franchise in the act was opposed since most of the population was illiterate. Article 45 in the Constitution of India was set up as an act: The State shall endeavour to provide, within a period of ten years from the commencement of this Constitution, for free and compulsory education for all children until they complete the age of fourteen years. As that deadline was about to be passed many decades ago, the education minister at the time, M C Chagla, memorably said: Our Constitution fathers did not intend that we just set up hovels, put students there, give untrained teachers, give them bad textbooks, no playgrounds, and say, we have complied with Article 45 and primary education is expanding... They meant that real education should be given to our children between the ages of 6 and 14 – M.C. Chagla, 1964 In the 1990s, the World Bank funded a number of measures to set up schools within easy reach of rural communities. This effort was consolidated in the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyanmodel in the 1990s. RTE takes the process further, and makes the enrolment of children in schools a state prerogative.

Criticism

The act has been criticised for being hastily-drafted, not consulting many groups active in education, not considering the quality of education, infringing on the rights of private and religious minority schools to administer their system, and for excluding children under six years of age. Many of the ideas are seen as continuing the policies of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan of the last decade, and the World Bank funded District Primary Education Programme DPEP of the '90s, both of which, while having set up a number of schools in rural areas, have been criticised for being ineffective and corruption-ridden

Conclusion

The Constitution (Eighty-sixth Amendment) Act, 2002 inserted Article 21-A in the Constitution of India to provide free and compulsory education of all children in the age group of six to fourteen years as a Fundamental Right in such a manner as the State may, by law, determine. The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009, which represents the consequential legislation envisaged under Article 21-A, means that every child has a right to full time elementary education of satisfactory and equitable quality in a formal school which satisfies certain essential norms and standards.

Article 21-A and the RTE Act came into effect on 1 April 2010. The title of the RTE Act incorporates the words 'free and compulsory'. 'Free education' means that no child, other than a child who has been admitted by his or her parents to a school which is not supported by the appropriate Government, shall be liable to pay any kind of fee or charges or expenses which may prevent him or her from pursuing and completing elementary education. 'Compulsory education' casts an obligation on the appropriate Government and local

authorities to provide and ensure admission, attendance and completion of elementary education by all children in the 6-14 age group. With this, India has moved forward to a rights based framework that casts a legal obligation on the Central and State Governments to implement this fundamental child right as enshrined in the Article 21A of the Constitution, in accordance with the provisions of the RTE Act.

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BEST PRACTICE IN YCMOU: A CASE STUDY

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Introduction

All Levels of Government are aiming to use Public Private Partnership (PPPs) more intensively to help meet gaps in the provision of the basic services. It is because to increase investments use technical and management expertise, improve service delivery, improve performance & monitoring and many more. Many times, Public Sector performs its role as facilitator, enabler, monitoring & supervising for service quality, pricing and cost effectiveness whereas Private Sector performs its role for management and technical skill/ innovative technology, improve operational efficiencies, financing and builder or operator. Collaboration will be done having many sides. One may be of public funding with private service delivery and private management, the Second may be of public as well as private funding with private service delivery and private management. the third will be of Joint management and the Fourth will be of private funding with private service delivery and private management. Education field is no exceptional for this. Many new things are coming up in this field also and those compel the field to incorporate the Public Private Collaboration.

Knowledge Society

In the 'New Information Age', 'New Processes' and 'New Methodologies' are discovered, society is connected by creating new ways of Working organizing, managing, learning and developing. We are going through the Open Resources Movement, Management Information Technology (MIT) Open Courses, Google, Wikipedia, Wiki- Educator etc are used as an Open resources. Global standards and protocols are established for communicating and working together Blogs, Orkut, You Tube are used for Self-expression. Wiki Communities, Wiki Educators etc are used for crating organization, Face books, Flogs etc are used for creating Social Networking. Thus new connected society has now new social behavior, new ways of sharing, communicating, interacting and organizing action, This is the new type of Organization without organization power.

A3 System of Connection

Today Anyone, Anywhere and Anytime (A3) can connect and thus knowledge society is emerging. Half the world is connected and in India 45 crores people are connected through cell phones and five crores are connected by Internet. Young generation is not only Techno-savvy (Netizens) but it uses New tools and techniques and access the world's knowledge. Information Communication Technology (ICT) has created New Age Processes like digitization, Virtualization and Mass-Personalization.

Role of Teacher and Teacher Education

In these all changing situations the 'Role of a Teacher' is very important. He will be the main Social Transformer, as he has to play then multiple roles. He has to acquire essential competencies for the same. He may work as a Tutor or as an Mentor. He is the one who guides young generations in creating their futures, and shaping the Nation's destiny. Therefore it needs to change our Teacher Education Training also. Old Methodologies and old system of working in the Training Centers has to change.

Rethinking of Education System

Considering all these things, we have to rethink of our Education System. What should be goals and vision of our educational system. What pedagogy we should use and what paradigm we should evolve. Our vision should be for creating a new society based on core values and Organizational Principles incorporated in the Preamble of the Indian Constitution, We must assure Quality Education for all evolving new paradigm based on 'Future Now' model. For the purpose, it is necessary to adopt new methodology. It is the Life-long Learning, It's linkages with Learning with Working, Developing, Value Creation and Social Transforming Education is now considered as an e. Education. It is e (electronic media) in education. It is Technology Mediated Open and Distance Education (Tech-MODE). It is 'Integrated Mode of Education' Existing and new processes are involved in this new process. e – and education are inseparable. It leads to Trans-Education. It is Tran formative Education, New Knowledge, New Tools / Technology like Blogs, Websites, Virtual Conferencing, Working, LMS, Orkut, You Tube, Face-books etc are going to widely. Now our goal is to create Universal Cultural and Innovative Human Being of the 21st Century. We have to shift from Information Age Model to Industrial Society model. Where individual task is falling short and the group task is required and where Co-operation of all the members is considered the essential factor.

The Effort of the Training Program is Falling short

Institutions and University imparting education for Teacher Education is now falling short in preparing 'Future Teacher' They have to seek assistance of the technicians and have to find out the Expert Academicians to assist them in this regard the Experts may include the persons from education, industry or from any field of work. Therefore, Consortium or Public Private Collaboration or Partnership has become a new paradigm of education.

The Experiment of B. Ed. (e- Education) Programme in YCMOU

Yashwantrao Chavan Maharashtra Open University (YCMOU), Maharashtra is one of the partners of such type of programme. Indian Consortium for Educational Transformation (I- CONSENT) is a group of 40 persons form 30 institutions assembled in 2005 to develop New Age alternative to existing system of education. This group was supported by COL, Vancouver , Canada. It has initiated B. Ed. (e – Education) programme in 2008. This programme is developed through Public Private Collaboration. Yashwantrao Chavan Maharashtra Open University, Maharashtra is the Nodal Agency for this programme. Other partners of this programme are: Maharashtra Knowledge Corporation Limited (MKCL), University of Poona, Indian Institute of Education, Pune , Homi Bhabha Centre for Science Education, Mumbai, Bahai Academy Panchgani ,Maharashtra and Kapila Khandwala College of Education, Mumbai.'I CONSENT' is looking after developing the programme with the help of the expert faculty of the member institutions. Academic faculty was also invited from the non-member institutions from India and outside India, too. The Editors of the Scenario developed were from outside the country, one is from Australia and the other is from Cannada. Before deploying anything through Distributed Classroom (DC) core team leaders sit together. Discuss on it. Suggest modification, if any. And after modifying it, it was sent to the Editors. Thus, this procedure helps to finalize the content part of this programme.

Yashwantrao Chavan Maharashtra Open University a nodal agency of this programme, is looking after all the activities of this programme. The Director, of the School of Education is the Chairman of the Academic Tasks performed for this programme. Every academic activities are going to discuss before this Academic Council, whose members are all the officiating members of all the institutions of I-CONSENT and some invited members.

YCMOU also looks for 'Evaluation Part' of this programme separately. It is the authority to decide to give weightage for formative evaluation and summative evaluation, weightage to assignments, activities and to Project Work. It conducts semister viva-voce and also comprehensive viva-voce. It decides the form of Mark list and also of gradation, and of learner's achievement. It is authority to award degrees to the Successful Candidates, in its convocation. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the YCMOU to seek recognition for this degree from Distance Education Council (DEC) and also from National Council of Teacher Education (NCTE).Maharashtra Knowledge Corporation Ltd. (MKCL) is holding the responsibility of technology used for this programme. The context of this programme. Is e-education, deployed through networked community of learners, teachers and stake holders. Its delivery is through LMS-ERA (e-Learning Revoluation for All) and Distributed Classes (DC) using Saba Centra at well-equipped Study Centers (SCS). MKCL helps in this regard. It provides all types of support for Tutors, Mentors and also for Learners, in presenting power point and multi-media presentations, providing supplimentory learning resources, for virtual lectures webinars , and for panel discussions. MKCL assists for uploading the study material on Saba Centra and for its deployment. It also records all the activities of DC and provides feedback. It has developed the necessary softwares for this programme. It is the real sense of mediator between the Academics and the learners, without which it is highly impossible to implement this programme.

Apparently it seems it is the triangle partnership. But it is Co-operative, Collaborative and Consortium Venture of several partner organizations such as Common Wealth of Learning (COL) and Seven Universities and Six Course Teams of about 40 educators working for almost four years as Developers, Tutors, Mentors and Evaluators. They had developed six roles co-operatively. The six roles are as follows.

1) Teacher as a Nurture of e-culture.
2) Teacher as a Change Agent and Net Worker.
3) Teacher as an e-Learning Specialist.
4) Teacher as an e-Learning Resource Developer.
5) Teacher as a Content-Based Techno-pedagogue
6) Teacher as an Action Researcher and Evaluator.

Other Programmes of YCMOU with Collaboration

YCMOU has lunched many programmes on the line of Public-Private Partnership. 'Certificate Programme in Value Education' is one of them which is developed with Bahai's Academy partnership; the programme namely 'Self Help Group' was developed with Chaitanya Group Partnership and Early Childhood Care Education (ECCE) programme was developed with Maharashtra Bal Shikshan Parishad Partnership. Rasbihari Institution assists YCMOU in implementing 'Post Graduate Diploma in Advance Pedagogy' programme whereas Salaam Bombay Group assists YCMOU in performing practical on 'Addiction of Tobacco.' YCMOU also extended its helping hand towards Anandadai Language Education Project of Apanach and SCERT of Maharashtra. For collecting necessary data for the project .

Public Private Partnership: Procedure and Precautions

Public-Private Partnership has become the demand of the Era. Co-operative and Collaborative work is always better than the individual task. But it is needed to choose the right partner and the procedures to be followed for implementation.
 The following procedure should be followed for Public Private Partnership
1. Policy frame work
2. Creation of PPP Cell

3. Legal frame work
4. Procedures and Guidelines
5. Information dissemination & guidance material
6. Developing PPP frame work
7. Rigorous project development
8. Selection of private sector partner
9. Change management
10. Implementation

Only procedures are not enough in this regard. It is also necessary to take some precautions while implementing the Public-Private partnership. One has to think about :

1) What type of expertise is required to the particular chosen programme or project.
2) Whether this expertise is with the chosen partner ?
3) Are they ready, for extending the required expertise?
4) What are their expectations in lien of that ?
5) What type of mind set have the official bearers ? Have they superiority complex ?
6) The question of ownership of the programme.
7) The Certification and the award of degree.
8) Financial implication and its distribution.
9) The form of Agreement; its clauses.

Agreement is only to show legality. To fulfill the legal conditions are not enough in these types of partnerships. One when goes beyond the agreement and keeps his mind to co-operate for completing the project or to run the programme, partnership will have success. For God's sake partner should not make a obstacle to complete the project or run the programme. Therefore, the partners who are coming together for the noble task must be co-operative each-other. The mindset at the beginning must last long throughout the years to come. Sometimes, it is said that it requires system to develop apart from the individuals who involve in it. Individual may change must system remains. We have to develop such type of system to make Public-Private Partnership alive and for better run .

Recommendations

- Encourage Public Private Partnership in developing , maintaining , implementing and publishing the programmes run through Distance Education.
- Encourage the Collaborations.
- Avoid the duplication of work

Public Private Partnership (PPP) is the demand of the Education System and of this era.

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USE OF ICT IN ODL SYSTEM WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO MOBILE TECHNOLOGY

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Introduction

Information and communication technology is group of technologies by virtue of which various support services shall be provided to the students at different phases of learning in distance education system. In Distance Learning System, there is a great geographical barrier between the learners and the learned people (teaching faculty). In contrast to the conventional teaching learning process where the learners and teachers interact physically on day to day basis and follow the proper time tables to teach the courses, the distance learning system does not have such established time tables. To overcome these barriers, ICT is being used extensively throughout the globe. Last two decades has witnessed a great shift in the methodology of teaching learning processes, as teaching and learning process has been clubbed together with the technology for the better transmission of knowledge and administrative information from administration to the students. The Directorate of Distance Education which is being taken as the case study for the paper under discussion does employee ICT for the better functioning of the Directorate, but the use of ICT in DDE is minimal. DDE is presently using the ICT only for admitting the candidates to the directorate of distance education and in disseminating various notifications to the students through its website which is a classical one. ICT and Mobile learning may be used to improve the functionality of the DDE in an efficient manner. Mobile Applications have drastically changed the discourse of information sharing and business processing throughout the globe.

Mobile Learning and Distance Education System

Mobile learning is an emerging field of learning in distance education system. Mobile Learning can be defined as any sort of learning that happens when the learner is not at a fixed, pre-determined location, or learning that happens when the learner takes advantage of learning opportunities offered by mobile technologies(O'Malley et al., 2003).As more and more people are switching towards the distance learning education system. Scientists are coming up with the new ideas and techniques to meet the demands of the distance learning system and Mobile learning is one of the important outcomes of the research being carried out in distance learning system with ICT as it frame of reference. Mobile phone has become the necessity of the life and is being carried out by almost 70% of educated fellows. It's the smartest way to reach any person irrespective of geographical distances. Mobile learning uses these devices to carry the information from the instructor to the learners. So mobile phone or smart phones can be used easily for educational purpose in distance learning system. Mobile Learning is a learning process where the learner and instructor need not to be seated at a same place .It enables the learners to learn at their own conveniences i.e. at a location they desire and the time they choose. There has been the evolution in the distance learning mechanism with respect to time and advancement in technology. But with the advancements in technology the electronic medium or ICT was involved in the educational sector to enhance the accessibility and become more and more reachable to masses via distance education system. Now the distance learners are using the mobile learning technology as a medium to

achieve the education. Traditionally the information transmission from DDE was being achieved by way of print media only. Now a day, the DDE is disseminating the information by means of the website, but the need of the hour is to switch to mobile technologies to reach to the learners instantly and effectively. It's very important to keep the pace with the changing technologies for the betterment of the society at large and Directorate in particular. The mobile learning has been enabled by many factors: The introduction of the cell phone and Personal Digital Assistants (PDAs) are probably the most significant. As advances are steadily being made in the small information appliance industry we expect to see them incorporated into the mobile learning paradigm; handheld devices, mobile phones, smart phones and iPods, etc. Mobile Learning achieved more features and flexibility by the development of Android Operating system which is built on the open Linux kernel. Android is an open source. The mobile learning applications will continuously evolve as the mobile learning software developers are working tirelessly to build innovative and on-demand mobile learning applications.

Need of Mobile Applications in DDE

It is important to know the needs of mobile applications in the present education system. The future is running towards wireless system. E-commerce has been replaced by M-commerce. There are mobile applications for banking, business and for almost every walk of life. Android applications are being used widely for every activity of life these days. There is an android application for almost every common process of the world these days. So, in-order to keep distance education system upgraded with the present world, it has became obligatory to develop mobile learning environment. The information is useful only if it's being communicated to masses on time otherwise it's of no use. Mobile applications can help in transmitting the information instantly.

Benefits of ICT and Mobile Applications

Implementing any change or technology is meaningful if and only if it improves the system in manifolds. Before we jump to the implementation of the ICT and mobile system in Directorate of Distance Education, it's imperative to discuss the prospective benefits of these technologies. To get in depth view of the benefits here are some important functionalities of the Directorate of Distance Education and their prospective improvements by using mobile technologies.

- Presently the student is asked to register him/her self via the website of the Directorate of Distance Education through an online application form which is indeed very effective and smart way of registration. Once, the student submits the application form he has to wait for a long time for selection list and has to call the directorate regularly for getting the update about the declaration of the selection list. Developing of android application may reduce the frequency of calling by the candidates as they can get the information in hand by just switching to the application on their mobile.

- Once the selection list is declared the candidate has to go through all the pages of the selection list to find his/her name, while as in android application the candidate may directly poll the mobile application for knowing his selection list.

- The learners of the DDE have to visit the DDE website regularly from time to time for any notifications that may be issued by the Directorate of Distance Education, thus increasing the burden of the students. This burden can be eased up by going for a Mobile application which can alert the learners automatically as and when any notification is issued by the Directorate.

- Using the mobile application, distance learners can customize their intimation alerts according to their needs and can only receive the notifications and alerts of their interest only, which is a distant dream in present system.
- The most important challenge that the learners face in distance education system is regarding the counseling of subjects they should opt for. Using the mobile application certain features can be made available for the learners before registering for a particular program (e.g., we can have one of the modules in mobile application as counseling guide module). So by using the counseling guide module of mobile application, the learners can beforehand decide which subject is best suited for them and can come fully prepared for the physical counseling session.
- The architecture of the application can be designed in such a fashion so that the mobile application can be scaled up as per the demand of the distance education system.
- Presently there is no system of run time announcements in the Directorate of Distance Education, for examples if there is a sudden change in the contact class schedules the learners are hardly reached on time. By having a mobile application we can notify all the learners instantly about any schedule change which can save the time, energy and off course money of the learners.
- Presently if a teacher has to circulate any assignment or a piece of lecture, he/she has to circulate the hard copy among the learners physically. If a mobile application is implemented the same assignment can be circulated easily and instantly among all the learners, thus saving time and efforts.
- Besides the above mentioned benefits there could be manifold benefits that will be achieved after the implementation of the mobile applications. Implementing the ICT especially Mobile applications will certainly improve the quality of work processes throughout the Directorate of Distance Education.

Challenges

The main challenge in implementing the smart mobile applications in Open Distance Learning system is the problem of acceptance. There are two categories of people who encounter problems when they have are asked to use mobile devices.

The first category is the lot of people who are used to traditional mode of working and are resistant to learn and switch to new technologies as compared to the other category who accept and upgrade to new technologies very easily. Switching to mobile learning seems to be a uphill task to this lot and they love to stick to their older tactics of working, thus providing a great challenge to mobile learning implementation.

Second category is the people of rural areas where the awareness is the main issue. This is a second serious implementation impendent. Interestingly, the second category contributes to more than 50 percent learner enrollment for the Directorate of Distance Education.

Another serious problem that should be considered is user data privacy and securities because of new technologies are more vulnerable of attacks by Intruders and question of authentication and authorization are critical for successful education and development of effective mobile learning system.

Solutions

The challenges posed to the implementation of ICT by way of mobile applications can be easily dealt with timely up gradation of the human skills. The long time employees can be trained to use the new technologies by going for a time to time training sessions and

programs. Skill up gradation shall be counted for the carrier advancement schemes so as to make this learning process more attractive. Extra perks may be given for attending the training sessions. Culture of best worker of the month may be incorporated in the Directorate which will throw an open competition between the employees for achieving the awards.

The second challenge can be neutralized by arranging some counseling sessions for the students at the time of contact classes. Each teacher may be asked to spend an hour on the usage and utility of the mobile applications in reference to the DDE. This will certainly make the rural learners aware of the benefits of the mobile application and will lead to the effective use of the mobile applications by the learners who are the main target users of the applications. Security of the mobile applications shall be ensured by protecting the sensitive resources at network, system and the application domains. Some of the security parameters are authentication, access control, availability, confidentiality, integrity and non-repudiation. Violation in any of the parameter leads a breach in security. All these security parameters shall be enforced along with security policy on the ICT infrastructure being used in open distance learning.

Conclusion

This paper suggested mobile technology as one of the solutions through which education can be imparted to large number of learners in an efficient and effective way through open distance learning system. The paper describes the mobile technology as need of hour for the teaching learning process in distance learning system. Taking directorate of distance education as case study, it describes the impact and benefits of mobile technology in the working of directorate. The paper presented certain challenges and security issues which the directorate can face after adapting mobile technology but simultaneously suggests certain solutions for the same.

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E-LEARNING IN OPEN DISTANCE LEARNING:
A CASE STUDY WITH REFERENCE TO OPEN UNIVERSITIES ACROSS THE WORLD

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Introduction

Electronic learning or e-learning, is education based on modern methods of communication including the computer and its networks, various audio-visual materials, search engines, electronic libraries, and websites, whether accomplished in the classroom or at a distance. Generally speaking, this type of education is delivered through the Internet medium where the educational institution makes its programs and materials available on a special website in such a manner that students are able to make use of them and interact with them with ease through closed or shared, networks, or the Internet, and through use of e-mail and online discussion groups. The definition of e-learning centers on its being a learning method and a technique for the presentation of academic curricula via the Internet or any other electronic media inclusive of multimedia, compact discs, satellites, or other new education technologies. The two parties participating in the educational process interact through these media to achieve specific educational objectives.

Evolution of E-Learning

During the 1980s, the compact disc (CD) began to be used in education, but the fact that it lacked the quality of interaction between the student, the material and the teacher was an important flaw in the opinion of a number of educators. This problem was only resolved with the appearance of the Internet which justified the adoption of e-learning because it fulfilled the condition of immediacy or simultaneity. E-learning assists in the transformation of the educational process from the stage of learning by rote to one characterized by creativity, interaction and the development of skills. The student, in e-learning, is able to access educational materials at any time and from any place, thereby transforming the concepts of the educational process and learning to go beyond the limits imposed by traditional classrooms into a rich environment in which there are numerous sources of learning. E-leaning has began the preferred mode of delivering content in open distance learning and thus many countries all over the world adopted this system for their open universities.

Singapore SIM's University (UniSIM)

UniSIM is it distance learning institution and its delivery of education is through a mix of face-to-face sessions, comprehensive self-learning materials, and e-learning. The learning services cluster, led by a vice president, supports the learning needs of our students, and the equipping of faculty for their teaching roles. It has two arms: Educational Technology and Production Department (ETP)—providing printed learning materials and spearheading adoption of appropriate educational technology to create e-learning content, and Teaching and Learning Centre (TLC)—dedicated to raising the instructional and facilitation skill levels of our teachers. A university-wide Teaching and Learning Committee and an e-learning Committee drive related efforts and initiatives. A central theme of UniSIM's program offering is "Quality Education, Anytime, Anywhere." This is still work in progress, as it involves the implementation of a full e-learning system that will deliver teaching and learning

in e-mode as the main vehicle rather than as a supplementary mode. In addition to comprehensive printed texts and study guides, increasing efforts are being made to enable students to access learning through an e-mode. Present efforts include management of educational content, deployment of e-learning content, encouragement of participative learning through discussion boards, and enabling of formative assessment. The key question is: "What is good quality in an e-course?" This is still being debated in UniSIM, but ETP has proposed a scheme to assure quality of e-courses and formally evaluate and quantify the degree of learning enhancement and learning effectiveness of these courses. (Brindley et al. 2004).

Thailand's Sukhothai Thammathirat Open University

Sukhothai Thammathirat Open University (STOU) is the only university in Thailand that teaches solely via Open Distance Education. Over the past three decades, STOU has addressed individual and societal needs by implementing a Distance Education system employing print as core medium, supplemented by broadcast, face-to-face tutorial sessions and e-learning, to allow STOU students to study on their own, with or without assistance from instructors or having to attend regular, conventional classes. As of 2011, STOU offers 44 bachelor's, 32 master's, and 5 doctorate degree programs through 12 schools of study covering a wide range of quantitative and qualitative academic fields. Approximately one hundred and sixty thousand learners study these programs each year. In addition to various other system of approach in their learning system there is supplementary media through interactive distance learning activities, radio and television broadcasts, computer-assisted instruction, e-learning, tutorial sessions, e-seminars, teleconference, and real and virtual practical experience programs. (Mark 2011)

Open University of Hong Kong

Hong Kong is a technologically advanced society. It has a highly developed technological infrastructure with a home internet usage rate of 73 percent in 2009 and one of the highest mobile phone ownership and usage rates in the world, with one thousand seven hundred and twelve subscribers per thousand population in the same year. The OUHK launched its Online Learning Environment (OLE) in 1999 and now all courses have an online presence. Individual courses use the OLE in different ways; this can vary from the use of online discussion boards and electronic submission of assignments to the provision of specially developed electronic course materials. The University has now launched the first in a series of fully online programs, where not only are the course materials provided electronically but real time tutorials are also delivered via streaming technology. In theory, students from anywhere in the world can register for these programs. In an attempt to globalize its electronic programs, the University has entered into partnership agreements with various overseas organizations. While the introduction of online instruction has significantly improved the opportunities for tutors to provide individualized and general learner support, enhanced student-to student communication and facilitated monitoring of the teaching and learning process by the Course Coordinator and the external examiner, it has also raised staff development and workload issues for both part-time tutors and full-time academic staff. The University now provides specialist online training for tutors to enable them to carry out their e-tutoring role more effectively. (Butcher & Hope 2011).

S. Korea's Hanyang Cyber University

Tutors in S.Korean Hayang Cyber University (HYCU) are required to be informed and have experience of e-learning and student support, on top of their subject area expertise.

HYCU provides support to tutors through training programs and teaching guidelines. Before each semester starts, an orientation session and a series of workshops are held for tutors. Various seminars are also provided once a year. Tutors must meet with their professor three times per year. HYCU has constructed an online community for tutors to support their work and help develop their professional skills. On the online community site, they access information on course implementation, post inquiries, and submit their weekly work reports. Tutors strengthen their teaching skills by sharing opinions and engaging in discussions. Tutors are evaluated every semester, and departments do not renew contracts for any tutor who scores less than 70 out of 100. On a positive note, incentives are given to outstanding tutors. (Lee et al 2009).

Mongolian e-Knowledge

E-learning Center was established at the Computer Science and Management School (CSMS) of the Mongolian University of Science and Technology (MUST) in 2003, with support from the Centre for International Cooperation for Computerization of Japan. Its mission has been to develop online content for DE. So far, more than three hundred content modules have been developed in areas of engineering study and used by learners from MUST. The NGO Mongolian e-Knowledge (MeK) was established in 2007 to promote e-learning in Mongolia through the use of ICT. Its main objective is to contribute to the country's development by providing opportunities for individuals and organizations to share and manage knowledge using electronic means. Each course is delivered online over four to six weeks. To date, more than one hundred and fifty students have successfully completed these certificate courses. In addition to these certificate courses, several other online courses have been developed. Examples of these courses include e-Learning Strategy, e-Learning Project Management, Support of Virtual Learning Communities, Content Development, and e-Learning Technology. MeK also provides technical support for the course delivery activities. In early 2011, MeK convened a round table discussion involving participants from ministries, agencies, and other NGOs in Mongolia to develop the first nationwide e-Learning strategy (Bates 2011).

Open University of China (OUC)

The Open University of China (OUC, originally known as the China Central Radio and TV University), together with the Radio and TV University (RTVU) system, which includes 44 Provincial RTVUs, nearly one thousand municipal and prefectural RTVUs and three thousand learning centers, comprises China's DE system. Various media are used for course delivery in the RTVUs. OUC is responsible for arranging the transmission of audio-visual courses, management of Web-based courses, and publication of various media teaching materials. For the compulsory courses, where a large number of learners are enrolled, satellite TV and the internet are used to broadcast the courses nationwide. OUC provides the teaching materials for the compulsory courses to the provincial RTVUs, which are responsible for broadcasting these materials locally. The learning centers can also use these materials to perform their teaching activities (Du et al 2009).

India's Indira Gandhi National Open University

Course development is the process whereby quality SLMs are designed, written, printed, and delivered as per the needs of the academic program under consideration. Several courses make up an academic program. For instance, a 64-credit Master's degree in English program at IGNOU comprises eight courses of eight credits each. The course development process is another area where quality checks are stringently maintained. Several crucial

factors that affect the course development process include: "the level at which courses must be approved; course production deadlines; varying views of what constitutes respectable materials; shortage of working times; availability of instructional support services; faculty experience with distance education; adaptability of the faculty to the course development activity; interpersonal relationships between members of the course team; and course development models" (STRIDE 2006). The course development process has several stages. It is the task of the Course Coordinator to play several roles, as the Subject Matter Expert (SME), Unit Writer, Content Editor, Language Editor, Format Editor, Surrogate Learner, Coordinator/ Project Manager, and Quality Assessor. The printing of the Self Learning Material also has a series of procedures to be followed, but this aspect does not necessarily directly affect most faculty members. The type of paper to be used, the size, the Camera Ready Copy (CRP) preparation and the layout (page layout/ in-house design of each page) of the SLM and the actual printing process need consideration when analyzing IGNOU's QA mechanisms. In addition there are electronic learning materials with use of media, the mix of media, and the planning for the audio-video courseware, e-learning materials and interactive media (Daniel 1996).

Conclusion

The modernisation of educational activity may simply be an impression gained by the use of grandiose solutions in terms of technology, even if they are not strictly speaking functional on the learning level. Innovation, on the other hand, needs a solid base of references that can only come about through research. Underlying modernisation there are imitative procedures which derive from the impression we get from the contiguity of certain educational offers and solutions. The final level is ODL with ICT. E-learning is one among the tool of ICT for reaching the far away students.

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CAT PRACTICES IN ODL, CREATES QUALITY SELF CENTRIC INTERACTIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

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Introduction

Effective software design permits curriculum content to be delivered in a manner most appropriate for the target group of learners (Hanz & Kyung, 2012). Appropriate software design allows the learner to obtain the maximum benefits from the material being presented (Fernandez & Body, 1997; Fisher, 2000). The amount of effort required of the learner to interact with the software will be rewarded by a sense of satisfaction. The concentration of the learner should be focused on the curricular material and content and reflecting on the process required interacting with the software. Interaction with the software needs to be as natural and intuitive as possible (Kumar, 1994). Evaluation using software packages must therefore be sensitive to classroom process, and must be capable of providing information about these processes. In order to explore the behavioral actions of students as they "navigate" on screen and through the software, the response analysis was done while interacting with CAT was also analyzed in this study.

Computer Adaptive Test (CAT)

The designing of "**Innovative Item structuring**" is an emerging area, within the field of computerized testing. CAT is a handy tool and an assistive device with build in provisions for monitoring and routing various associated functions like scoring, unbiased evaluation and replaces the monotony assessment. In this the level of the learner is automatically selected in consultation with their earlier performances. The easy and difficult test items are like adding constants to someone's scores. In this, the evaluated behavior is mapped and the progress is tackled and maintain as a cumulative record of progress individually. They provide relatively the information about their ability level. The basic idea of CAT is that, test items are selected by the computer individually to match the ability level of each student. In this manner, the test is tailored to each student. The nature of responses is graded and evaluated with reference to various norms.CAT have the maximum degree of adaptivity, since they can be adapted for each examinee based on the amount of difficulty and order in which the items are administered to each examinee.

In this, examinees computer adaptive test (CAT) scores and the level of the selected test item will be shown by the package itself. In a CAT, however, each examinee can potentially see a different collection of operational test items that are selected from a large pool of calibrated test items, and there is no such unique test suitable for all examinees.

Objectives of CAT

In the Present Study, the following are the major objectives of the developed CAT package;

1. To promote self-paced, interactive, individualized test material to the ODL learners.
2. To use computer technology to meet the challenges for techno based future.
3. To estimate the examinee's ability and to provide much information about them.

4. To classify the examinee into different categories based on their ability without allowing them to cheat on the test.
5. To include enough flexibility in the testing process so that different types of learners (brilliant, average and slow learners) would have path set for progress, and to update the estimate of the examinee's ability after each items.

Development of CAT

For developing a CAT, select the content area from the subject area in which the CAT has to be developed. Next step is to collect the content material from different sources, text books, competitive exam question papers etc. The type of test items is decided and pools of test items are prepared. A blue print has to be prepared to avoid over loading of questions from same concept and to give equal weightage. Among objective items, multiple choice question (MCQ) type is selected, because these items are proved to be the most widely used in CAT. They are easy to score than any other form of objective items and make it more challenging by presenting several alternative responses. Multiple Choice Questions (MCQ's) are usually used to test a student's ability to recall information, to interpret data or diagrams and to analyze and evaluate the content material (Christina Ballantyne).

To increase the precision of ability estimation, the multiple choice questions of different levels were prepared, to suit the various levels of abilities among the learners. This is to estimate the residual potential to the maximum. It also instigates the learners to perform at the optimum level. By preparing the same question in three different levels (higher, average, low level), the ability to respond to the test item is estimated greater than the learners is measured in traditional way. The prepared questions along with the distracters were analyzed and placed either as higher level (Level-a), average level (Level-b) or easy level (Level-c) questions depending upon the difficulty of the distracters using Item Response Theory (IRT) and are placed accordingly. A computer adaptive test draft is prepared, which should contain equal number of difficult, average, easy question.

Methodology:

A pre test was conducted. The MCQ test items are classified based on the Difficulty Index and Discriminative Index using the norms recommended by juries. Based on the CAT Score, the students were categorized into three groups and their performance was studied. The developed package was given to the students and the Computer Adaptive Test was administered. The CAT score and the response chart of students were given by the computer automatically after completing the last question. Finally a Post Test was conducted and data was collected. The analyses are carried out based on the hypotheses by using suitable statistical techniques.

In the Quasi Experimental design, Homogenous sample was selected from different Educational Environment and Locality, having different level of Computer Knowledge, Level of education and Gender, using Randomized sampling technique.

Result & Discussion:

Ho1: When the learners interact with the Computerized Adaptive Test material, there will not be any significant difference between the mean Pre Test and Post Test scores of the Samples.

Table: 1. Significance of difference between the mean scores in Pre test & Post test of the Samples

Test	Range	Mean	SD	N	't' value	Level of significance
Pre test	7- 17	10.86	2.32	65	47.9276	0.01
Post test	25- 30	27.48	1.56	65		

The Achievement mean score (Post test) has been used as one of the indicators of the treatment effect as a dependent variable. The behaviors of the sample is analysed further based on the Pre and Post test scores as presented in Table- 1. The difference in their mean achievement score of the samples were very high which shows significance at 0.01 level this may be due to the interaction effect of CAT on the learning ability of the samples, which make them to get a clear understanding on the basic concepts. Thus it is concluded that the developed CAT package is highly effective.

Response Analysis

For the response analysis overall 150 responses were analyzed individually using their performance report which is given by the package, after the completion of the CAT tool by the learners. The 'a' "difficult", 'b' "average", and 'c' "easy" levels of responses of the students were counted and entered separately. The ability estimate of the item bank for different level of learner's (High, Average, Low) was observed from the Examinee's performance chart under 3 levels of interaction (Difficult, Average, Easy) posed by the item bank. Each student's responses were analyzed by counting the number of 'a' level (high), 'b' level (average) and 'c' level (low) responses of the individual learner when responding to the CAT material.

Ho2: There will not be specificity of path decided by responses to the calibrated item bank adapted to the ability demonstrated by the test takers in CAT.

Table-2: Response analysis of High, Average and Low scorers

CAT-responses of								
High Scorers			Average Scorers			Low Scorers		
A	b	c	A	b	c	a	b	c
40	60	45	12	30	93	8	18	106
36	52	57	14	30	87	7	14	113
27	51	68	9	40	83	8	16	108
35	45	60	10	27	99	10	17	107
32	43	67	13	27	93	5	14	114
36	64	29	10	33	88	8	15	106
30	50	54	8	35	88	10	10	105
20	40	62	10	29	92	4	13	111
25	47	61	10	40	86	7	15	112
20	44	60	15	29	91	5	10	102

Estimation of Ability Level

The responses of the 10 samples from each group (high, average, low) tabulated separately in the descending order of their high, average and low level responses by which, they were classified into three groups as shown below as high group, average group, and low group.

After tabulating the responses of each student under different levels as shown above, each level was analyzed separately, to identify the performance of the different level students. This identification process was continued till the completion of analysis for all the levels. For example, High scorers secured (20- 40) number of response counts in 'a' level. The responses were denoted by blue colour in the graph. The average scores secured only (8- 15) number of responses in the 'a' level. The responses were denoted by red colour. And the Low scores secured only (4- 10) number of responses in the 'a' level. That means, the high scorers answered many 'a' level questions than the average and the low achievers.

The 'b' level responses also reflect the same when it is compared. The high scorers responses in the 'b' level is (40- 60), and the average scorers is (25- 40) and the low scorers responses is (10- 20). This is followed to find out the total number of responses in the 'c' level with a maximum count. In the tabular column shown above, low achievers answered many questions in this lower level than the average as well as high scorers. The maximum number of 'c' level responses is marked by green colour in the graph

As per the sample analysis, high group consisted of 10 members whose responses at the 'a' level were ranging from 20-40. That is, if a student had shown at least 20-25 % responses in the 'a' level and 40 % in 'b' level, then he was classified under the high achiever group. The average group contained 10 members with dominating 10 % 'a' level responses & 20% 'b' level responses ranging from 25- 40. The low group had 10 members who fail to score more on either high (a) or in average (b) but with dominating 80% 'c' level responses ranging from 100-120. Thus the response analyses paved way for the classification of three types of learner's namely brilliant, average and slow learners.

Conclusion

Educators have a great role to play in meeting the needs of ODL mode learners from a large number of diverse backgrounds and increasingly diverse special needs. If, ICT technologies like computer based instruction and testing like CAT, along with the Self learning packages are provided to ODL learners, it develops motivation and self esteems by allowing learners to take more responsibility for their learning, because of the immediate feedback they receive. CAT can thus be effectively implemented to all kind of learners for enhancing their academic performance and ability estimation which help to classify the learners. So, it is imperative to adopt such a testing tool in ODL for quality education. Assessment can be the basic for improvement in learning and has become a hot topic among educators across the country. Several initiatives have contributed to the increased need for quality assessment, which gives information regarding strengths and weaknesses, skills & abilities to plan activities accordingly. Hence, for the improvement in the ODL mode education, the evaluation system has to be improved. Thus, the research study proves that CAT practices in ODL, improves Evaluation system and develops Quality Self Centric Interactive Learning Environment

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DISTANCE EDUCATION: A NECESSITY FOR ENSURING ACCESS AND EQUITY, RESEARCHING THE DISADVANTAGED AND INCLUSIVE GROWTH

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Introduction

Enhancing access, equity and quality at all levels of education is at the heart of achieving many of the millennium development goals. Globally, virtually all countries are facing the triple challenge of expanding access, improving quality and ensuring equity especially in higher education. In our country, the Twelfth Five Year Plan document has laid all the more emphasis on achieving the triple objectives of higher education i.e. access and expansion, equity and inclusion and quality and excellence. Educational equity can be achieved by ensuring that any access issues that students may have, are met. The concept of equity goes beyond equal treatment to fostering a barrier free environment where individual benefit equally. It recognises that some people or groups of people may require additional and/or unique approaches in order to achieve equal access to opportunity. Despite the tremendous expansion of the formal system of higher education since independence, the pressure on the system is continuously increasing indeed the system has not been able to provide an effective means to equalize educational opportunities. One of the major reasons for establishing the distance education system is to provide more opportunities to large sections of the society irrespective of age, gender social, economic & cultural status and reach disadvantage groups who otherwise are not having access to higher education due to a variety of barriers (Spencer, 1995). Today, in our country, this task is looked after by 200 dual mode universities and 15 open universities and one national open university IGNOU (Basu, 2015). In the process, unlike the conventional system distance learning institutions are able to generate sufficient internal resources. By this they are able to sustain themselves and are in a position to reap economies of scale. In spite of their self reliance, the success of the distance learning institutions in a qualitative term lies in their ability to extend educational opportunities to all irrespective of the age, gender, social, economic and cultural status. Consequently the role of the distance learning institutions is to act as agent for social change so as to realize the principle of expanded education (Sirsa-an, 1997) for the sake of equity-self-reliance mix.

The University of Jammu:

The University of Jammu accredited as 'A" grade university by National Assessment and Accreditation Council of India came into existence in vide 'Kashmir and Jammu Universities Act 1969' following bifurcation of the erstwhile University of Jammu and Kashmir. The jurisdiction of the university extends over the districts of Jammu, Udhampur, Doda, Poonch, Rajouri, Kathua, Samba, Reasi, Ramban and Kishtawar. The main campus of the university is located in Jammu. The University offers a number of academic and professional programmes leading to post-graduate, M.Phil., Ph.D. degrees, post-graduate diplomas, certificate and graduate degrees through its various teaching departments, centres, affiliated colleges, centre for adult, continuing education and extension and directorate of distance education. The institute of correspondence education was established on March 3, 1976 by the University of Jammu to provide quality education with minimum expenditure and make available opportunities of higher education to those in Jammu region (i) who discontinued their education in the formal system on account of social and economic constraints, (ii) who live in far flung and inaccessible areas of the state, (iii) who do not get

admission in regular colleges and university teaching departments, (iv) in-service personnel and (v) those who want to pursue education as a lifelong activity. The nomenclature of the institute of correspondence education was changed to the directorate of distance education on 12 October, 1996. At present, the directorate is offering a number of undergraduate and post graduate programmes. The total enrolment figure which was only 78 in 1976 has gone up to 16,955 in academic session 2014-15. The directorate has set up ten study centres, one each in government degree college, Kathua, Udhampur, Poonch, Rajouri, Bhaderwah, Kishtawar, Doda, Samba, Billawer and Ramnagar to provide information, administrative and academic support services to the undergraduate students of the DDE. The students are delivered study material of their respective courses through study centres and they submit their assignments to the study centres. The study centres organize contact cum counseling classes, conduct practical in courses involving practical work, evaluate assignments and provide library facilities. To provide flexibility to the learners of distant places, PCP and practice teaching of B.Ed programme is also conducted in different districts of the region.

Objectives of the study

The main purpose was to study the learner enrolment profile of the DDE, University of Jammu, gender ratio/ SC / ST enrolment and urban / rural ratio. By examining the profile of the learners, the study was intended to assess the extent of the outreach of the DDE programmes to the disadvantaged population. For this purpose annual report of the DDE has been utilized.

Analysis and Findings

The analysis and findings have been presented in the following sections

1. *Growth in Enrolment:* The directorate has been able to register growth in terms of enrolment. The data in terms of growth in enrolment at the time its inception and further w.e.f 2008-09 to 2014-15 has been presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Growth of Enrolment in DDE Programmes w.e.f. 2008-09 to 2014-15

Academic sessions	1976	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
No. of Learners Enrolled	78	8927	11635	13085	13425	13949	14993	16955

It is evident from table 1 that from 2008-09 to 2014-15, there has been steady growth of enrolment in different programmes offered by the DDE. There has been 217 times growth in enrolment since 1976 to 2014-15 despite that fact that enrolment in professional programmes is restricted. It means that DDE is expanding its reach to the masses and programmes are widely accessible.

2. **Women**: In the directorate, there is no separate reservation for the female candidates exclusively in various programmes offered by it. However, applications for admission of women candidates are considered along with men on equal footing as the criteria followed for admission is educational qualifications and experience. The women percentage in different programmes can be seen from table 2&3.

Table 2: Female Enrolment in Programmes of the DDE

Year	Male	%	Female	%
2008-09	2718	30	6209	70
2009-10	3946	34	7689	66
2010-11	4694	36	8391	64

Year	Male	%	Female	%
2011-12	4597	34	8828	66
2012-13	4732	34	9217	66
2013-14	4773	32	10219	68
2014-15	5466	32	11529	68

3. **Rural Background:** There is no reservation for those residing in rural areas since the criteria for admission to our programmes is academic merit. Since the selection is not based on entrance test and interview, the rural candidates, who are mostly found weak in speaking or writing English are not put to any disadvantage. The rural percentage in different programmes can be seen from table 3.

Table 3 : Rural- Urban Enrolment in Programmes of the DDE

Year	Rural	%	Urban	%
2008-09	4584	51	4373	49
2009-10	7232	62	4403	38
2010-11	6812	52	6273	48
2011-12	6123	46	7302	54
2012-13	7925	57	6024	43
2013-14	9897	64	5395	36
2014-15	985	58	7104	42

4. **Socially Backward Categories:** There is no reservation belonging to SC, ST and OBC categories in different programmes except B.Ed. and M.Ed. in which there are fixed number of seats. However, none of the eligible SC, ST and OBC candidates in programmes other than B.Ed. and M.Ed. is denied admission. The percentage of socially backward candidates in different programmes is given in table 4&5.

Table 4: Enrolment by Categories-wise SC, ST, OBC & General in all programmes of the DDE

Year	SC	%	ST	%	OBC	%	Total SC, ST & OBC	Gen.	%
2008-09	1229	14	597	7	612	7	28	6489	72
2009-10	1812	16	725	6	713	6	28	8385	72
2010-11	1834	14	801	6	1056	8	28	9394	72
2011-12	1575	12	673	5	910	7	24	2026	76
2012-13	1786	13	708	5	533	4	22	1092	78
2013-14	1267	8	928	7	469	3	18	1233	82
2014-15	1782	11	1237	7	519	3	21	13417	79

Table 5: Enrolment by Category-wise SC, ST, OBC & General in each programme w.e.f. 2008-09 to 2014-15

Programmes	Total Enrolment	SC, ST & OBC	%	General	%
M.A. Eng.	15100	2906	19	12194	81
M.Com	5562	733	13	4829	87
M.A. Socio.	17358	3134	18	14224	82
M.A. Hindi	11645	3651	31	7994	69
B.A. (I,II,III)	26165	6082	23	20083	77

Programmes	Total Enrolment	SC, ST & OBC	%	General	%
PGDBM	1149	158	14	991	86
B.Ed.	4071	1696	42	2375	58
M.Ed.	4387	815	19	3572	81
M.A. Urdu	4987	1916	38	3071	62
M.A. Dogri	1044	295	28	749	72
M.A. Eco.	494	190	38	304	62
M.A. Pol.Sc.	1007	189	19	818	81

Table 4 presents the enrolment of SC, ST and OBC learners in the programmes of the DDE for the period 2008-09 to 2014-15. The data reveals that the category-wise participation in DDE programmes during the period is ranging between 18 to 28%. Data indicates that reach of the DDE to the learners of these categories is satisfactory. A perusal of table 5, which depicts the data regarding category-wise participation in each programme w.e.f. 2008-09 to 2014-15 reveals that the social categories have adequate participation (as per reservation policy) in programmes like B.Ed., M.A. Urdu, M.A. Economics, M.A. Hindi, M.A. Dogri: whereas in other programmes like B.A., M.Ed., M.A. Political Science, M.A. English and M.A. Sociology, it is satisfactory. Participation percentage of the social categories in M.Com and PGDBM is 14% and 13% respectively. It is less than what is prescribed under reservation. Efforts need to be initiated to enrol more learners of social categories in these programmes to bring the participation rate at the satisfactory level.

Findings

- It is encouraging to note that the enrolment in programmes of DDE has steadily gone up. It has widened its access to the people.
- The Directorate is far ahead of achieving the gender equality in educational opportunities. In programmes like M.A Urdu, PGDBM and B.Ed. where the percentage of females is comparatively low than males, the directorate needs to publicize these programmes.
- Most of the programmes of the DDE are more popular among the rural population than the urban one.
- It is found that the representation of SC, ST and OBC candidates in different programmes (except in M.Com and PGDBM programme) is more what is prescribed under the reserved categories i.e. (15 % SC, ST and OBC taken together). The directorate needs to widen its access to the socially and economically weaker sections in PGDBM and M.Com programme.
- The directorate is promoting social inclusion and bridging the inequality between general and socially and economically weaker sections.

Conclusion

Distance education has emerged has an effective and parallel system of imparting education to the large number of learners. It emerged on the scene with the objective of providing education outside the structure of conventional education system. It has to play prominent role to provide educational opportunities to the deprived by taking quality education to the door steps of the disadvantaged. In accordance with the objectives of distance education, distance education system of the DDE, University of Jammu is successful in reaching the unreached and building a culture of learning based on equity, equality and

social justice. More flexible and innovative approaches, learner centeredness, use of ICT, learning support and need based programmes can go a long way in increasing the popularity of the system among the disadvantaged sections of the society and thus promoting social inclusion by widening access.

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ROLE PERCEPTION OF TEACHERS IN ODL: PROBLEMS OF DEVELOPING AN ALTERNATIVE PERSPECTIVE

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Introduction

Open and Distance Learning (ODL) actually represents a distinct philosophy and methodology of imparting instructions in which the learner has a very little scope for face-to-face (f2f) interaction with the teachers. However, just like conventional systems, in the distance mode also, there must be teachers, students, and specific courses or curriculum that the teacher is capable of teaching and the student is trying to learn. The basic relation between teacher and learner, whether in a conventional system or in a distance mode, presupposes that the students be taught, assessed, given guidance for successful completion of the course. The process must be conducted through two-way communication in both the cases. What is unique in distance mode is that it is accomplished, at least to a certain extent, in the physical absence of the teacher within the class rooms in a regular basis. In order to compensate the loss, in the distance mode of education, *Self Instructional Materials* (SLMs) are provided to learners, which are structured in ways that facilitate learning at a distance. Education through distance mode dictates changes in behavior for both the teacher and the learner. The successful student develops persistence and skills in self-directing work. The successful distance education teacher becomes conversant with new technology and develops new instructional styles, moving from creating instruction to managing resources and students and disseminating views (Strain, 1987). Many people, however, do not have the knowledge about the specific nature of the jobs that the teachers in the distance mode actually have to perform. In absence of proper understanding of the processes involved in the distance education, misconceptions develop, and one may be prone to believe in the declining role of the teachers in distance education, on the ground that there is no exclusive dependence on face to face interactions within the four walls of classrooms in this mode of education, as prevalent in the conventional systems. As against such notions, the present paper seeks to highlight the fact that the reality is just the opposite. The role of the teachers in the ODL institutions are no less important if it is assessed in terms of the multifarious activities particularly in organizing the most comprehensive *Student Support Services* (SSS) to facilitate the self-learning process in the ODL. The time and work associated with teaching at a distance generally exceeds the normal requirements of campus-based instruction. In order to understand the differential role of the teachers in the ODL institutions, the paper focuses on the need for appropriate role perception of the teachers in the ODL and tries to identify the problem in developing an alternative perspective in this regard.

Role-perception of the Teachers in ODL Institutions:

The role of teachers in any learner-centric education is not only very important, but also very comprehensive even though one might be tempted to believe otherwise. But one of the major problems is that even the teachers engaged in the process of ODL sometimes have the difficulty in adjusting themselves in their new role as the faculty in the distance mode. Most of them, being the products of the traditional class rooms themselves, closely identify their job with the idea of the 'chalk-talk' teacher, where communication is basically a one-way process-- a top-down flow. But the teachers associated with the distance mode neither have the opportunity to be always present inside the class room nor at the centre of the

process of teaching. Being the intermediary, the *facilitator* of the self-learning process, the teachers in the ODL institutions have to bring together both learners and the available resources through alternative means keeping in mind that the ODL stands or falls by the quality of its own mechanism. Four major aspect of quality assurance related to the basic philosophy of ODL are identified by the experts in the field: 1) Quality of teaching in the process of course development, 2) Quality of learning implicit in the broad context of academic support. 3) Quality of service to the distance learners as the integral part of the system. 4) Quality of assessment as the intensity component of programme evaluation. In order to achieve the desired results, it is very much essential to recognize the specific role the teachers working in ODL institutions and also to motivate them accordingly through well-designed faculty development programme.

Teachers as Councellors

Academic counseling plays a very significant role in ODL. It is one of the most important components of the student support services in any institution of ODL. Its importance lies in the fact that the problems arising out of the self learning process, particularly in using SLMs and other non-print materials, are solved through human contact during counseling sessions. The teachers in the ODL are always in the state of flux and he has to simultaneously handle multiple tasks as teacher, trainee and trainer and also a PRO. To discharge those responsibilities effectively, a teacher as counselor has to respond to the changes in technology not only in developing SLMs as well as designing delivery strategies. The role of the teacher/academic counselor is undoubtedly of great importance in the context of ODL. It is the task of the teacher to reinforce the motivation of distance learners by encouraging them *to think, read and do* and also to other activities that make them feel secure and direct their attention to what comes next in their course work. Counselling services is considered as the most fundamental part of the guiding process. The overall purpose is to assist the learners in the process of self learning. It provides an opportunity to them to discuss their academic problems with the counselors in an academic environment. The process aims at making a student *self-directed, self sufficient and self learnt*. The counsellors have to provide feedback to the learners regarding their academic progress through contact sessions and evaluation of assignments etc. It is the responsibility of the academic counselor to impress upon the learners to benefits of regular and systematic study of SLMs, use of audio-visual components, visiting the Study Centres, consulting libraries and also the counseling services.

Counseling has been defined as "advice , help and support given to learners to enable them and make satisfactory progress in the system." It is often regarded as an *effective teaching support* to guide the learners. But one has to be aware of *the differences between teaching and counseling*. However, there has been skepticism in certain quarters that the task of counseling has become nothing but an exercise of class room teaching in a miniature form. No serious attempt is evident as yet to revamp or reorient the process to meet the varying needs of the learners in the ODL. It is often heard that the time available is too short for completion of syllabus. Whereas the need for increasing contact hours to help the students more in the process of self-learning is beyond any debate, the proposition of completion of syllabus is also absurd in ODL. Any serious study on the process of counseling in any ODL institution may reveal the uncomfortable truth that the counseling sessions are not being carried out professionally and effectively. Hence, it is the need of the hour to study the problems involved in the practice of counseling, and also to assess the perceptions of the students, academic counselors, co-coordinators of Study Centres on the present state of

academic counseling to get their suggestions for improvement and above all to develop appropriate strategies for quality assurance in academic counseling.

In this connection, one must have a very clear idea of the role of a counselor in a learner-centred educational system. It is said that, while the traditional system is more teacher-centric, distance programmes are basically learner-centric. In traditional systems, the teacher teaches, primarily through lecture method, and the students listen and take notes on what the teacher says. The students tend to be passive, and sometimes may even be disengaged. As the distance programmes are claimed to be learner-centric, it is expected that the teachers, first of all, consider the students' learning goals for the course and then plan teaching or learning methods that help students meet the goals. The primary focus of the teacher, it is said, will be on creating an environment in which the students can learn. Designing a learning environment is considered as a more creative task than planning lectures. It is of course true that it presupposes a lot of other exercises of which teachers are only a part. The other components of learner-centric teaching are, it is said, is i) how consistently all aspects of the course are aligned; ii) how the teachers select the teaching/learning methods as appropriate for students' learning goals; iii) how to make the students interact with the teachers and also the peers; iv) how to articulate the objectives; and, finally, v) how to motivate the students to learn. (Blumberg, 2009)

Monitoring Students Support System in ODL

As stated earlier, the main aim of ODL is to promote self-study/ independent study among distance learners in absence of regular face to face teaching. In order to achieve the purpose, ODL institutions extend support to its learners comprising clusters of facilities and activities that are intended to make teaching- learning process easier and interesting to the learners. Usually, the teachers are playing key roles both in developing the materials and making good use of it. The teaching-learning process in distance education comprises of printed SLMs, radio, audio and video lessons, telecasting, face to face contacts, which we call PCPS or contact-cum-counselling sessions, interactive radio programmes, tele-conferencing etc., intensive practical training sessions and assignments to provide instructions to the learners. While the printed course materials are the principal medium, other non-print and/or electronic media act as supplementary means of instruction. Among those, two most important things are: 1) Planning & Preparing SLMs; and ii) conducting the task of counseling. The task of teacher in ODL institutions may well be understood if one looks at the process of developing the SLMs. The questions as to where lay the *differences between a text and an SLM* or as to *how a text may be transformed into an SLM* may provide us enough clues to understand the difficult task of a teacher in ODL institutions. Similarly, the question as to *how the task of counseling is different from teaching* is also very important in this score.

Technology for Faculties in ODL

Since the success of the ODL largely depend on adopting appropriate technology to support the pedagogy, the teachers in distance educational system have to be equipped with the latest technology in terms of computers. Besides giving technological support, the teachers are to be trained at regular intervals in using technology to facilitate learning and enhancing their own effectiveness. To discharge the responsibilities effectively, the teachers must have to respond to the changes in technology which may help them not only in the process of development of SLMs but also in designing delivery strategies. It is the task of the teachers to reinforce the motivations of distance learners by encouraging them to think, read and pursue other activities that make them feel secure and direct their attention to what comes later in the course. While Information and Communication Technology (ICT) provides the

tools for disseminating information to the learners, it is the responsibility of the teachers to ensure that the information gained by the students is converted into new insights and ideas. Although it is said that the responsibility of learning in a learner-centered system of education falls to the learners, the teacher still retains the *overall responsibility for setting the stage, creating a climate for learning, and monitoring progress to the desired outcome.* To be able to discharge these functions, the teachers should adapt themselves with the changing needs of the time. In this connection, we may refer to the experiments centering round the problems of adoption of new technology particularly in a rural set up in the process of distance education. In a very interesting article entitled "Distance Realities: Rural Wisdom", authored by M. Landis and Diane Wolfe, such an experiment was reported. It reveals the story of gradual advancement toward embracing the 'two way audio--video network' for the purpose of improving the technological skills of the teachers and the students. It , further, has identified the difficult management issues which are yet to be tackled by the stakeholders. Those are: "a. how to provide an incentive for districts to offer courses over the network. b. how to establish consensus on follow-up offerings so that they reflect common needs among the districts. c. how to hire additional teachers to teach over the network" (Maddux C.D.et al, 2002)

In this connection, it may be mentioned that, with the availability of technological resources and also the opportunity to use the means to enrich the distance learning process, the scope for online teaching develops, and , accordingly, the role and function of the teachers altogether changes. Much has been written about online learning and also the changing roles and functions of both the teachers and students in this context. For the purpose of the present article, we may only refer to some prescriptions which have been made by scholars as very much relevant in this context. One among those suggests three forms of presence, viz. social presence, cognitive presence, and teaching presence of the instructors to facilitate the process of online teaching. Another model talks of i) social function; ii) managerial function; iii) pedagogical function; and iv) technical functions of the online teachers. It implies that, besides performing the role of educational facilitation, the instructors in online teaching has also to perform the role of technical facilitation including the very important social functions. (Palloff, 2007)

'Training of the Trainers':

Teachers are accustomed to being the experts. Fear of appearing incompetent may cause them to resist involvement in any activity for which they have not had the proper training. Presently, the teachers in the ODL have sufficient reasons to believe that they have not been provided with adequate training to completely manage the affairs of the ODL. In view of this what is needed is to empower the faculty with proper training to enable them to perform roles in academic leadership to facilitate distance education programmes through well organized Student Support Services. With the advancement of ODL throughout the globe over the years, the time has now actually been ripened (i) to set up a 'corps' of distance teachers in order to give them a distinct identity considering their role as different from a traditional teacher; and (ii) to introduce a specialized system of training for distance teachers which will not only meet the needs of those already in the profession but also train potential teachers in the theory and practice of distance education. This could gradually evolve into a subject that can be taught as a part of teachers' training courses. In course of time, such training could be made mandatory while recruiting teacher for the ODL institutions. This is particularly necessary to meet their basic tasks like(i) development of professional orientation; (ii) design and development of SLMs; and (iii) conducting counseling sessions;(iv) appropriate use of technology etc. Ongoing, in-service training

programme for faculties in ODL are essential so that teachers would be able to get themselves acuustommed with the advanced methodology of distance teaching and also be acquainted with the latest developments in instructional technology and instruments/formats.

Measuring Teaching Effectiveness

In this connection, it may not be regarded as out of place here to add a few words relating to the issue of measuring teaching effectiveness through assessing students feedbacks. Teaching is now being seen increasingly as more important relative to the research goals of higher education. This renewed emphasis on teaching necessitates valid means of measuring teaching effectiveness in different levels of higher education. As such, there is a growing body of research pertaining to students' assessment of instructions in higher education as well as the relevance of the total process of operation of the system of higher education. Much has been written in recent years about the connections between teaching and learning in higher education. Marsh and Roche (2003) examined students' evaluation of teaching effectiveness as a means of enhancing the quality of university teaching. Ryan and Harrison (1995) investigated how students weight various teaching components in arriving at their overall evaluation of teaching effectiveness. More recently, Ralph (2003) conducted a study on teaching effectiveness using how well students learn as the criterion. Similar studies provided students with a set of characteristics from which to choose. Those included the *cognitive components* like knowledge, organization of instructions, clarity of expression, and quality of presentation. The other *affective components* are students' interest, students' participation and openness of ideas, interpersonal relations, communication and fairness. Students were asked to identify how each course/ instructor ranks in each of these qualities.
More recently, with the advancement of distance education in general and the increasing use of online sources in particular, newer avenues of such researches unfolded. The questions as to whether the characteristics of effective teaching in a face-to-face environment the same as the characteristics of effective distance and online teaching led many a scholars to undertake new researches keeping in view the specificities of distance education. A glance of the researches in this specific area reveals that communication, flexibility, feedback, student-teacher roles and the quality of SLMs and MLMs have been the deciding factors in many studies in distance education. Students in the distance mode are required to take a different role in the process of learning in distance mode. They need to be more actively involved in the process while the teachers take on more a facilitative role. Given these new roles, students' concern about teaching effectiveness in such courses focused on communication, noting that timely responses from instructors were the most valued instruction (Young, 2006; Northrup, 2002).

Of late, researches are undertaken to assess the students' perceptions on effective teaching in higher education, where the students are asked to identify the characteristics they believe are essential to effective teaching. It reveals that the instructors who are effective teachers are respectful to students, knowledgeable, approachable, engaging, communicative, organized, responsive, professional and humorous. It is indicated that those characteristics are consistent across modes of delivery. However , it is interesting to note that that the respondents belonging to the students of distance mode, it is found that while the characteristics identified are the same, the order of emphasis is different, because, they add more importance to the aspects of communication than on knowledge (Delaney et al, 2010).

Experiences in India: Accomplishments and challenges

In India, it was since 1960s correspondence courses were conducted by some Universities. The ODL in its present form started with the establishment of state open

University at Hyderabad (BRAOU) in 1982. A major push in this direction was made in 1985 when IGNOU was set up by an Act of Parliament. Now, we do have 14 State Open Universities and also about 125 dual mode Universities throughout the country covering nearly 30 per cent of the total enrolment in higher education. Going by the data both in terms of the number of institutions imparting education through ODL and also the number of students enrolled, it is no denying the fact that there has been a steady growth of distance education in India. But in so far as the questions of quality and the flexibility of the system are concerned, the picture may not be found very satisfactory. There might have been several reasons for it and some of those are as follows: a) *Conceptual Confusions*: Mistakenly, ODL is viewed in some quarters as a step-forward from the concept of learning through private / correspondence system even today. Confusions are multiplied with the use of new terminologies like virtual, open, flexible, distributive learning etc. But, it is not a mere question of a new terminology, but the philosophy of teaching-learning process along with its focus on self-directed learning and self-regulation. It involves the challenges not only of accessibility, but also of equity and quality. b) *Infrastructural Limitations*: Although the infrastructure of both the state open Universities and also the dual mode Universities has increased a lot both out of their own resources as well as with the support of the funding agencies, those may not match their requirements when considered in terms of the number of courses they offer and also the number of students they admit in those courses. c) *Legal and social constraints:* In general terms, it is said the degrees awarded to the learners in the distance mode be treated at par with those given to the students in the regular mode. But the practical experience of sections of students is otherwise. At the societal level too, the level of acceptability is far from total. *d) Experiences with ICT*: It is no denying a fact that with advent of new technologies and the demands for ICT-mediated educational systems, there arose the need for development of a focused academic agenda by adopting appropriate technology to support the pedagogy. However, very composition of the student community in ODL institutions in our country particularly in terms of their location and socio-economic condition makes it very difficult to make education a tech-savvy process. Given the impacts of these negative points, there are other sides of the picture too, which needs serious consideration. The growing popularity of Distance education in our country and also the consequent changes not only in respect of the size of enrolments and others, but also in its very composition seems to be very important in this context. The role of the teachers in the ODL institutions in India may well be understood if analysed in the context of the problems as mentioned above.

Paradigm-shifts in ODL in India and the Imperatives of Quality Education:

Distance education originally emerged as a viable means to open up the horizons of education to those who are denied access to higher education for some reasons of others. Now, in addition to them, a sizable section of the young learners opt for higher education through ODL for different reasons – some for non-availability of berth in conventional system – some for many other reasons. The recent developments in ICT might have further pushed some learners towards ODL. Again, individuals' urge for consistent upward movement through skill-development in the emerging globalised knowledge economy might also have a great push towards the popularity of ODL. Now, with the growing acceptance of the ODL by the academia and the people at large, it becomes an imperative for any ODL institution to ensure quality-education to its learners, so as to enable them to compete with their counterparts in conventional systems. So, an element of accountability is added to the goals of increasing access. Hence, *simple access* is not enough today, what is needed is to ensure *greater success* for the learners. In view of such changes, the tasks of the teachers

associated with ODL have become more challenging, particularly when considered in the context of the present inadequacy both in regard to the number of teaching staff in proportion to the number of student enrolled and also in regard to the other supporting resources-human and material.

Concluding Remarks

It is no denying the fact that over the years the system of ODL as a particular mode of education has found a very important place in the academic map of the world at large, and India is also no exception to that. With the development of ODL in India through the Open Universities—national and state level—and also by the dual mode Universities, particularly in the last two decades, time has now ripened not only to assess the quality of education imparted by such institutions, but also to evaluate different aspects of the operation of the system individually. Assessments of different aspects of ODL may become fruitful only when the changing features of the system as a whole are taken into account. The 'paradigm shift' in the field of distance education in our country in recent times, through which the ODL institutions , instead of being a supplementary mode, becomes a parallel system of education, may be found very important in this regard. The efforts of 'convergence' in different ways, keeping the basic philosophy and methodology of ODL unchanged, which are under experiment in different quarters, may also be regarded as no less important. The role of the teachers in the ODL may only be understood properly in this given context.

Again, the technological advances, which have been taking place in rapid pace in recent times, and adopted by ODL institution in different degrees, may definitely have distinct bearing on the role of teachers in general and the teachers in the distance mode in particular. It is interesting to note in this connection that much emphasis is being given on distance education to accomplish the task of teacher education today, but the question of training of the teachers in the distance education is remained a relatively neglected domain even today. Now, it is an established fact that the teachers in the ODL, besides carrying forward a considerable amount of the functions of the teachers in the conventional mode, have to play diverse roles, as distinct from the later, without having a distinct recognition. Hence, they are in a continuous 'search of identity', the realization of which may not only help them to find their due place in the academics, but also enrich the system of ODL and also the cause of education as a whole. The latest researches may well enlighten us both in delineating a distinct identity of the teachers in the ODL as well as in designing and developing the scheme of proper training for them. Such a scheme may also be devised for those who may have the career option to become a teacher in ODL institutions in future.

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TECHNO-PEDAGOGY IN TEACHING LEARNING PROCESS TO PROGRESS THE EDUCATION

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Introduction

The word technology is derived from the Greek word "technic" meaning art or skill and login meaning science or study. Thus technology is the science of study of an art or skill. A systematic way of applying the technique to achieve the objectives is an important as the use of technical equipment for the same. Man is always on the lookout for inviting new innovations in all walks of life. Human life has improved tremendously as a result of the growth in science and technology. Education is a social institution that has also been influenced by technological developments. Education technology is a system in education in which machines, media, men and methods are interrelated and work together for the fulfillment of specific educational objectives. Educational technology is a communication process resulting from application of scientific method to the behavioral science of teaching and learning. The communication may or may require the use of media such as radio, films, television broadcasts, cassettes, etc.

Objectives of Techno-pedagogy

- To create awareness about the use of technologies in research
- To make famous with basic of information and communication technology.
- To acquire facts of computers languages and software packages for education.
- To expand programming skill in computer languages for education.
- To develop skill in utilizing intranet and internet.
- To exploit technology for solving educational problems.

Enhancement of Learning and Teaching

- Emphasizing learning rather than technology
- Mainstreaming the role of technology in normal analysis, planning, design, implementation and evaluation processes;
- Developing staff- ensuring that professional development opportunities are evidence-based and include scholarly and academic illiteracies appropriate to the digital age;
- Enhancing other core processes through use of technology, e.g. Student selection.

Enhancement of students learning

- Evidencing the role of technology in meeting the needs of diverse learners and ensuring parity of learning experience by developing student scholarly/ academic illiteracies. Engaging with student as partners;
- Research is encouraged to inform decision- making and build capacity by identifying new opportunities for enhancement of the student learning experience.
- Research is flexibility and accessibility of provision:
- Technology has a role in increasing accessibility and flexibility above beyond benefiting individuals with particular needs. It is important in supporting student transition and progression, including addressing equality and diversity. Welsh-medium learning and fostering lifelong learning.

Importance of Technology

- Technology was originally intended to serve as a means of improving efficiency in the education research.
- It can help to improve memory retention, increase motivation and gradually deepen understanding.
- Technology can also be used to promote collaborative learning include role playing, group problem solving activities and articulated objects.
- It is helpful for critical thinking.
- It is used Generalist (broad) competencies.
- Technology competencies enable expert work.
- Technology is used for decision making.
- It is used in handing of dynamic situation.
- It helps to communication effective.

Five Benefits of Techno- Pedagogy

- Improve Student Performance
- Increased Student Productivity
- Better Attendance Rates
- Complete Resource Portability
- Connect with Student More Easily

Advanced Mobile Devices

- Mobile Learning
- Mobile Learning Practice as a Learning Style
- Class blogs, Wireless and wikis for mobile learning
- Electronic books and World mapper
- Mobile Computing in Technology
- Encourage "anywhere, anytime" learning;
- Reach underserved children:
- Improve 21st-century social interactions
- Fit with learning environments:
- Enable a personalized learning experience

Value of Mobile Learning

Tutors who have used Mobile-Learning programs and techniques have made following value statement in favor of Mobile- Learning.

- It is important to bring new technology into the classroom.
- Devices used are more lightweight than books and PCs.
- Mobile learning can be used to diversify the types of learning activities and the students partake in a blended learning approach.
- Mobile learning supports the learning process rather than being integral to it.
- Mobile learning can be a useful add-on tool for students with special needs.
- Mobile learning can be used as a 'look' to re- engage disaffected youth.

Use of Mobile Learning

- Mobile learning can happen anywhere, any time
- Learning is more user- centred as Mobile technology is bridging tool.

- Mobile learning increase motivation and engagement with learning.
- Mobile learning makes the learning process quicker, easier and more attractive.
- Mobile learning is Potentially a more rewarding learning experience

Conclusion

Technology Concerns a host of issues including pedagogical theory, choice of land ware or software, method of use and evaluation of effectiveness. Technologies are not single technologies but complex combination of hardware and software. These technologies may employ some combinations of audio channels, computer code, data, graphics, video or text. Technology, inventory properly used, can enhance the learning and interest of student. Evolution of new technologies will be necessitated to maximize development of learning in modern research practice. Thus in the present investigation the authors concluded that techno- pedagogy's are very necessary in teaching learning process to progress the education.

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ENROLMENT TREND AMONG LEARNERS ACCESSED THROUGH THE IGNOU REGIONAL CENTRE AT VARANASI

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Introduction

While the means to education has been widened from face-to face education to part time education to flexi education to individualised education to experiential learning to online education to self-learning to certification through the Conventional Education System (CES) and the Distance Education System (DES). Each means of education has its own clientele. According to Khan (1999) Open and Distance Learning is not supplementary, complementary or alternative to the conventional system, but it is part of the evolution of new methodologies in teaching and learning. The flexibility of the DES attracts its own clientele mainly because of the systemic characteristics and established credibility of the System. Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) is one of the Distance Teaching Institutions (DTI) in India offering education Programmes ranging from Awareness level to Certificate to Diploma to Post Graduate Certificate to Post Graduate Diploma to Under Graduation to Post Graduation to Research Degrees. The present paper gives the detail about the enrolment trend of the learners for Six years from 2010 to 2015 (*Eleven consecutive cohort of enrolment)* at Varanasi Regional Centre, one of the second tier administrative setup of IGNOU in the State of Uttar Pradesh.

Profile of the learners of enrolled at Varanasi Regional Centre of IGNOU

Primary data given in the application form by the learners at the time of admission into the Programme was retrieved to arrive at the profile of the learners since the inception of the Regional Centre in 2010. All the enrolment data available in Varanasi Regional Centre for the Six years from 2010 to 2015 (*Eleven consecutive cohort of enrolment)* collected. A total of 30008 learners were enrolled into the various Programmes on offer from the year 2010 to 2015. However, while tabulating the values, only the valid frequencies for the respective response have been taken into account for discussing the various parameters of interest, which falls within the scope of the study. The data was analysed on various aspects such as Academic session wise Programme with enrolment, Academic session wise Enrolment, Gender of the enrollees, Area of place of stay of the enrollees, Category of the enrollees, Marital Status of the enrollees, Prior history of Study in the Parent Distance Teaching Institution (DTI), Differently enabled Enrollees, Learner Support Centres. The various aspects that are being discussed under this section which falls within the scope of the objectives of the present study are the following:

Academic session-wise Enrolment: The number of enrollees belonging to the Varanasi Regional Centre for the Six years from 2010 to 2015 (*Eleven consecutive cohort of enrolment)* is given in Table 1.

Table 1: Academic session wise enrolment in various programmes

Enrolment Cohorts	Number	Percentage
2010 January	1667	6
2010 July	2207	7
2011 January	2259	8
2011 July	3762	13
2012 January	1581	5
2012 July	2932	10
2013 January	2234	7
2013 July	3584	12
2014 January	2916	10
2014 July	3419	11
2015 January	3447	11
Total	30008	100

From Table 1, it can be observed that there was a fluctuation in the enrolment for this programme in Varanasi Regional Centre. The highest enrolment for the Six years from 2010 to 2015 (*Eleven consecutive cohort of enrolment)* was the highest was in the July Admissions of the year 2011 for Varanasi Regional Centre (n=3762; 13%)   and the least was in the January Admissions of the year 2012 for Varanasi Regional Centre (n=1581; 10%).

Gender: The number of Enrollees in Programmes which has enrolment at the Varanasi Regional Centre based on the Gender is given in Table 2.

Table 2: Gender-wise enrolment in the programmes with enrolment

Enrolment Cohort	Male		Female		Total number of Valid frequencies
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	
2010 January	1075	64	592	36	1667
2010 July	1487	67	720	33	2207
2011 January	1542	68	717	32	2259
2011 July	2432	65	1330	35	3762
2012 January	880	56	701	44	1581
2012 July	1945	66	987	34	2932
2013 January	1364	61	870	39	2234
2013 July	2437	68	1147	32	3584
2014 January	1732	59	1184	41	2916
2014 July	2186	64	1233	36	3419
2015 January	2021	59	1426	41	3447
Grand Total	19101	64	10907	36	30008

As evident from Table 2, a majority of the enrollees are men [consistently above 56% over the Six years from 2010 to 2015 (*Eleven consecutive cohort of enrolment)*] in the Varanasi Regional Centre. The highest enrolment in men was in the cohort of enrolment of July 2013 (n=2437; 68%) whereas, the highest gross enrolment in women was highest in the cohort of enrolment of January 2015 (n=1426; 41%) at Varanasi Regional Centre.

This finding is in line with the findings of Kumar and Dorothy (2010a) where the majority of the enrollees for the BTCM Programme of IGNOU are men (n= 1426; 89.12%) for the Ten

enrolment years from (2000 to 2009) at the Chennai Regional Centre. This finding also reinforce one of the earliest findings by Anand (1985) who had categorised, women, Academic orphans *(whose gender can be male)* as one of the types of learners who come into the fold of distance education. However, this finding contradicts with one of the earliest finding by Faith and Croom (1988), who had concluded that "the gender factor addresses the phenomenon whereby large number around the world study on distance education programmes, close to half the total enrolment . This mode of study suits women. They can study at home and fit study around their traditional responsibilities, largely domestic. Where access to a campus institution is difficult or impossible due to geography or cultures, distance education provides educational possibilities for women" and the recent study by Kumar and Dorothy (2010b), who have documented highest enrolment of women compared to men for the B.Ed Programme at Chennai Regional Centre. From the data given in Table 2, it can also be noted that for the recent four consecutive cohorts of enrolment, there is a steady increase in the enrolment of women at Varanasi Regional Centre.

Category: The number of Enrollees in Programmes which has enrolment at the Varanasi Regional Centre based on the Category [General, Scheduled Caste (SC), Scheduled Tribe (ST), Other Backward Class (OBC)] is given in Table 3.

Table 3: Programme with enrolment based on category (Consolidated)

Enrolment Cohort	Number				Percentage				Valid Frequencies (Number)
	General	**OBC**	**SC**	**ST**	**General**	**OBC**	**SC**	**ST**	
2010 January	881	601	142	43	52.8	36.1	8.5	2.6	1667
2010 July	1305	728	130	44	59.1	33.0	5.9	2.0	2207
2011 January	1098	786	301	74	48.6	34.8	13.3	3.3	2259
2011 July	1650	1657	368	87	43.9	44.0	9.8	2.3	3762
2012 January	794	636	128	23	50.2	40.2	8.1	1.5	1581
2012 July	1372	1280	228	52	46.8	43.7	7.8	1.8	2932
2013 January	1082	932	197	23	48.4	41.7	8.8	1.0	2234
2013 July	1978	1291	270	45	55.2	36.0	7.5	1.3	3584
2014 January	1556	1144	176	40	53.4	39.2	6.0	1.4	2916
2014 July	2049	1141	171	58	59.9	33.4	5.0	1.7	3419
2015 January	2012	1172	227	36	58.4	34.0	6.6	1.0	3447
Valid Frequencies	15777	11368	2338	525	52.57	37.88	7.79	1.74	30008

From Table 3, it is evident that a majority of the enrollees are from General Category   (n= 15777; 52.57%; N=30008) then followed by Other backward Class (n=11368; 37.88%; N=30008) then by the Scheduled Caste (n=2338; 7.79%; N=30008) and least by Scheduled Tribe (n=525; 1.74%; N=30008).

The low enrolment of the socially excluded groups (Scheduled Caste/ Scheduled Tribe) has been documented by Kumar and Dorothy (2010b) upon profiling Ten cohorts of enrolment of learners of B.Ed programme from the year 2000 to 2009 attached to the Chennai Regional centre and by Dorothy and Kumar (2014) upon profiling learners of M.Sc DFSM Programme for Ten consecutive Academic sessions (January/July sessions) from the year 2005 to 2011 at Lucknow Regional Centre. However, Kumar and Dorothy (2010a) upon profiling the BTCM Learners from the year 2000 to 2009 attached to the Chennai Regional centre have found that a majority of the enrollees are from Other backward Class then followed by General Category and then by the Scheduled Caste. It is apt to mention that the admission procedure of IGNOU also falls in line with one of the findings by Sharma (2001) who after conducting an in-depth study of the Teacher Education through the Distant Mode had concluded that all the Correspondence course Institutions (CCI)/Directorate of Distance Education (DDE) have reservation for SC and ST students i.e. the under privileged groups in the social hierarchy, in the admission process.

Differently enabled learners: The number of Enrollees who are differently enabled belonging to the Varanasi Regional Centre over the Eleven cohorts of enrolment is given in Table 4.

Table 4: Programme with Differently enabled Enrollees

Cohort of Enrolment	Differently enabled		General		Total of Valid frequencies
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	
2010 January	27	1.6	1640	98.4	1667
2010 July	23	1.0	2184	99.0	2207
2011 January	30	1.3	2229	98.7	2259
2011 July	33	0.9	3729	99.1	3762
2012 January	14	0.9	1567	99.1	1581
2012 July	21	0.7	2911	99.3	2932
2013 January	35	1.6	2199	98.4	2234
2013 July	14	0.4	3570	99.6	3584
2014 January	16	0.5	2900	99.5	2916
2014 July	8	0.2	3411	99.8	3419
2015 January	15	0.4	3432	99.6	3447
Total	236	0.8	29772	99.2	30008

One of the reasons for establishing the Distance Teaching Institutions (DTI) is to take the education to the doorsteps of the disadvantaged individuals. The Government of India also gives concession in entry qualifications for individuals from such special categories. From Table 7, it is evident that differently enabled enrollees are one of the beneficiaries of the Programmes on offer at IGNOU Regional Centre, Varanasi. The highest number of this type of beneficiary was in the enrolment cohort of January 2013 (n=35; 1.6%). This finding relate to the view of Banerjee (1990) who had opined that the distance learning has been accepted as the 'servo-mechanism' for meeting the ever growing demand of education.

Conclusion

The Distance Education System (DES) is being envisaged for ensuring equalisation of educational opportunities and Open Avenue for learn-earn experience (Kumar and Dorothy, 2010a). According to Trainer's Kit 001(1999b) Open and Distance Learning offers a number of advantage to both learners to providers of opportunities for learning. They include

overcoming physical distance, solving time or scheduling problems, expanding the limited number of places available, accommodating low or dispersed enrolments, making best use of the limited number of teachers (experts) available, dealing with cultural, religious and political considerations. In addition, as King Solomon opines in the Book of Proverbs Chapter 13 Verse 16 "Every prudent man acts out of knowledge" is also apt in for implementation in all fields of education. With the desire of the Indian Government to democratise education to optimise the availability of education, the Programmes of IGNOU is not only the means to fulfill the aspiration of the degree-seeking learners but also is an evidence for the use of Distance Education System (DES) in rendering education. This paper discussed the profile of the learners of the Varanasi Regional Centre for eleven cohorts of enrolment from the year 2010 to 2015 on the various aspects of the Profile of the learners.

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ADOPTING INTEGRATING TECHNOLOGY BASED DISTANCE EDUCATION

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Introduction

The University revolutionized the scope of the correspondence program and helped to create a respectable learning alternative to the traditional form of education. It has been at the forefront of developing new technologies to improve the distance learning service and is still the largest such institution in the world wide. There are now many similar institutions around the world, often with the name "Open University". All "Open Universities" use distance education technologies as delivery methodologies and some have grown to become 'mega-universities' term coined to denote institutions with more than 100,000 students. Combining computer assisted instruction with telecourses produced by TV, success in helping to establish online distance learning using modern technology for learning. The widespread use of computers and the internet have made distance learning easier and faster, and today virtual schools and virtual universities deliver full curricula online.

Some distance programs became more and more common, the share of students in at least one distance education class expanded from 8 percent to 20 percent, and the percentage enrolled in a distance education degree program increased from 2 percent to 4 percent. Many private& public institutions worldwide now offer distance education courses from the most basic instruction through the highest levels of degree and doctoral programs.

Defining integrating technology based distance education (ITBDE)

Distance education has a long history, but its popularity and use has grown exponentially as more advanced technology has become available. By 2008, online learning programs were available in the distance education universities. A 2013 research paper argued that implementation of internet forum; online discussion group and online learning community contribute to an efficacious distance education. Researchers showed that socialization plays the most vital role in effective distance education.

Although the expansion of the Internet blurs the boundaries, distance education technologies are divided into two modes of delivery: synchronous learning and asynchronous learning. In synchronous learning, all participants are "present" at the same time. In this regard, it resembles traditional classroom teaching methods despite the participants being located remotely. It requires a timetable to be organized. Web conferencing, videoconferencing, educational television, instructional television are examples of synchronous technology, as are direct-broadcast satellite (DBS), internet radio, live streaming, telephone, and web-based VoIP. Online meeting software such as Adobe Connect has helped to facilitate meetings in distance learning courses. Another form of synchronous learning that has been entering the classroom over the last couple of years is the use of robot proxies including those that allow sick students to attend classes. In asynchronous learning, participants access course materials flexibly on their own schedules. Students are not required to be together at the same time. Mail correspondence, which is the oldest form of distance education, is an asynchronous delivery technology, as are message board forums, e-mail, video and audio recordings, print materials, voicemail, and fax.

The two methods can be combined. Many courses offered by both open universities and an increasing number of campus based institutions use periodic sessions of residential or day teaching to supplement the sessions delivered at a distance. This type of mixed distance

and campus based education has recently come to called "blended learning" or less often "hybrid learning". The Open University uses a blend of technologies and a blend of learning modalities (face-to-face, distance, and hybrid) all under the rubric of "distance learning. So "Adoption of ITBDE defines as the decision of an individual to make use of technology as the best for learning as per his convenience".

ITBDE: The Indian Perspective

The potential and capability of distance education was realized in the 60's across the world however, it has got national acceptance and recognition with the emergence of IGNOU in 1985. IGNOU &ISRO share a common vision of creating educated India, to achieve this, IGNOU &ISRO have been collaborating in the use of satellite communication to enrich learning processes and increase access to education through distance mode. Under IGNOU &ISRO collaboration, developed 4-TV channels and 2-interactive networks dedicated for education. In order to fulfill the requirements of education for all, the Indian parliament took a major decision in 2001 where by education was made compulsory for the age group of 6-14 i.e., Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan. The massive educational setup required to develop an effective communication system with extensive point to point reach covering the entire country. Along with IGNOU &ISRO and a few educational institutions & organizations propelled the idea of designing and developing a dedicated satellite for education by ISRO. India is unique in the world in this respect and it is expected that this capability will immensely support the mission to provide seamless education and to accomplish the target of education for all.

Different Types of Integrating Technologies that can be used in Distance Education

Various technologies are used to facilitate distance learning. Most of distance-learning uses combinations of these techniques, including blogs, collaborative software, portfolios, and virtual classrooms.

- **Audio:** The radio has been around for a long time and has been used in distance education. Recent technologies have allowed to stream audio over the internet. There are also webcasts and podcasts available over the internet for students and teachers to download.
- **Video:** Videos allow teachers to reach students who are visual learners and tend to learn best by seeing the material rather than hearing or reading about it. The institutions can access video clips through the internet instead of relying on DVDs or VHS tapes. Websites like YouTube are used by many teachers and distance education students.
- **Computers, tablets and mobile devices:** Computers and tablets allow distance education students and teacher's access to websites and other programs, such as Microsoft Word, PowerPoint, PDF files, and images. Many mobile devices support m-learning.
- **Blogging:** Blogs allow distance education students and teachers to post their thoughts, ideas, and comments on a website.
- **Webcams:** The development of webcams and webcasting has facilitated the creation of virtual classrooms and virtual learning environments. Virtual classrooms supported by such technology are becoming more and more popular especially for distance education students; they are contributing as a main solution to solving problems with travel expenses. Virtual classrooms with such technology also provide the benefits of being easy to set up.

- **Whiteboards:** Interactive whiteboards, similar in use to "smartboards", allow teachers and distance education students to write on the touch screen, so learning becomes interactive and engaging.
- **Screen casting:** Screen casting is a recent trend in distance learning. There are many screen casting tools available that allow users to share their screens directly from their browser and make the video available online so that the viewers can stream the video directly. The advantage of such tools is that it gives the presenter the ability to show his ideas and flow of thoughts rather than simply explain them, which may be more confusing when delivered via simple text instructions.
- **Virtual learning:** Virtual Learning, also known as learning platforms, utilize virtual classrooms and meetings which often use a mix of communication technologies. Distance education students are able to 'write on the board' and even share their desktop, when given rights by the teacher. Other communication technologies available in a virtual classroom include text notes, microphone rights and mouse control.
- **Cyber Hunt:** A cyber Hunt, or internet scavenger hunt, is a project-based activity which helps distance education students gain experience in exploring and browsing the internet. A Cyber Hunt may ask students to interact with the site (i.e.: play a game or watch a video), record short answers to teacher questions, as well as read and write about a topic in depth. There are basically 2 types of cyber hunts**:**
- A simple task, in which the teacher develops a series of questions and gives the students a hypertext link to the URL that will give them the answer.
- A more complex task, intended for increasing and improving student internet search skills. Teachers ask questions for distance education students to answer using a search engine.
- **WISE:** The Web-based Inquiry Science Environment (WISE) provides a platform for creating inquiry science projects for distance education students using evidence and resources from the Web. WISE inquiry projects include diverse elements such as online discussions, data collection, drawing, argument creation, resource sharing, concept mapping and other built-in tools, as well as links to relevant web resources.
- **Video conference:** Video conference technology can be used to support collaborative inquiry among distance education students who are in different locations and are often not available at the same time through a range of such online learning technologies, learners and teachers can engage in synchronous as well as asynchronous interactions across space, time and pace. Video conferencing allows people in different locations to meet and share information without travelling.

Advantages and Disadvantages of ITBDE

The main advantage of ITBDE learning is that it allows you to fit your learning around your work and home life.

- You can usually also set your own pace of study.
- It is your decision as to when and where you study.
- It doesn't matter where you live – you can gain a degree from anywhere in the world.
- As with a full-time degree, students may find that they gain useful, transferable skills, such as planning and research.
- A distance learning course often costs less than a full-time degree.

- Loneliness and feelings of isolation should be avoided however by frequent online contact with tutors and taking part in virtual forums, virtual help groups and discussion rooms.
- Distance learning providers usually offer dedicated support to their online or distance learning students.
- You can study undergraduate, postgraduate and professional level courses via distance learning.
- Universities and colleges ensure that their distance learning programs and qualifications are of the same high quality as campus-based programs.
- The main disadvantages of ITBDE that have been found to make learning less effective than traditional class room settings, include:
    - Ease of cheating
    - Bias towards tech-savvy students over non-technical students
    - Teachers' lack of knowledge and experience to manage virtual teacher-student interaction
    - Lack of social interaction between teacher and students.
    - Lack of direct and immediate feedback from teachers.
    - A synchronic communication hinders fast exchange of question.

Conclusion

Distance education programs can act as a catalyst for institutional innovation and are at least as effective as face-to-face learning programs, especially if the instructor is knowledgeable and skilled. Distance education can also provide a broader method of communication within the realm of education. With the many tools and programs that technological advancements have to offer, communication appears to increase in distance education amongst students and their professors, as well as students and their classmates. The high cost of education affects students in higher education, to which distance education may ne an alternative in order to provide some relief. Distance education has been a more cost effective form of learning, and can sometimes save students a significant amount of money as opposed to traditional education. Distance education may be able to help to save students a considerable amount financially by removing the cost of transportation. In addition, distance education maybe able to save students from the economic burden of high-priced course textbooks. Many textbooks are now available as electronic textbooks, known as e-textbooks, which can offer digital textbooks for a reduced price in comparison to traditional textbooks. Also, the increasing improvements in technology have resulted in a partnership with digital publishers that offer course materials for free, which can help students significantly with educational costs. The innovative integrating of technologies has been a boon in the field of distance education to enhance quality of learning more meaningful.

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E-LEARNING: AN INNOVATIVE TECHNO-PEDAGOGY IN THE DIGITAL ERA

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Introduction

The root meaning of education is given as bringing up or leading out or making manifest the inherent potentialities in a pupil. Education in broad term means, "the life-long process of acquiring new knowledge and skills through both formal and informal exposure to information, ideas and experiences". A shift from teacher –centered instruction is needed to enable student to acquire the new dimensions of knowledge and skills. This new environment also involves a change in the role of both teachers and students. In the modern era, we have seen phenomenal developments in the application of media and technology in education in the recent past.

E-learning and E-teaching

E-learning is a technology which supports teaching and learning via computer web technology E-learning is internet-enable learning. E-learning provides faster learning at reduced cost, increased access to learning and clear accountability for all participants in the learning process. (Rosenberg.2001). E-learning is the facilitation of live teaching with streaming lectures, white boards, downloadable slide sets and discussion forums (Mishra,2005). E-learning is about the automation of an existing teacher-centered educational approach, while e-learning means innovative students-centered approach that is more consistent with adult learning theory. Thus E-learning and E-learning enables the students for continuous updating of knowledge, enhances their IT skills and paves way for time management in the teaching learning process.

E-learning Efficiency in Teaching Learning process

"India can become one of the development countries in the world by year 2020, if we adopt technology as our tool. For this, the teaching community should change its mind set and enthuse the students by means of technology" (Abdul kalam, (2004).

E-learning promotes collaborate learning, depends understanding, provide flexible and rich medium for students to access learning materials. It also provides a single experience that accommodate the distinct learning styles of auditory learners, visual learners and kinesthetic learners. In short computer based networking system has provide the present day teacher to the effective instruction in the class room.

Role of an e-teacher

E-teacher has to adapt continuous professional development in the educational use of technology in this sense; teachers have to be ready to make use of the possibilities that ICT offer, such as different learning content, focused on the students, presenting them with several types of interaction, offering different degrees of control of their own learning and promote collaborative tasks. Hence the e-teacher need to (i) Look at the subject content in a new way and re-think and adapt innovative course delivery (ii) Gain computational proficiency so that there is understanding of both its strength and its weaknesses (iii) Develop positive attitude towards e-learning (iv) Encourage students to set their own objectives and agendas (v) understanding of different learning styles of students.

Conclusion

Integration of ICT in education is inevitable in the digital era. Success of ICT based education depends upon the teacher's ability to keep pace with developments of modern society. E-learning is a learning process created by interaction with digitally delivered content, network, based services and tutoring support. Thus, E-learning enables the students for continuous updating of knowledge, enhances their skills and paves way for time management in the teaching learning process.

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ARCHAEOLOGICAL STUDIES:
A PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT IN OPEN AND DISTANCE LEARNING

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Archaeology as a tool has come to serve many disciplines. Of these disciplines history is the main user. However, history as a separate discipline has been written with different interpretations and the archaeological sources are used in relevant places and it also depends on what kind of history historians are writing. But, at the same time archaeology has grown as a separate discipline as it involves various scientific methods than history which relays on the written records and other material remains. These scientific techniques have been introduced in the midst of 19th century A.D. Though steps are taken to introduce new scientific techniques in the Indian Archaeology, it is surmised that the practice of these techniques are not widespread.

Archaeology is the study of ancient cultural periods ranging from Palaeolithic period to the Modern period in the scientific aspects. It involves enormous field surveys, which are conducted to identify new artifacts like stone tools, metal objects, potteries, bones, wood, inscriptions, coins, etc through exploration and excavation. A comparative study on literary evidences is also necessary to prove the antiquity of the region surveyed. Archaeology is also the collective study of various other disciplines like anthropology, geology, chemistry, biology and zoology. The materials unearthed through explorations and excavations would be subjected to scientific examinations which is must to date the materials.

In the present context, archaeology is taught only in *regular mode* in colleges and universities in India. These institutions have professors who are highly trained in archaeological studies. The experience of the professors, proper infrastructure in the institutions for archaeological research, necessary manpower for the execution of works etc., leads a student to conduct the archaeological research in a proper and unbiased way. Archaeology is taught as an allied or vocational subject in *Under Graduate* level in Historical studies in the institutions. So, a student studying medieval and modern history would be able to know ancient history of India or the states through the archaeological studies.

In the *Post Graduate level*, separate department is assigned for the archaeology discipline. These departments concentrate on proper archaeological research with the help of various science disciplines. Studying archaeology in regular stream would makes students to get updated with the day to day advancement in the archaeological studies and it is also notable that the students of Post Graduate study in archaeology, somehow gather interest in this subject as they have basic knowledge about the subject in the under graduate level when they study history as the core subject. But students from other disciplines rather than history in under graduate level also show interest in studying archaeology in the post graduate level.

Apart from this various government agencies like Archaeological Survey of India, State Department of Archaeology from various states also conducted class in regular stream in the Diploma Level. These institutions give training for the students in exploration, excavation, handling of various scientific equipments related to archaeological studies, inscriptions reading, copying of inscriptions, technique of manufacturing the ancient tools,

chemical examination on the materials unearthed during excavations and finally taking the students to the ancient archaeological sites in order to train the students practically. This practical experience helps them to fetch jobs in various government agencies. Even the students gets study grant from various agencies like University Grants Commission, Indian Council of Historical Research, Indian Social Science Research, Central Institute of Classical Tamil (Tamilnadu) for their higher study.

The aim of this article is to promote Archaeological Studies in the Open and Distance Learning mode. So, for the benefit of the students Diploma, Degree in undergraduate and post graduate level studies are conducted. Among the courses History, Sociology, Economics, Commerce, Education, English, Regional languages like Tamil and other are conducted. In India, history students are taught about Medieval and Modern history of India. But among the subjects, archaeology is not taught in detail. A brief account on the subjects like Inscriptions, Numismatics and Museology are studied by the students. The important subjects like Pre and Proto history, Exploration and Excavation are not dealt in detail. So, if archaeology is created as a separate department in the Open and Distance Learning system, even the middle school and high school students would be able to study the ancient history of India in deeper account. As the ancient history covers the areas like Old Stone Age (Palaeolithic), New Stone Age (Neolithic), Iron Age (Megalithic), Copper Age (Chalcolithic), study of Inscriptions, Coins, Art and Architecture, Paintings etc, it will be a great opportunity for a students to know entire history of his country or region with proper material evidences. The scientific aids to prove the antiquity of the materials unearthed also helps in writing the history. Also, by studying archaeology as a elective or subordinate subject in Open and Distance Learning mode, a student of history is able to access the chance of correlative study with the other disciplines like anthropology, geology etc, as like the students of regular stream getting benefitted.

A student leaning on the written materials to study history, would be able to get a training on field surveys and excavation if he studies archaeology as a core subject. This makes even a student of middle school and high school to know the history of a place in detail, as the materials unearthed or collected from excavation would be subjected to scientific examinations. So for this, the concerned Open University should allot necessary funds for the archaeological research. Apart from the professors in archaeology discipline, proper trainers in explorations and excavation can be engaged by the institution to train the students. This will initially create a interest among the students to go for a search on the materials to prove the ancient history of a place or his region, which will leads to the preservation of the site or materials pertaining to the ancient period if exposed properly. A student studying archaeology in Open and Distance Learning mode in the diploma and undergraduate level may get interest in studying post graduation in archaeology which may even leads him to do higher studies like M.Phil or Ph.D. So, the Open Universities can even produce a doctorate in archaeology apart from issue degrees and diploma in history and archaeology.

As far as the Learning Research Centres (LRC) are concerned, they can engage a expert from archaeology in the concerned and can train the students in archaeological field studies in case of need. Apart from this signing Memorandum of Understanding with other archaeological institutions like Archaeological Survey of India (ASI), State Department of Archaeology, etc can make the students of Open and Distance Learning to get accessed with the classes and field studies conducted by these institutions.

Launching Diploma course in Archaeology in distance mode will be helpful in teaching the students about the basics of archeological topics like inscriptions, coins, arts, architecture, paintings, museology. This can cover all the topics of archaeology in a birds view and also will be a platform to create interest among the students to do higher studies in archaeology. So, studying archaeology in Open and Distance Learning would make a student of middle and high school level to get to know about the history of India in deeper account as like the Post Graduate students.

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SELF-CONCEPT AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT OF DISTANT LEARNERS OF KASHMIR UNIVERSITY

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Introduction

Self-concept is also called self-construction, self-identity or self-perspective. It is a multi-dimensional construct that refers to an individual's perception of "self" in relation to any characteristics, such as academics (and nonacademic's), gender roles and sexuality, racial identity, and many others. Each of these characteristics is a research domain (i.e. Academic Self-Concept) within the larger spectrum of self-concept although no characteristics exist in isolation as one's self-concept is a collection of beliefs about oneself. While closely related with self-concept clarity (which "refers to the extent to which self-knowledge is clearly and confidently defined, internally consistent, and temporally stable"), it presupposes but it is distinguishable from self-awareness, which is simply an individual's awareness of their self. It is also more general than self-esteem, which is the purely evaluative element of the self-concept.

Operational Definition

The self-concept is an internal model which comprises self-assessments. Features assessed include but are not limited to: personality, skills and abilities, occupation(s) and hobbies, physical characteristics, etc. For example, the statement "I am lazy" is a self-assessment that contributes to the self-concept. However, the statement "I am tired" would not be part of someone's self-concept, since being tired is a temporary state and a more objective judgment. A person's self-concept may change with time as reassessment occurs, which in extreme cases can lead to identity crises. The students may be at different levels of achievement in different subject areas. Therefore, achievement is the learning outcome of students in classrooms. A level of achievement in academic fields includes the performance of students.

Methodology

The sample for the present study consisted of 600 distant learners (300 urban and 300 rural) from Directorate of distance education. The data for the present study was collected by using the self-concept inventory, *Real Self and Ideal Self* by Sagar and Sharma (2003).

In order to collect the data the investigator approached to the respondents during the personal contact programme conducted by DDE university of Kashmir. The investigator administered the self-concept inventory to 600 students (300 rural and 300 urban) to assess their self concept.

The academic achievement of the previous two semesters of the sample subjects was collected from official records of the DDE Kashmir University. The data collected was subjected to the following statistical treatments. Mean, S.D., and t-test was used to find the significant difference between urban and rural on self concept and academic achievement.

Analysis and Interpretation

Table 1.1: S**howing the Mean Comparison of Urban and Rural distant learners on Ideal Self Dimension of Self-concept (N= 300 in each group)**

Group	N	Mean	S.D	t-value	Level of significance
Urban distant learners	300	162	4.40	3.27	Significant at .01 level
Rural distant learners	300	160	3.25		

The perusal of above table shows the mean comparison of urban and rural students on the Ideal Self-dimension of the self-concept inventory. The calculated t-value is greater than the tabulated t-value at 0.01 level of significance which indicates that there is a significant difference between urban and rural students on the Ideal Self of the Self-concept inventory. The above result clarifies that urban students have better Ideal Self than rural students.

Table 1.2: S**howing the Mean Comparison of Urban and Rural distant learners on Real Self Dimension of the Self-concept Inventory (N= 300 in each group)**

Group	N	Mean	S.D	t-value	Level of significance
Urban distant learners	300	165	5.40	3.63	Significant at .01 level
Rural distant learners	300	163	4.25		

The above table shows the mean comparison of urban and rural students on the real self dimension of self concept inventory. The calculated t-value which is (3.63) is greater than the tabulated t-value at 0.01 level of significance, which indicates that there is a significant difference between urban and rural students on the Real self of the Self concept inventory. The above result clarifies that urban students have better Real self than rural students.

Table 1.3: The Mean Comparison of Urban and Rural distant learners on Self-concept

Group	N	Mean	S.D	t-value	Level of significance
Urban distant learners	300	166	5.80	3.38	Significant at .01 level
Rural distant learners	300	164	4.60		

The perusal of above table shows the mean comparison of urban and rural students on the Self Concept Inventory. The calculated t-value (3.38) is greater than the tabulated t-value at 0.01 level of significance, which indicates that there is a significant difference between urban and rural students on the Self Concept Inventory. The above result clarifies that urban students have a better Self Concept than rural students.

Table 1.4: The Mean Comparison of Urban and Rural distant learners on Academic Achievement (N= 300 in each group)

Group	N	Mean	S.D	t-value	Level of significance
Urban distant learns	300	74.50	6.01	1.53	In Significant
Rural distant learners	300	73.50	5.41		

Table 1.4 shows the mean comparison of Urban and Rural students on academic achievement. The table reveals that there is no significant mean difference between urban and rural aspirants on their academic achievement, which means that urban and rural aspirants have similar academic achievement. Though the mean difference favored urban but the difference failed to arrive at any level of confidence.

Conclusions

1. It was found that urban and rural distant learners differ significantly on the ideal self dimension of the Self Concept inventory. The urban students had better ideal self than the rural students.
2. It has been found that urban and rural disant learners differ significantly on real self dimension of the Self Concept Inventory. The urban students had better real self than the rural Students
3. Further it was found that urban and rural distant learners differ significantly on the overall dimensions of the Self Concept Inventory. The urban students had a better self concept than the rural students.
4. It was also found that there is no significant difference between urban and rural distant learners on their academic achievement.

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THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE POLICY FOR RESEARCH

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What is Quality Teaching and why does it matter?

Quality teaching is the use of pedagogical techniques to produce learning outcomes for students. It involves several dimensions, including the effective design of curriculum and course content, a varietyof learning contexts (including guided independent study, project-based learning, collaborative learning,experimentation, etc.), soliciting and using feedback, and effective assessment of learning outcomes. Italso involves well-adapted learning environments and student support services.Experience showed that fostering quality teaching is a multi-level endeavor. Support for qualityteaching takes place at three inter-dependent levels:

- *At the institution-wide level*: including projects such as policy design, and support to organisation and internal quality assurance systems.
- *Programme level*: comprising actions to measure and enhance the design, content and delivery of the programmes within a department or a school.
- *Individual level*: including initiatives that help teachers achieve their mission, encouragingthem to innovate and to support improvements to student learning and adopt a learnerorientedfocus.These three levels are essential and inter-dependent. However, supporting quality teaching at the programme level is key so as to ensure improvement in quality teaching at the discipline level andacross the institution.Support for quality teaching can be manifested through a wide range of activities that are likely toimprove the quality of the teaching process, of the programme content, as well as the learningconditions of students. Hybrid forms often prevail in institutions. These can include initiatives such as:

Areas of Internal Quality Assurance

Internal quality assurance mechanisms are departmentally generated andare continuous. The mechanisms shall be coherent with the qualityassurance framework set forth in this policy and approved by Council andshall include mechanisms to assess the following areas;

1. Quality of programmes and courses
2. Quality of academic staff
3. Quality of teaching and learning experience
4. Quality in student assessment: Internal moderation
5. Quality in support services
6. Quality of resources and facilities
7. Quality of research
8. Quality program review process

Institutions engage in fostering quality teaching essentially for the following reasons:

- To respond to the growing demand for meaningful and relevant teaching. Students as well asemployers want to ensure that their education will lead to gainful employment and will equipthem with the skills needed to evolve professionally over a lifetime.

- To demonstrate that they are reliable providers of good quality higher education, whileoperating in a complex setting, with multiple stakeholders, each with their own expectations(ministries, funding agencies, local authorities, employers…).
- To balance performance on teaching and learning achievements along with researchperformance, since even for elite, world-class universities, research performance is no longersufficient to maintain the reputation of the institution.
- To more effectively compete for students against the backdrop of higher tuition fees andgreater student mobility.
- The increasingly broadening scope of education and greater diversity of student profiles
- The rapid changes in technology, which can quickly make programme content and pedagogies obsolete
- The demand for greater civic engagement of graduates and regional development of higher education
- The increased pressures of global competition, economic efficiency
- The need to produce a skilled workforce to meet the challenges of the 21st century

Quality Assurance Policy

*Purpose***:** International concerns about how to maintain quality control in an environment thatincreasingly puts acute pressure on the traditional modes of teaching, research, learningand management have forced most developed countries adopt a formal, transparent andcredible systems of quality assurance with external verification of outcomes andprocesses.

Quality Assurance Mission: This mission statement provides the University with ample opportunities against which to build further and develop its quality of teaching, learning, and research base.

Features
- A commitment to widespread involvement of staff, students and other stakeholders in the QA process.
- Critical self-evaluation and rigorous peer review of academic andadministrative areas;
- Methodical collection of evidence about service satisfaction and studentexperience, including external comparisons;
- External assessment of professional courses through accreditation andinternational review;
- Multiple avenues for student and staff input to QA and improvement: College,Faculty, School, Services, Academic Board and committees, studentassociations,
- Systematic use of client experiences to improve staff development andtraining.
- A focus on efficient management, planning and resource processes to achieveexcellence and to ensure continuous improvement.
- National and international benchmarking of quality assurance processes withcomparable research-led universities.

Operational Definitions
- *Assessment -* In the context of quality assurance, assessment is the process of identifying andensuring that appropriate internal procedures are in place and

operational and that outcomes of academic programmes and activities are in accord with established standards.

- *Audit -* Audit is a process of identifying and ensuring that appropriate internal qualityassurance processes are in place and operational.
- *Programme Review -* Programme review is a process of holistic appraisal of a course/programme and resources, with a view to its further evolution and improvement.
- *Quality Assurance -* The process whereby measures are established which ensure that outcomes of academic programmes and activities are of a prescribed standard.
- *Quality Control -* This is the process whereby outcomes are assessed to determine whether they areof the prescribed standard.
- *Quality Management -* Quality management refers to all the processes that are in place to facilitateachievement of quality in an institution.
- *Stakeholders -* The term stakeholders include agencies (government and private) that controltertiary institutions, individuals, groups that participate in or have responsibilities towards education.

Aims and Objectives of the Policy

Effective institutional quality assurance processes assess quality against their mission andrelated objectives. The University will strive to be an example of an efficient and effective QA system development. The University in this QA framework has adopted Quality as *fitness for purpose"* - a concept that stresses the need to meet orconform to generally accepted standards such as those defined by an accreditation or quality assurance body, the focus being on the efficiency of the processes at work in the institution or programme in fulfilling the stated, given objectives and missionGoals and Objectives are the key drivers of a *.fitness for purpose* model of quality assurance. They need to be set clearly and explicitly, and in ways that can be operationalised effectively. They set the framework for planning, monitoring andmeasuring outcomes. They also facilitate communication with stakeholders such asemployer, industry, government, students and parentsFaculty/School/Institute level.Assessment of the research relevance to the discipline, locally and globally.Assessment of research managementAssessment of research findings and disseminationAssessment of research & research training strategies whether they reflect international best practices.

The Department Self-Study should include but not limited to the following areas of academic programme review;
- Assessment methods analyses/evaluations/Marking guides/strategies
- Assessment of teaching and learning environments including teachingstrategies used, resource availability, etc.
- Summaries of peer assessments
- Statistical summaries of student evaluation of course and teaching scores
- Academic staff information, i.e., qualifications, scholarly work andprofessional development activities
- Student results
- Department organizational structure including record keeping

Conclusion

The University Quality Assurance Unit or its equivalent be required to account formally and regularly for the quality and standards of its career education, information

andguidance with the objective of promoting continuous improvement.The University through its Quality Assurance Unit or its equivalent should provide thetraining required for academic and other appropriate staff to fulfill their role in providing career education, information and guidance, The quality Assurance unit or its equivalent should incorporate from key stakeholders into Career education, Information and Guidance. The University should setup appropriate targets in or to measure the performance of the Career Education, (Information and Guidance), record requests for information with a view of amending the statement of service, undertaking regular reviews on the career education, information and guidance policies, to include development, monitoring and resourcing; to collect data centrally and through academic units.

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PROGRESS OF OPEN AND DISTANCE LEARNERS

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Introduction

Education is not acquiring bookish knowledge but it is a lifelong process for self development and at a large scale it is the development of the country. Besides curricular instructions, the life skills need to be integrated in the education system of India. Life skills are abilities for adaptive and positive behavior that enable individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges that facilitate the physical, mental and emotional well-being of student. Knowledge and life skill education imparted to the students are likely to be passed on their own children, thus influencing future generations. This is possible with the system like open and distance education learning.

History of ODL in India

Open and distance learning in India started around 1960s. By the 1980s there were 34 universities offering correspondence education through departments designed for that purpose. The first single mode Open University was established in Andhra Pradesh in 1982, followed by Indira Gandhi National Open University(IGNOU), and subsequently in Bihar, Rajasthan, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Karnataka, West Bengal and Uttar Pradesh (established throughout the 1980s and 1990s). The establishment of these single mode distance education universities was stimulated by the government's intent on to democratize education and make it lifelong. The initiative did not discourage the expansion at the same time of correspondence programs in dual mode universities.

Need for ODL

There is a need to bring changes in the existing system where the learning time, learning style, and the pace of learning, and the evaluation system is such that is does not create any pressure and stress on the learners. The focus of the education should be on life skill development rather than making the students bookworm. The learners should be made capable of using their potential and capabilities for a happy and stress free life. For this they should be provided with an open and free environment at home as well as in the schools and colleges.

Distance Education Council

The DEC is founded in 1992. DEC is responsible for the promotion, co-ordination and the maintenance of quality and standard. A range of factors including emerging ICTs, liberalization, privatization and globalization have amplified the demand for open and distance learning.

Distance Learning Methods

The method of learning used in distance learning are divided into two basic groups : synchronous and asynchronous learning. The term synchronous learning is a mode of delivery where all participants are present at the same time. It resembles traditional classroom teaching methods despite the participants being located remotely. It requires a timetable to be organized. The asynchronous learning mode of delivery is where participants access course materials on their own schedule and so is more flexible. Students are not required to be together at the same time.

Distance Learning Technologies

The various technologies used in distance learning are print, computer, audio and video. Print materials may serve as the primary source of instruction, or they may be supplemental. As a primary source, distance students use text books. As a supplement to instruction, text materials may take the form of worksheets or study guides that are used in conjunction with video or voice technologies. Supplemental print materials may be disseminated via regular mail or over the Internet. In addition, fax machines are often used to transmit the print materials back and forth between the students and the teachers.

Other technologies, such as e-mail, could then be used to ask questions and send assignments back to the teacher. Audio and voice technologies offer cost-effective ways to enhance distance learning course. The audio component of a distance learning course can be as simple as a telephone with voicemail, or it can be as complex as an audio conference with microphones, telephone bridges and speakers. Audio files and CDs are inexpensive, easily duplicated and very versatile and it is used to deliver lectures, panel discussions or instructions for the distant learners.

Telephone conversations can be used to monitor individual students or to reach numerous students simultaneously via a conference call. Podcast is a method for making digital audio and video files available on the Internet in such a way that others can set their computers to automatically download new episodes in a series as they are posted online.

Implementation of ODL

The 20th century saw the creation and evolution of technologies beyond imagination a century ago. The acceptance of these technologies has led to a new alternative for providing education and training i.e., distance learning. Despite initial concerns that distance learning might lower the quality of instruction, studies show that its benefits are clear and demonstrable and many forms of distance learning are quickly gaining acceptance.

Conclusion

Distance learning is a contributing force to social and economic development. In developed and developing countries distance education is becoming an essential part of mainstream of educational systems. The globalization of distance learning provides many opportunities for countries for the realization of their education system-wide goals. The growing needs for continual skills upgrading and retraining and the technological advances have led to an explosion of interest in distance learning.

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AUGMENTED REALITY: A TECHNOLOGY FOR INTEGRATED LEARNING

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Introduction

Augmented reality is a technology which alters the perception of the real world by wrapping a layer around reality. It is a layer of augmentation which enhances the perception of the reality(Fast Track, 2013, p.4). It is a way of overlaying computer graphics on to the reality. In this way we do not alter the reality but add more features to the reality. In AR we use hand held devices or head mount display (HMD) which may be see through or overlay graphics or animation around the reality giving more information about the reality(Billinghurst, 2002, p.12).

AR is not Mediated Reality

Mediated reality is the ability to add and subtract details from the existing reality to improve the human perception, using hand held or wearable devices(Wiki, computer mediated reality). Here there is an element of modifying the reality or altering the reality. But AR does not alter the reality to change human perception. It only adds information to enhance the human perception (Fast Track, 2013, p.9).

AR is not Virtual Reality

Virtual reality is an imaginary reality, not real. It is an environment or reality created with the aids of computer and graphics to produce the so called reality(Fast Track, 2013, p.9). The user is immersed into the created reality which is constituted with graphics, sound, animation and sometimes smell also to give the user the utmost feeling of a really existing environment (Brooks, 1999, p.16). Whereas augmented reality is not imaginative or artificial. It is the existing world with added features. In this way it completely differs from the virtual and imaginary reality (Steuer, 1992).

The Technology of Augmented Reality

Augmented reality is a reality with some enhancement, in this way it can very well be called as enhanced reality. The question of 'how a reality can be enhanced?' remains unanswered still. Augmented reality is implemented in real time directly or indirectly. It requires computer generated sensory input such as image, sound, text, animation, GPS data and so on (AR in Wikipedia).

The augmented reality requires both hardware and software. The hardware requirements are processor, display, input devices, sensors and which may be used in handheld devices, smartphones (Metz, 2012). The hardware components of augmented reality includes Head mount displays, eyeglasses, contact lenses, virtual retinal display, Head-up displays, eye tap and other hand held devices (AR in Wikipedia).

Augmented reality is not restricted to vision alone. It can be applied to other senses like touch, hearing, smell and so on (Azuma, 2001). The primary aspect of augmented reality is seamlessly integrating the augmented reality with the real environment. It needs accurate measurements and efficient algorithms for metrics. Augmented Reality Markup Languages are also used for presenting the augmented reality (AR in Wikipedia).

The simple architecture for the augmented reality would be as shown in Figure 1, where the reality is enhanced with additional details collected from the internet then it is added to the reality and presented to the user to change his or her perception.
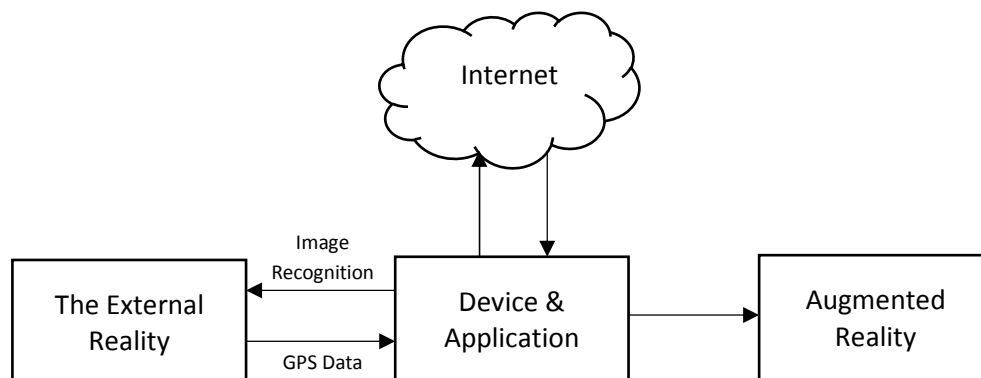
Figure 1. Simple Architecture of Augmented Reality

The external world is viewed through the device. Using the software present in the device which may be image recognition, GPS data and so on, the device recognizes the point of interest (POI) in the real world. The point of interest could be data like GPS coordinates, distance, location history, speed, color, temperature and many other properties of interest (Hamilton, 2011). They are then used to compare and fetch more information from the internet. The collected useful information are filtered and presented through the display to the user as the augmented reality (Fast Track, 2013, p.12).

Augmented reality does not end with the smartphone. There are many types of augmented reality like Projection based AR, Recognition based AR, Location based AR, Outlining AR, Superimposition based AR and so on (Fast Track, 2013, pp. 25-31).

Augmented Reality in Education

Education is an interactive process of learning. The more interactive it is, the better and the quicker the learning becomes. In this way there is still a preference for physical text books due to the favor of physicality, transportability, flexibility, robustness etc.(Pasereti, 2011). But still augmented reality can enhance the physical text by adding more information to them all. The text, video, graphics, animation, sound etc. can be superimposed on the reality to give more information to the learners (PRWeb, 2011).

AR Text Books

The traditional learning tools of textbooks, blackboard and other materials are not expected to be thrown away. But we can have the same with the difference of special markers on them. So that when they are looked with AR devices such as smartphones, Head mounted display, eye glasses etc. they would automatically project information more than what is present in them (Stewart-smith, 2012). For example, the image of TajMahal printed on the book along with the embedded special markers can automatically reveal for the user with AR device the additional details about the weather condition, the height, width, area, nearby locations etc. In this way it would automatically enhance learning process and the student need not go to various other places for learning the additional details (Lubrecht, 2012).

AR for Children

Children always learn better with example objects. We still have the method of teaching 'A for apple and B for ball'. Now a days the play way method has come to make the learning process more involved and interactive. In this regard augmented reality can play a very important role by enhancing the reality with additional information. The learning objects for the children, the models present can be embedded with special markers and may be a push button. When they are handled by the children they can project more information regarding the object, which may be in the form of graphics, video, animation, sound, taste etc. (Fast Track, 2013, p.4).

AR for Technical Education

Technical education mostly trains people for specific trades, crafts and career. It concentrates on imparting more technical knowledge to the student on a particular field. To take for example the mechanical engineering can make use of the AR to give more information constructing 3D objects. Like virtual reality it can also provide simulation using the real time objects. AR provides a method of viewing the 3D objects and other properties which were only imagined by the students earlier. Now they can see the spatial problems and the spatial relationships and the learning becomes more effective. The software applications and some hardware devices become very handy in this process of simulated, interactive learning using augmented reality (Kaufmann, 2003).

AR for Distance Learning

Distance learning is a mode of education where the student and the teacher are separated by time and space. The student is not present physically as in the traditional mode of education (Honeyman, 1993). Augmented reality will be of great help to students of distance learning more than the others, since they have no teacher to clarify their doubts. AR provides all the additional information in the form of text, video, animation, graphics and sound through the devices and learning materials giving the experience of seamless learning to the student. The recorded lectures of the teacher, the visual explanation of the problems and theory, the 3D models of the specific subject content can very well be prepared and be embedded. When the student accesses the learning materials, which may be textbooks, CDs, Videos or any other forms, through the AR devices the information becomes active and vivid. The student can continue to interact with them. Any further clarification could be recorded to be sent to the teacher for review (AR in Education, 2011).

Conclusion

Augmented reality is a recent technology which is not very prevalent in the field of education. But it has got the potential to overthrow all the traditional means of learning. It would certainly pave the way for a new mode of learning overshadowing the traditional institutionalized learning. Moreover it would enhance and facilitate the distance and remote learning methods. The students would no more require the teacher in real time. The student would need only the text materials which are embedded with all the additional information. The teacher would be needed only for the preparation of text materials as well as for reviewing the feedbacks from the student. Augmented reality is certainly an efficient, effective and robust method in the field of education.

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LEADERSHIP BEHAVIOUR OF SECONDARY SCHOOL HEADS IN RELATION TO ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

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Introduction

In a comprehensive review of leadership theories, several different categories were identified by Stogdill (1974) that capture the essence of the study of leadership in the twentieth century. The first category dealt with the attributes of great leaders. Leadership was explained by the internal qualities with which a person is born. The thought was that if the traits that differentiated leaders from followers could be identified, successful leaders could be quickly identified and put into positions of leadership, Personality, physical, and mental characteristics were examined. This research was based on the idea that leaders were born, not made, and the key to success was simple in identifying those people who were born to be great leaders. Through much research was done to identify the traits, on clear answer was found with regard to which traits consistently were associated with great leadership. One flaw with this line of thought was in ignoring the situational and environmental factors that play a role in a leader's level of effectiveness.

Significance of the Study

Importance of the Head of the school as a leader in a secondary school situation has been discussed above at length. To emphasize it again, Head of secondary school owes a great responsibility to the nation in setting right the temples of learning where future of the youth is shaped. They play an important, predominant role in the making of these institutions. It is a common experience that, social climate of a secondary school is chiefly determined by leadership behaviour of its Head master. It is the Head of the school who mainly exerts leadership for the welfare of his school. But for his leadership, the secondary school cannot progress and show notable results. This suggests that there is an immediate need for research in this field. It is however, noted that in India, adequate attention has not so far been given to the leadership behaviour of Head of school.

Brief Review of Literature

Patel(1983) found in the study that, No significant differences were found between male and female administrators as perceived by teachers and by themselves on 'initiating structure' and 'consideration.' Jayajothi (1992) revealed, female teachers had a better perception about the leadership and teacher morale. Cekay (1999) supportive leadership contributed significantly in the creation and implementation of the violence prevention programme at all three schools studied. Bonton (2002) the teachers' perceptions of principal's leadership behaviour were associated with school level, number of hours of professional leadership development, and student performance. Mthenjwa (2003) found it is true that heads are the central players in their schools success. Adenuga (2008) It was recommended among others that principals' and head of schools should be subjected to regular training a workshops boost their effectiveness and efficiency. Karabasanagoudra A.V (2011) stated that, head master might be more democrative as demanded by circumstances and hence are perceived to be so by teachers. Basu mudassir (2012) said that, Low Co-relation Exists Between Occupational efficacy and Administration behaviour of in effective educational Administrator.

Statement of the Problem

A Study of Leadership Behaviour of Secondary School Heads In Relation To Organizational Culture of Belgaum City

Objectives of the study

- To study the relationship between male and female heads of schools with respect to leadership behaviour and its dimensions i.e. consideration and initiating structure
- To study the relationship between male and female heads of schools with respect to organizational culture and its dimensions i.e. openness, confrontation, trust, authenticity, pro-action, autonomy, collaboration and experimentation.

Hypotheses of the Study

- There is no significant difference between male and female heads of schools with respect to leadership behaviour and its dimensions i.e. consideration and initiating structure.
- There is no significant difference between male and female heads of schools with respect to organizational culture and its dimensions i.e. openness, confrontation, trust, authenticity, pro-action, autonomy, collaboration and experimentation.

Methodology

The researcher used descriptive method for the present study. The sample of the study was selected from Belgaum City. The investigator has used the random sampling technique. In Belgaum City the investigator has selected only 30 schools have been selected based on the total number of schools each category of management (Government-   aided-   and un-aided-   ). The data was collected from 30 Heads of schools and 150 assistant teachers. The investigator personally collected the data from 30 Heads of secondary schools and 150 assistant teachers of Belgaum City.

Data Analysis and Results

Table-1. Results of t test between male and female heads of secondary schools with respect to leadership behaviour and its dimensions

Variable	Sex	n	Mean	SD	t-value	p-value	Signi.
Leadership behaviour	Male	71	136.73	28.12	5.5003	<0.05	S
	Female	109	116.93	20.15			
Consideration	Male	71	79.89	16.78	5.3914	<0.05	S
	Female	109	68.04	12.65			
Initiating structure	Male	71	56.85	12.71	4.5207	<0.05	S
	Female	109	48.89	10.71			

From the results of the above table, it can be seen that the followings:

1. A significant difference is observed between male and female heads of secondary schools with respect to leadership behaviour scores (t=5.5003, p<0.05) at 0.05 level of significance. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected and alternative hypothesis is accepted. It means that, the male heads have higher leadership behaviour scores as compared to female heads of secondary schools.
2. A significant difference is observed between male and female heads of secondary schools with respect to dimension of leadership behaviour i.e. consideration scores (t=5.3914, p<0.05) at 0.05 level of significance. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected and

alternative hypothesis is accepted. It means that, the male heads have significant higher consideration scores as compared to female heads of secondary schools.

3. A significant difference is observed between male and female heads of secondary schools with respect to dimension of leadership behaviour i.e. initiating structure scores (t=4.5207, p<0.05) at 0.05 level of significance. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected and alternative hypothesis is accepted. It means that, the male heads have higher initiating structure scores as compared to female heads of secondary schools. The mean scores of leadership behaviour scores are also presented in the following figure.

Table-2. Results of t test between male and female heads of secondary schools with respect to organizational culture and its dimensions

Variable	Sex	n	Mean	SD	t-value	p-value	Signi.
Organizational culture	Male	71	114.54	10.83	2.4405	<0.05	S
	Female	109	110.92	8.92			
Openness	Male	71	14.85	3.13	1.7736	>0.05	NS
	Female	109	14.07	2.66			
Confrontation	Male	71	15.10	1.94	2.1627	<0.05	S
	Female	109	14.45	1.99			
Trust	Male	71	14.97	2.47	0.7880	>0.05	NS
	Female	109	14.68	2.41			
Authenticity	Male	71	11.85	3.04	-0.8787	>0.05	NS
	Female	109	12.21	2.51			
Pro-action	Male	71	16.61	3.06	2.4628	<0.05	S
	Female	109	15.53	2.72			
Autonomy	Male	71	12.54	2.19	0.4295	>0.05	NS
	Female	109	12.40	1.88			
Collaboration	Male	71	13.82	2.26	0.3706	>0.05	NS
	Female	109	13.70	2.02			
Experimentation	Male	71	14.82	2.01	2.8255	<0.05	S
	Female	109	13.96	1.96			

From the results of the above table, it can be seen that the followings:

1. A significant difference is observed between male and female heads of secondary schools with respect to organizational culture scores (t=2.4405, p<0.05) at 0.05 level of significance. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected and alternative hypothesis is accepted. It means that, the male heads have higher organizational culture scores as compared to female heads of secondary schools.

2. A non-significant difference is observed between male and female heads of secondary schools with respect to dimension of organizational culture i.e. culture scale scores (t=1.7736, p<0.05) at 0.05 level of significance. Hence, the null hypothesis is accepted and alternative hypothesis is rejected. It means that, the male and female heads of secondary schools have similar culture scale scores.

3. A significant difference is observed between male and female heads of secondary schools with respect to dimension of organizational culture i.e. confrontation scores (t=2.1627, p<0.05) at 0.05 level of significance. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected

and alternative hypothesis is accepted. It means that, the male heads have higher confrontation scores as compared to female heads of secondary schools.

4. A non-significant difference is observed between male and female heads of secondary schools with respect to dimension of organizational culture i.e. trust scores (t=0.7880, p>0.05) at 0.05 level of significance. Hence, the null hypothesis is accepted and alternative hypothesis is rejected. It means that, the male and female heads of secondary schools have similar trust scores.

5. A non- significant difference is observed between male and female heads of secondary schools with respect to dimension of organizational culture i.e. authenticity scores (t=-0.8787, p>0.05) at 0.05 level of significance. Hence, the null hypothesis is accepted and alternative hypothesis is rejected. It means that, the male and female heads of secondary schools have similar authenticity scores.

6. A significant difference is observed between male and female heads of secondary schools with respect to dimension of organizational culture i.e. pro-action scores (t=2.4628, p<0.05) at 0.05 level of significance. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected and alternative hypothesis is accepted. It means that, the male heads have higher pro-action scores as compared to female heads of secondary schools.

7. A non-significant difference is observed between male and female heads of secondary schools with respect to dimension of organizational culture i.e. autonomy scores (t=0.4295, p>0.05) at 0.05 level of significance. Hence, the null hypothesis is accepted and alternative hypothesis is rejected. It means that, the male and female heads of secondary schools have similar autonomy scores.

8. A non-significant difference is observed between male and female heads of secondary schools with respect to dimension of organizational culture i.e. collaboration scores (t=0.3706, p>0.05) at 0.05 level of significance. Hence, the null hypothesis is accepted and alternative hypothesis is rejected. It means that, the male and female heads of secondary schools have similar collaboration scores.

9. A significant difference is observed between male and female heads of secondary schools with respect to dimension of organizational culture i.e. experimentation scores (t=2.8255, p<0.05) at 0.05 level of significance. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected and alternative hypothesis is accepted. It means that, the males heads have higher experimentation scores as compared to female heads of secondary schools. The mean scores of organizational culture scores are also presented in the following figure.

Major Findings of the Study

- The male heads have higher leadership behaviour scores as compared to female heads of secondary schools.
- The male heads have significant higher consideration scores as compared to female heads of secondary schools.
- The male heads have higher initiating structure scores as compared to female heads of secondary schools.
- The male heads have higher organizational culture scores as compared to female heads of secondary schools.
- The male heads have higher confrontation scores as compared to female heads of secondary schools.
- The male heads have higher pro-action scores as compared to female heads of secondary schools.
- The male heads have higher experimentation scores as compared to female heads of secondary schools.

Educational Implications of the Study
- The major findings of the present study proved that leadership behaviour of the Heads of the schools are very much related to the leadership behaviour of Heads of schools and organizational culture of the schools.
- There is a need to give primary importance in rural area schools to improve the school culture. There should be provision for a systematic, planned, academic training with all types of Heads at least once in two years.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the present study shows that leadership behaviour of the Heads of the schools are due to the influence of organizational culture of the schools. The effective leadership behaviour, the impact of organizational culture would lead not only to better performance of school students and teachers but also good quality education. Whatever is leadership behaviour of the Heads, it needs to be effective. The study reveals that any leadership behaviour of a Head of school will affect any member of school in one way or the other; only the degree of influence differs.

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QUALITY ASSURANCE IN DISTANCE AND OPEN EDUCATION – A CASE STUDY OF UniSIM

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Conceptual Framework

Quality is the degree to which an object (entity) [e.g., process, product, or service] satisfies a specified set of attributes or requirements. The quality of something can be determined by comparing a set of inherent characteristics with a set of requirements. If those inherent characteristics meet all requirements, high or excellent quality is achieved. If those characteristics do not meet all requirements, a low or poor level of quality is achieved. Quality is, therefore, a question of degree.. According to this definition, quality is a relative concept. As quality is linked with requirements, the quality of something cannot be established in a vacuum Quality is a subjective term for which each person or sector has its own definition. In technical usage, quality can have two meanings: 1. The characteristics of a product or service that bear on its ability to satisfy stated or implied needs; 2. A product or service free of deficiencies. Thus, Quality means "fitness for use" as well as "conformance to requirements".

Quality Assurance in Distance and Open Education: Trends and Developments

Agencies such as European Network of Quality Assurance (ENQA), International Network of Quality Assurance Agencies for Higher Education (INQAAHE), and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), typically work together and share information about quality standards, benchmarks and best practices. A number of terminologies have been developed and used to refer to similar ideas of improving the quality of higher education, such as quality assurance, quality assessment, quality improvement, and quality development (Harman, 2000; Brennan & Shah, 2000; Hopkin & Lee, 2001; Gosling & D'Andrea, 2001). Higher education institutions are challenged to develop new visions, new forms of collaboration across institutions and nations (Harman, 2000). Brennan and Shah (2000) use the term 'quality assessment,' whose common methods and elements include 1) a national coordinating body; 2) institutional self evaluation; 3) external evaluation by academic peers; and 4) published reports. Quality assurance in distance and open education has gained serious attention by institutions, stakeholders, and scholars.

Numerous reports have been published to share ideas, experiences, and articulate the 'how and how not to' and 'best practices' of QA implementation in DE contexts from around the world (Deshpande & Mugridge, 1994; Tait, 1997). Stakeholders interested in ODL have become increasingly interested in quality assurance issues. Learners are demanding better quality educational services and provisions. This means ODL providers must pay close attention to quality in terms of products, processes, production, delivery systems, and philosophy (COL, 1997). The 'total quality approach,' which covers not only products but services and processes as well, is a very useful methodology that holistically examines the process of ODL as an integrated whole (Zuhairi, Purwanto & Isman, 2002). Quality in ODL

covers a number of aspects, which along with the physical products, includes pedagogical processes, production and delivery systems, and philosophy (COL, 1997). Quality of products includes course materials, number of graduates, examination pass rates, admission in further studies, and so forth. Quality of processes
covers areas such as learning and teaching processes, advising students, coordinating external course and test item writers, networking with regional offices, managing student information. Quality of production and delivery systems includes course production, print and multimedia production, test item production, scheduling, warehousing and stock control, getting materials to students, and broadcast transmissions. Quality of philosophy covers such things as ODL vision, mission and policy statements, institutional culture, governance, corporate culture, and public image (COL, 1997).

Rationale of the present Study:

Implementing QA principles in a DE institution is a monumental task. The Quality of ODL varies from one institution to another, depending on priorities, resources, size, and the student body of which it aims to serve (COL, 1997). For instance, ODL institutions in developed countries typically use ICT-based courses, while institutions in developing countries use printed materials as its primary medium of instructional delivery. The use of ICT in ODL in the developing country like India is still at experimental stages, and even though many institutions are ready to experiment with modern ICT-based courses, access and participation by students is still relatively low. It is the challenge for institutions in a developing country like India to ensure Quality Assurance in Distance and Open Education. The present paper is a case study of UniSIM's Quality Assurance system, based on the first author's visit to the SIM University, Singapore's first privately-funded not-for-profit University in 2011. An in-depth study using Participant Observation Technique throws light on the internal processes, external scrutiny and internal audit mechanism of the University. The lessons drawn will be highly beneficial for improving the Quality of Open Education in India.

Genesis and Growth:

SIM is a large provider of private tertiary and professional training in Singapore. It was founded in 1964 as a membership society under the Singapore Economic Development Board to develop business management skills. It now has over 33,000 corporate and individual members, and three divisions: SIM University, SIM Professional Development and SIM Global Education. The latter, which offers degree programmes from a range of overseas universities and institutions, is the University of London International Programme's link; the agreement is with the Singapore Institute of Management Pte Ltd. SIM has comprehensive campus facilities and was among the first private educational institutions to be registered under the Enhanced Registration Framework (ERF). It was awarded EduTrust certification in May 2010 following a submission in which staff at the University and the lead colleges were closely involved.SIM University is Singapore's only private university with a mission to create excellence in lifelong education through a uniquely-designed learning experience that equips learners for a better future. Established in 2005, the university is started as a result of the Singapore Government mandate to set up a university for working adults. In 2012, it is announced that UniSIM will be granted National University status and will become the republic's 6th national university. The university initially admitted only part-time students but begin to offer full-time publicly funded university places starting 2014. In October 2013, it an announced that/ was UniSIM has been selected to house Singapore's third law school. Though a private university, eligible students are able to enjoy government tuition fee

subsidy, government loans and bursaries for their undergraduate education. The university is managed separately from the SIM Global Education arm of the Singapore Institute of Management Group.

Relevant and innovative program curricula:

The basic UniSIM bachelor's degree program is modular, consisting of 130 credit units (CU) of courses; for an honors degree, 40 more CUs are needed. Other programs, e.g., the Bachelor of Electronics program, are direct honors requiring 170 CUs of studies. Limited credit exemptions are given for suitable entry qualifications.

The slogan used for the programs is "learn today, apply tomorrow," enabling the working adults to bring their learning to their workplace, sometimes applying it immediately. Market relevance is achieved through various means, including:

- Market Orientation of Content
- Input from Industry
- Content and Assignments/projects with extensive Industry components
- Regular Curriculum reviews
- Having many AF with relevant Industry experience
- Joining with Industry to provide learning and
- Aligning Curricula to Professional Accreditation Requirements.

Additionally, UniSIM develops programs in niche disciplines to satisfy a need for qualification upgrading in an industry/ organization. Examples are Malay Language and Literature, Counseling, Aerospace Systems, and Management and Security Studies for the Singapore Police Force. UniSIM's modular structure enables it to mix and match courses to develop new programs.

Accreditation is one measure of quality that assures stakeholders that programs meet external quality standards and graduates are well-prepared for the professions. Accreditation with professional bodies is sought at the earliest opportunity. Such programs include Electronic Engineering, Counseling, and Social Work. Others have within their curriculum opportunities for professional certification (e.g., SAP, Oracle, and Blue Coat in ICT), giving students an added advantage in the workplace.

Quality Assurance Unit

The Quality Assurance Unit has the mandate to foster a quality culture in UniSIM that seeks to continually improve the University's provision of academic and administrative services. For this purpose, the unit operates a system of quality reviews for the schools and departments. It also assists the University in fulfilling its statutory obligations as a private university in Singapore.

Quality Assurance of International Programmes:

Students at SIM felt that there would be no difficulty for them in raising any issues that concerned them, citing SIM's Student Helpdesk as their first point of contact and one with a track record of producing rapid and effective responses. Feedback from students is obtained through many different routes, both formal and informal. Informal approaches include liaison between the programme directors and academic coordinators at International Programmes and SIM, visits by academics to SIM, monitoring the information on social networking sites such as Twitter and Facebook, drawing together any comments, feedback from the external study Audit of overseas provision: Singapore 12 weekend at LSE, and a VLE discussion forum. Additionally, programme directors regularly meet students and correspond with them through email and on the VLE. A formal mechanism is the online

external undergraduate student experience survey which includes questions on students' experience of support from institutions. There was a particularly high response rate from Singapore-based students, who comprised 56 per cent of the total respondents. The various strands of student feedback are brought together and considered through the college-based process of Annual Programme and Planning Review (APPR) with the reports also being considered by the Quality Assurance and Student Lifecycle Sub-Committee. An example of student views resulting in a change of practice was requests for enhanced feedback on examinations leading to the production of examiners' commentaries which give generic advice on answering exam questions. SIM seeks its own evaluations by students of various aspects of the course and its support package, including the associate lecturers and SIM services, using both structured surveys and the student portal through which students may provide feedback at any time. Students found in no doubt that there were multiple channels available to them to express their views. The University recognises that some of its International Programmes students may associate more closely with the local institution where they study, and is taking steps to increase students' sense of belonging to the University: one example of this is issuing each student with their own University of London email account. There is also a growing focus on alumni, with over 18,000 graduates registered with the Alumni Association. In general, students felt that they were associated with both SIM and the London University, and did not seem to think that their student identity was an issue. Effectiveness of day-to-day management the University has well-established and effective arrangements for day-to-day management of its relationship with SIM both through its clear lines of International Academy administrative liaison and through the academic links established by the lead colleges. The University had been limited its ability to analyse fully the progression of its students at different institutions, but the installation of a new MIS and the collection of student data through the new annual monitoring process provide the opportunity for more effective analysis and resultant action. The multiple informal and formal channels for student feedback which SIM uses help to ensure that the student voice is being heard and acted upon.

Arrangements for monitoring and review

There are two distinct sets of monitoring and review processes those that apply to the academic programmes and include Annual Programme and Planning Review, Programme Periodic Review and subject reviews (where these exist). Responsibility for these is set out in the quality schedule of the contract. Those that are part of the IQAF apply to the independent institutions and are administered by the International Academy. The former are considered by QASL, the latter by ISC, and the two sets are brought together at the International Academy Academic Committee (IAAC). In addition and complementary to the above, occasional thematic reviews provide a horizontal view of a particular theme across the range of International Programmes;

Annual review of programmes

Each international academic programme is subject to a process of Annual Programme and Planning Review (APPR) and leading to an Annual Programme Report which is considered by the QASL sub-committee. The report is in two sections: Section A deals with quality and standards, includes the external examiners' reports and responses to them, and is publicly available; Section B deals with business and operational matters, marketing and the strategic direction of the programme and is available on request. The Section A reports of the EMFSS and CIS programmes were commendably comprehensive and evaluative with effective oversight maintained by QASL. Programme teams also annually review and, if

necessary, revise programme specifications: the versions for the current and previous four academic years are published on the International Programmes website.The aim of the IAM is to monitor ongoing progress by the recognised centre through consideration of a completed report form, which will capture information with a particular focus on student performance'. The booklet goes on to say that 'the monitoring exercise will consider qualitative information pertaining to the recognised centre's organisation and administration, and the student experience, including changes to resources and facilities'. The longer term aim is that successive rounds of annual monitoring will feed into the periodic review process.In the first round of annual monitoring, institutions were asked to supply information on the results of those students that were registered with them in sufficient detail so that it could be correlated with and verified against the University's own records. This would provide initial data for an ongoing analysis of student performance at recognised centres, which was seen as an essential benchmark for supporting students. Institutions were also requested to supply information about academic and administrative staffing provision. The initial contribution to annual monitoring by SIM consisted of a summary report of institution registration statistics and a large collection of data sheets relating to individual students.Singapore needs with what can reasonably be expected of institutions and to avoid imposing oppressive requirements. The Corporate Performance and Quality Directorate has recognised the imperfections in the process and the need to get institutions to engage more fully with students' results, and intends to refine the process for the second round. Those institutions that failed to respond at all to the annual monitoring request will be required to do so within a given time in line with the written agreement. the process of annual monitoring needed further development. In particular, a more analytical approach would be needed if the process was to fulfil the aspirations of the IQAF for qualitative information pertaining to the student experience and to provide a useful input to the institution review cycle, where it should be both feeding into periodic review and a means of monitoring review outcomes. The team encourages the University to continue to develop the annual monitoring process for institutions so that it will more fully meet the expectations of the IQAF and provide a stronger foundation for periodic review of institutions. SIM staff who had been involved in coordinating SIM's response to the first round of annual monitoring expected it to be an evolving process and were confident that they would be able to meet the University's requirements. They believed that their own systems, experience of internal quality assurance and commitment to continual improvement would facilitate the process.

Conclusion

In the first ten years since its formation, UniSIM has firmly placed a priority on the quality of its people, processes, programs and provisions. This is a never-ending journey to keep improving and raising the standards. The Knowledge and experience of Quality assurance in UniSIM reveals the respective development of QA System and procedures within this provider. It has unfolded the good practices in Quality Assurance for Distance Education, analyse the challenges in assuring the quality of DE products and services, offer possible solutions to meet those challenges and present lessons for the Distance Education providers for a developing country like India.

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SELF INSTRUCTIONAL MODELS FOR DISTANCE EDUCATION LEARNERS

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Introduction

Distance learning is the major core system in the present higher education system to reach unreached in India. The system could not accommodate the learners like formal system and unable to provide learning experiences. The learning materials of distance mode quite different and it should more effective to make the distance learner to learn with their own pace and convenient. Modular approach plays a prominent role in the present day teaching learning process. 5E Instructional Model. That model consists of the following phases: engagement, exploration, explanation, elaboration, and evaluation. This instructional emphasis for the different phases. They not only supplement the teacher but also enrich the content. They also provide a unique experience to the learner in the presentation of the content. This article seeks to create opportunities for self Instructional Models for Distance Education Learners to publish empirical and conceptual research that advances our understanding of the complex work of teaching and teacher education. It incorporated a lot of activities that ensure active learning.

Instructional Models:

- *Engagement:* The teacher or a curriculum task accesses the learners' prior knowledge and helps them become engaged in a new concept through the use of short activities that promote curiosity and elicit prior knowledge. The activity should make connections between past and present learning experiences, expose prior conceptions, and organize students' thinking toward the learning outcomes of current activities.

- *Exploration:* Exploration experiences provide students with a common base of activities within which current concepts (i.e., misconceptions), processes, and skills are identified and conceptual change is facilitated. Learners may complete lab activities that help them use prior knowledge to generate new ideas, explore questions and possibilities, and design and conduct a preliminary investigation.

- *Explanation:* The explanation phase focuses students' attention on a particular aspect of their engagement and exploration experiences and provides opportunities to demonstrate their conceptual understanding, process skills, or behaviors. This phase also provides opportunities for teachers to directly introduce a concept, process, or skill. Learners explain their understanding of the concept. An explanation from the teacher or the curriculum may guide them toward a deeper understanding, which is a critical part of this phase.

- *Elaboration:* Teachers challenge and extend students' conceptual understanding and skills. Through new experiences, the students develop deeper and broader understanding, more information, and adequate skills. Students apply their understanding of the concept by conducting additional activities.

- *Evaluation:* The evaluation phase encourages students to assess their understanding and abilities and provides opportunities for teachers to evaluate student progress toward achieving the educational objectives.

Distance Education

Change or enhance your career prospects wherever you are - rural, metropolitan or overseas fit study around work, social or family commitments. Study at home in your

convenient time. Vary your study load to suit your schedule - full-time or part-time distance study is available with many degrees. Develop and demonstrate your autonomy through self-motivation and self-direction of your degree. Be included in uni life through contact with other students through online learning environment, residential schools and through direct contact with your lecturers via the forum, email or by phone. It has time to review your study materials without having to rush off to the next class. As a distance education student study wherever, whenever and whatever you want. It's your choice don't have to worry about being at lectures and tutorials at times that may not fit in with your lifestyle. Have the convenience of course materials being delivered to your home or office. Usually study two subjects per session, with each subject needing around 8 - 10 hours of study per week. Have both full-time and part-time study options often available so you can vary your study load to fit in with your schedule - from one subject per session to four or five.

Self-Learning

It helps to understand the processes involved in this mode of study. There are four Commutative tools for self-learning – Being ready to learn, Setting learning goals, Engaging in the learning process and evaluating learning.

Being Ready to Learn

Various skills and attitudes towards learning are required for successful independent study .This step requires time for analyzing a student's current situation, study habits, family situation and support network both at school and at home – and as they continue in the program, progress in degree program and past units taken that will prove useful. Signs of readiness for self-directed learning include being: autonomous, organized, self-disciplined, and able to communicate effectively, able to accept constructive feedback and engage in self-evaluation and self-reflection.

Setting Learning Goals

Communication of learning goals between a student and the advising faculty member is critical. Learning contracts are highly recommended tools for successful self-directed learning experiences. Learning contracts generally include: Goals for the unit of study Structure and sequence of activities, timeline for completion of activities, details about resource materials for each goals, details about grading procedures. A section for advising faculty member feedback and evaluation as each goal is completed.

Engaging in the Learning Process

Students need to understand themselves as learners in order to understand their needs as self-directed learning students.

- *Deep approach involves transforming*– to understand ideas for yourself. Be able to apply knowledge to new situations and use novel examples to explain a concept, learn more than is required for unit completion – most ideal for self-directed learning.
- *Surface approach involves reproducing*– to cope with unit requirements. Learn only what is required to complete unit in good standing. Tend to regurgitate examples and explanations used in readings.
- *Strategic approach involves organizing*– to achieve the highest possible grades. Learn what is required to pass exams. Memorize facts as given in lecture. Spend much time practicing from past exams. Be most concerned whether material will appear on exam.

Evaluating Learning

Students must be able to engage in self-reflection and self-evaluation of learning goals and progress in a unit of study. Students should regularly consult with the advising faculty members. Students should be able to engage in self-validation of achievements but, should have the motivation to seek feedback on progress and ideas from the advising faculty members or other available resources.

Conclusion

Twenty-first century learners will need to become highly self- learning, equipped to effectively continue to address their learning needs throughout their lives. The role of the teacher as facilitator in designing and using instructional strategies which enable students effectively to direct their own learning is essential in enhancing Self- Learning. Teachers, professors, and teacher trainers need to become learning facilitators, moving away from classroom approaches in which their students are merely passive recipients of the knowledge of others. These modules should be validated before execution. Instructional modules are extensively used in different situations for efficient learning. The special features of a module are validated tested material, mass produced for use in institutions for learning different subjects, participants or learner explicit and specially suited for individual self-learning.

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ENRICHING OPPORTUNITIES TO THE SCHOOL DROPOUTS THROUGH OPEN SCHOOL SYSTEM IN EAST GODAVARI DISTRICT - A STUDY

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Introduction

Education is the only means to enhance the abilities to live suitably in the elite and knowledge society. Education is the instrument for exploration of rationality behind the scientific and technological devices that enriches the joyful living in the world. In the early days of civilization, education limited to certain sections of the people in the society. Formal Education, the gurukula system limited to the elite section of the society. The Distance Education became an alternative to the formal class-room teaching breaking down the boundaries of the four walls of the class-room to global class-room. The introduction and advent of ICT Information and Communication Technology into the Education system, the distance education became a revamped to Open and Distance Learning . Now the ODL a grand system that break down the domestic walls of the country and inducted the learners to the global family of Open and Distance Learning .With the advent of ODL all the state governments in India introducing the system of Open University to facilitate the inspiring and aspiring learners from the sectors . This system became a novel and modern method that stand as alternative education to the formal system of education. Andhra Pradesh Government recently introduced a novel attempt by establishing a Andhra Pradesh Open Schools System (APOOS) a measure to break down the school drop outs number and to bring them into an easy and learner friendly open school system at the Secondary school level. A Study have been taken up to establish facts that how far the APOOS in East Godavari District flourished in fulfilling its objectives with the following:

Objectives:

- To Study how far the APOOS in East Godavari District fulfilled its objectives.
- To study whether the regional centers are established in the district are sufficient to run the system
- To study whether the centers are performing well or falling back.?
- To study the system became an alternative to the drop outs?

Hypothesis

- The APOOS in East Godavari District working with true spirit of APOSS.
- The number of regional centers are sufficient for running the system
- The regional centers are running well
- The school drop outs are admitting into the APOOS promptly to curb drop outs.

Methodology

To proceed with the project, separate questionnaires are prepare to get the required information from the sample. The questionnaires are administered on the sample, the first hand information collected for analysis. All the stakeholders of the Andhra Pradesh Open School Society in the East Godavari District , i.e. District Education Officer , District Coordinator , and the coordinators at the school level are taken and considered as the population to the study , From the population the sample is drawn and the children(students) at the schools are included in the sample to arrive conclusions to the study.

Data analysis and Findings

Andhra Pradesh Open School Society established with broad objectives m to enrich the enrollment in the schools and bring the school drop outs to the mainstream of school education, it became an alternative to the formal schooling , at the inception it aimed to bring back the children at primary / elementary level to the mainstream , the momentum of the open school system achieved more than its expectation . To bring down the child labor and the social evil will be eradicated with this alternative education system. Encouraged by the results that achieved in the short span of 10 years i.e. 1991 to 2001, the open school society extended the facility to the secondary level i.e. upto 10th Standard , Overwhelmed with the progress , the society started Intermediate Course i.e. + 2 system .The present study is conducted meticulously and came to the conclusion with following hypothesis wise analysis.

Hypothesis-I : *"The APOSS in East Godavari District working with true spirit of APOSS".*

Andhra Pradesh Open School s Society established by the Government of Andhra Pradesh , with a view to eradicate child labor and bring back the drop outs from the schools to the main stream of the elementary education in the year 1991 , since its inception the APOSS striving its best establishing land mark victory in fulfilling the spirit of arresting the child labor practice in the society , especially in the identified areas like scheduled castes, scheduled tribes and backward classes of the society. According the figures and facts that disclosed by the District Authorities of the APOSS reveals that Gross Enrollment Rate in these schools are encouraging and became an alternative system to people who are deprived of the chance to study and inspired to acquire knowledge at minimum educational echelons . The sectors like physically challenged, women, employed and part time employees are usually getting admissions in this society, thus it is fulfilling the spirit of APOSS. Hence the hypothesis that *The APOSS in East Godavari District working with true spirit of APOSS is proved positive* .

Hypothesis II : " *The number of regional centers are sufficient for running the system."*

The District Administration in the district is very crucial and concern about the propagation and promoting the open school system in the district to the gross level. As the open schooling became popular, in the public and is running parallel to the regular school education activities , some of the teachers from the main system are deputed to the APOSS, initially the number of schools with APOSS is very minimal but now nearly 112 schools with each school per a mandal (Taluk/ Tahsil) are running with true spirit in promoting the open schools. More over the craze for 10 th standard and +2 level is increased enormously and partially employed . women enrollment is promising. All the schools with open schools are sufficient enough with the work load and running the system uninterruptedly. Hence the hypothesis II The number of regional centers are sufficient for running the system is proved positive.

Hypothesis III *: "The regional centers are running well."*

All the regional centers at the schools are equipped with the material supplied by APOSS , the infrastructural facilities are on hire and or share with the regular school infrastructure , the faculties from the schools are deployed to conduct contact classes at the scheduled intervals and regular academic activities are being monitored by a team of teachers engaged especially entrusted to look-after the educational welfare of the enrolled numbers . the printed material in the form of books on par with the regular stream , the work books , assignments , etc will be circulated to the learners. All the qualified and the authorized

faculty will conduct the classes . All the faculty engaged in the system are working with true spirit. Hence the centers are running well. Hence the hypothesis " the regional centers are running well " proved positive .

Hypothesis IV :   " The school drop outs are admitting into the APOOS promptly to curb drop outs".

The rural areas in Andhra Pradesh suffered and suffering from the social evils , people with rude behavior and uncivilized happenings are common phenomenon. To avoid and arrest such uncivil activities , policy makers discovered and diagnosed the defect lies with the illiteracy , unemployment , and poverty are the basic causes of the all the uncivilized attitudes of the people. To avoid and create rational thinking and scientific temper through education in the society , a non –formal education system introduced through the society Andhra Pradesh Open Schools Society (APOSS). The unwise and unplanned life prevailed at the rural , semi urban and slum areas of the state. Child labor became the cheapest available labor and exploitation of public prevailed and practiced in these regions . The number of school dropouts at the primary level are became child labor at agricultural fields, cattle keepers, and the drop outs at the secondary school level are turned into cleaners, mechanics at the automobile centers, some are involved in hazardous occupations , some are involved into anti social activities , A special drive promulgated at the school level to identify the school dropout , if the child interested and the parents are sound enough to send the child the school the child will be given opportunity to admit into the regular schools , if not such school drop outs will be admitted in to the open school stream , so to eradicate the child labor and enhance the gross enrollment rate at the open schools , the double benefit the system paving the opportunities at the doorstep of the learner and the society will be benefitted with dual benefit . The Opportunities will be increased to the inclined students and parents , thus increased the number of admissions in this stream. Hence the hypothesis The school drop outs are admitting into the APOOS promptly to curb drop outs". Proved positive.

Conclusion

Open school society is a boon to the school drop outs to continue their education up to their interested level . The deprived sections of regular stream of education are driven into the correspondence courses in the beginning , gradually the technocracy introduced into the system starting with audio-visual education , supported by radio lessons , television school programs revamped to Open and Distance Learning system alternative to the formal education established , The Open and Distance Learning (ODL) now a best of all due to the invent and advent of ICT Information and Communication Technology, On line education shows how the four walls of the class-room boundaries are banished and the barriers of limited class-room is vanished and the opportunities became plethora to the inspired and inclined learners. Thus the Open and Distance Learning providing an education at the highest level of education ie P,hd. ,became system that creates opportunity to the large section, who are deprived of chances of learning in the regular system .

AUTONOMY IN HIGHER EDUCATION RELATED TO ACCESS EQUITY, QUALITY AND EXCELLENCE

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During the last two decades, Higher Education System in India witnessed dramatic changes, not only in terms of number of institutions but also in types of institution and geographical spread. Education Commission (1964-66) pointed out that the exercise of academic freedom by teachers is a crucial requirement for development of the intellectual climate of our country. Higher education system in India is the third largest system of higher education in the world next to USA and China. The rapid expansion of higher education system has brought several issues related to standards of its quality to the forefront. Studies of Higher Education system around the world suggest that countries have been modifying their system-wide governance structures to develop management and supervision of their higher learning institutes to achieve the goals of autonomy, with accompanying levels of accountability. Another proven benefit of autonomy is to establish a quality assurance and enhancement framework to ensure high standards, and the lower student – teacher ratio provides opportunities for closer attention to the learning needs of students.

The UGC in its 12th five year plan, the quality and excellence is one of the objectives. It has identified the following strategies:

- Achieving higher access through expansion by better utilization of the infrastructure and enhancing the infrastructure
- Enhancing the access through mission mode programs like "Rashtriya Uchchatar Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA)
- Promoting equity at all levels and all disciplines of higher education through innovative schemes
- Encouraging girls, SC/STs, minorities and reducing regional/disciplinary/gender imbalances
- Taking measures to retention and for better performance of the socially deprived sections.

Hence granting autonomy to higher education system enhances the UGC's objectives of access, equity, quality of excellence to some extent. It has been witnessed that number of universities are about 677 in 2013-14, which includes private and government funded, whereas number of colleges increased to over 37,200 in 2013-14. The Higher Education system includes 45 Central Universities, 318 State Universities, 185 State Private universities, 129 Deemed to be Universities, and 51 Institutions of National Importance (16 IITs, 30 NITs and 5 IISERs). Areas of autonomy and degree of autonomy enjoyed by different types of Institutions today vary significantly. By and large, there is a visible correlation between the extent of funding by government and degree of control exercised by government. Rao (2015) has stated broadly, Institutions with greater autonomy have delivered better performance consistently. At the same time, there is a general perception that quality of education at a number of the state universities, with low autonomy, seems to have gone down, as they lack even basic infrastructure and core resources like teachers.

Broad Spectrum of Autonomy

Patil (2015) has defined the drawbacks of the university affiliating system as follows:

- Teachers have no academic freedom to decide the curriculum
- The colleges have a subsidiary character and no direct role in education for social needs
- Teachers in the colleges have absolutely no recognition in research. Only few institutions recognized as research centres
- Curriculum and syllabi changes are very slow
- Communication channels are very slow
- Students have limited options
- Increase in the number of colleges overburdened the work of the universities
- The mass examination system of universities has become counter productive

Thus primary challenge is to understand the meaning of academic autonomy. The future and the whole life of students will have to be carefully designed and fashioned by an autonomous institution through its curriculum and fully and honourably take the responsibility for it. Autonomous status is not a freely given opportunity but a demanding responsibility. The institution has to carry out with the same academic demands but has to make teaching and learning more innovative, challenging and interesting for the students. Teaching-learning process has to create a sense of difference for the learners from the usual university pattern. To fit in all these demands into the academic calendar, the institute has to give priority to all the aspect learning both curricular, co curricular and extracurricular which is an essential element of the autonomous status. The autonomous institution which has the best to offer with co-curricular and extracurricular activities, extension activities and community services, skill and talent oriented programmes etc which provide all round development (Shirley 2015). Autonomy should necessarily lead to excellence in academics, governance and financial management of the University. If it does not lead to this, it can be said that autonomy has been mishandled. The broad spectrum of autonomy is defined by Natarajan (2015) as follows:

a) *Academic Autonomy:* Academic autonomy is the freedom to decide academic matters such as curriculum, pedagogy, techniques of evaluation, instructional material, admitting students, revising syllabus and course, recruitment and promotion of teachers, introducing new programmes and terminating obsolete ones etc.

b) *Administrative Autonomy:* Administrative autonomy is the freedom to institution to manage its own affairs in regard to internal administration. It is the freedom to manage the affairs in such a way that it stimulates and encourages initiative and development of entire system of university as such. A general view is that the autonomy enjoyed by the universities is a limited one and varies between institutions.

c) *Financial Autonomy:* Ensuring financial autonomy is not possible without adequate and free flow of finance. Universities are made to depend on state/central funds and they approach the funding agency on plan basis. Non-Plan grants will take care of maintenance of day-to-day functioning of the university and whereas plan grant could be used only for schemes which are formulated by the UGC.

Suggested Best Practices

Studies reveal that Indian education system is purely theoretical and memory oriented. Students work hard and are excellent in answering theory questions very well but when it comes to practical application questions they falter. It is not the mistake of the student but it

is due to deficiencies in our Higher Education System, the instruction given by them and the evaluation process they use. In the light of the above, Narasimha Reddy et al. (2015) suggest best practices to be taken jointly by the institutes and other major stake holders especially industry, and propose the following practices in order to achieve effective outcome based education:

a) *Bridging the Skill Gap and Need Based Curriculum*

Interviewing panel from industry expect students to be strong in basic domain knowledge and be aware of applications in real world. The traditional teaching methodology has failed in developing this aspect and has become more of exam preparation education. Today's education is going through a rough time where experts have to reinvent methodologies to bring back the relevance and excellence in the contemporary global scenario. A continuous update approach needs to be adopted by the institutes with regard to curriculum and faculty training. Curriculum update should be need based and electives offered should be tailored to requirements of the local industry as well as national and global level.

b) *Application Based Teaching and Project Based Learning*

Effectiveness in teaching and ensuring the learning to take place are two essential aspects which need consideration. There is no meaning for teaching if the learning does not take place. Learning is the process of developing individual's point of view beyond books. Project based learning enables a dynamic approach for students to learn concepts. With this methodology, students apart from concreting their concepts will also be able to develop their basic research skills that involves – exploring, investigation, understanding and project management. Project based learning is the best way to integrate practical approach in the curriculum. This methodology is adopted for almost all higher learning courses in the USA. In fact for most courses two-third of the time is spent in the class room and remaining one-third time is dedicated for project implementation, whereby students learn by designing and simulating the problem. Further, emphasis should not only be on functional correctness but also on specification analysis. This enables an excellent opportunity to students to get interested and connect to their core study area and aspire to pursue a career in the field.

c) *Collaborating with Startups and Fostering Entrepreneurship*

Institutes should explore collaborating with startups and fostering entrepreneurship as both parties can customize activities that they can effectively commit to which may not be feasible with big multinational companies. Some of proposed activities are training, internships, resource sharing, consultancy and joint research proposals. An institute with a production centre in collaboration with startup and fostering entrepreneurs improves the quality of education. It is well known that 'Job is guaranteed poverty and Business is risky prosperity." Entrepreneurship creates wealth and jobs. Students should strive to create jobs instead of seeking jobs. An entrepreneur who has the ability to innovate adds value to products and services. Entrepreneurship should be included in the curriculum, at least as an elective course. Mentoring support must be extended to students who have made up their minds to become entrepreneurs. Every effort should be made to promote spirit of entrepreneurship and nurture the entrepreneurial culture among students as well as alumni. The National Knowledge Commission (NKC) has also highlighted the role and responsibilities of institutions of higher learning in fostering entrepreneurship networks and invite successful entrepreneurs to address their students. These efforts will inspire the students and ignite their minds to pursue and embrace entrepreneurship.

d) *Initiatives in Research and Innovation*

Research and innovation is one of the key parameters to ascertain the quality of a country's higher education system. In the Indian context, the situation looks alarming as

India's share in the world researchers stood 2.2% in 2007 as against the China's share of 2.1%. The fact that we do not figure in the top 100 globally recognized institutions is also due to absence of focus and effort in research and innovation. Research and innovation can be imbibed in the teachers using suitable mechanism for motivating the teachers in this regard.

e) Targeting Global Excellence and International Collaboration

To foster academic collaboration with foreign institutes, a strong mechanism has to be evolved for faculty training/exchange programs to make our teachers competent with practical and application orientation. At the same time, the impact of such collaboration need to be closely monitored to achieve the attributes of outcome based education. The experiment of Indo-US collaboration for engineering education has to be strengthened further to ensure that effective teaching methods are imbibed in majority of the faculty.

Equity

Even though there is a significant growth in student enrolment in higher education system, especially in the last two decades, the GER in higher education in India is still about half the world's average GER(24%) and about two thirds that of the developing countries (18%) and much lower than that of developed nations (58%). The 12th FYP may consider level of incremental expansion in GER by 10%. The targeted GER in higher education was fixed at 15% by the end of the 11th FYP and was accordingly required to grow by 8.9% annually. On one hand GER stands low for the overall population, while on the other hand there exists large variations among the various categories of population based on gender, urban or rural habitation and rich and poor. Due to regional disparity in economic development and uneven distribution of institutions of higher education, the higher education is not equally available to the different sections of the society (Kamala and Kamalakar, 2015). Thus equity is a major concern in higher education in India. There is wide disparity in terms of rural-urban, gender and communities. Access to higher education for all minority social groups is much below the national average. There is considerable gender disparity unfavoring the females. Autonomy to the institutes will overcome these disparities to some extent.

Quality and Excellence

On the lines of equity, quality and excellence are also vital aspects in the higher education system. These can be achieved to some extent by the following suggestions by Sr. Alphonsa Vattoly (2015):

a) **ICT-enabled Instruction:** The use of ICT in enriching classroom instruction cannot be over emphasized. Autonomous institutions can arrange boot camps and regular training sessions for teachers to help them with connective technologies to engage students in class.

b) **Examination Reforms:** Teaching, learning and evaluation are the cornerstones of the education system. Currently it is used to test a student's memory but it could be a powerful instrument of education. Urgent reforms needed are removing subjectivity and memory-based components, continuous evaluation and the use of grades instead of marks.

c) **Distance Education through e-Learning:** Reduced infrastructure and wider reach of students have stimulated interest in distance education through e-learning, supplemented by contact classes. Students can have 24x7 access to resources and extend learning beyond the classroom.

d) ***Enhanced Accountability:*** The institution has control over inputs – whom to teach, what to teach and how to teach. Institutions are held responsible under autonomy for efficient management of resources to achieve realizable goals. Institutions gradually become responsible to manage academics and funding in a way that is transparent and lends itself to a system of audit.

e) **Create an Environment for Research:** Autonomous institutions can apply and obtain grants for research from the UGC and other funding agencies. By providing the right infrastructure, and by promoting passionate interest in research among teachers and students, an institution can create an environment that can attract the best talent and offer unique opportunities in the forefront of research.

f) **Promote Professional Growth of Teachers:** Autonomous institutes can strive to create an environment for research, support paper presentation / publication by making available all the funds earmarked by the UGC for this purpose Incentives in the form of awards and recognition can be offered to teachers to stimulate and sustain their interest in research.

g) **Offer Courses to Cater to varying Needs:** Autonomous institutes can tailor courses according to the needs of the students. Three types of course that could be offered are:

- Innovative graduation courses that impart the three basic skills of effective communication, numeracy and ICT along with subject knowledge and work-place training can be designed for those who desire to obtain a degree for employment
- Honours courses can be offered for those who are academically gifted, supported by scholarships to sustain them financially in academics
- Specialization courses that include projects, paper presentations and thesis writing could be for those who are enthusiastic about research and teaching

h) **Gain Global Competency:** In the year 2014, over 1.4 lakh students left India to pursue higher education in the US, a country where universities are focused on becoming the best in research. There is an increased awareness that global challenges require researchers across the world to work together to find solutions. Institutes should aspire to make students capable of collaborating with researchers around the world.

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WOMEN EMPOWERMENT THROUGH DISTANCE EDUCATION IN INDIA

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Introduction

Development is a process of structural change in the economic, political, social and cultural domains. It starts with people as they are the primary and ultimate focus of all development. It empowers women through Distance Learning in India, historically explores the causes and reasons for long denial of formal education to women. In recent times, Distance Education has emerged as a boon to women of all ages to equip themselves intellectually through acquisition of knowledge, leading them to new radical methods of thinking, and alternative, lateral perspectives on existing information thus rendering them more autonomous and liberated. Distance Education is a global and rapidly growing phenomenon which offers formal learning opportunities to people who would not otherwise have access to schooling or college education. Teachers and students are separated by physical distance and the means by which they communicate range from basic print material and the use of postal services to highly sophisticated communication technologies.

Gender and Distance Education

Women empowerment is a global issue. Empowerment is an active multi-dimensional process which enables women to realize their full identity and powers in all spheres of life. Women form the pivotal point around whom family life and living revolves. When economic level of a family goes down, women are the worst sufferers. The poorer the family the greater is its dependence on women's economic productivity. Also illiteracy among women often leads to a poor self-image, lack of knowledge and self-worth, making them susceptible to being deprived of their rights and playing an active role in the society and restricts their economic productivity. Literacy among women opens the possibility of unlimited exposure to new information and more importantly to new ways of thinking and new perspectives on existing information. Also literate women are able to constructively express their talents and give direction to their aptitude. This enables them to lead a life which is fulfilling and satisfying.

Distance Education promotes Women's Educational Development

Distance education is a non-formal method of education, through this method complete freedom to study is given to women's and it promotes women's educational development. Here are some methods to promote women's educational development:

1. Distance education uses technologies like radio, television, computers for providing education.
2. Distance education enables people to study while working.
3. Distance education enables people to study while working.
4. Distance education students who join from rural and remote areas need not stay in hostels and spend money.
5. Distance education system given books for study while conventional education does not provide any books to students.
6. Conventional education does not allow aged people whereas distance education does not impose any restrictions.
7. Even without having any educational qualifications one can study degree courses and PG courses.

8. Distance education system is offering many new and useful courses which are not offered by conventional system.
9. Distance education is egalitarian while conventional education is elitist.
10. Distance education materials are written by good teachers.
11. Distance education materials are self-teaching in form and hence there is no need to go to colleges regularly.

Impact of Distance Education on Women Learners

Now a day's women learners are enjoying the positive impact of distance education, and some of the important impacts are as follows:

1. Gained confidence in dealing with family members and outsiders.
2. Increased career opportunities.
3. Achieved higher educational qualifications that increased social esteem.
4. Second chance for the earlier dropouts and the disadvantaged.
5. Acquisition knowledge.
6. Changed socialization process.
7. Gained better decision making.
8. Gained respect in family and community.
9. Acquired better communication skills.
10. Changed the politico-socio-economic perception of society.
11. Enabled to promote literacy in neighborhood.
12. Enabled participation in local bodies.
13. Facilitated the acquisition of variety of knowledge through the print and the non-print media.
14. Enhanced the means and methods of empowerment of women.
15. Enhanced access to legal literacy and information relating to women's rights and entitlements in society so as to participate as an equal footing in all areas.
16. Developed ability to think critically.

Technologies Enhances the Usage of Distance Learning

Changes in the types of technologies available for delivering distance education, including changes in the capabilities of networking technology and the rise of the Internet, have played a role in the adoption of distance education by post secondary institutions.

The following are the common technologies available for the instructional delivery of distance education courses.

1. *Video technologies:* Two-way video with two-way audio (also referred to as two-way interactive video).
2. *Audio technologies:* Two-way audio transmission
3. *Internet-based technologies:* Internet courses using synchronous (i.e. simultaneous or `real time') computer-based instruction (e.g. interactive computer conferencing or Interactive Relay Chat), and Internet course using asynchronous (i.e. not simultaneous) computer-based instruction (e.g. email, list-serves, and most World Wide Web-based courses).
4. *Other technologies:* CD-ROM, mixed mode packages (i.e. a mix of technologies that cannot be assigned to a primary mode) and an open-ended `other, specify' category.

Resource persons pointed out that more powerful satellite, improved designs, innovations and advancements in ground reception technology are likely to lead to a considerable reduction in the overall cost of satellite technology; it is simple to install direct reception community sets for the benefit of schools and colleges.

Technology has come to stay as the backbone of communication in distance teaching methodology. Communication technology has found a client in the distance education system. That is, distance education represents the transformations of education from stage of craft to the stage of technology, thereby making room for increased productivity.

Limitations of Distance Education Technologies

- While there is a very wide range of media and interfaces available, their effectiveness in terms of educational communication, compatibility with the subject have to be considered.
- Good domestic facilities in terms of power supply, maintenance, availability of whichever medium is selected, software production and trained personnel are very important to the success of a distance education project.
- There are, in many minds, questions regarding the pedagogical implication of using distance methods which depend so greatly on the media. Passive learning is still something of a problem in Asia and may be reinforced by excessive dependence on the media.
- Many countries may need to opt for higher technology in communication out of sheer logistical and geographical problems. These technologies may include satellites and computers. Ways can be found in which they become cost-effective.
- It is important to familiarize Asian countries with the language of the new technology, and it is important not to be left behind in gaining access to the most advanced technology.
- To sum up, lack of coordination, one-way lecture, changes in schedule, lack of preparation on the part of the resource persons, power failure, badly maintained equipment, lack of awareness, poor economic conditions, duplication of work, costly nature of technologies etc., are the limitations of distance education technologies.

Strategies for Further Development of Women's Distance Education

For further promotion and development of women's distance education some of the suggestions made by women learners are:

1. Introduction of job oriented courses in the areas of computers, biotechnology, chemical technology, travel and tourism, home management, health, office management and such other newly emerging job oriented fields.
2. Interaction with industries, business concern, trading companies etc. to have hands on experience in the concerned fields.
3. Better physical amenities at study centers and special facilities for women students.
4. Setting up regional centers to monitor the activities of study centers.
5. Timely conduct of annual and supplement examinations and declaration of results.
6. Prompt replies to inquiries by students.
7. Regular publication and supply of newsletters.
8. Orientation to tutors and counselors in distance education methodology.
9. Setting up career guidance cells to enable learners to be aware of the employment facilities.
10. Regular visits to study centre's by the institutions 'headquarters' academic staff.
11. Appointment of more women counselors, co-coordinators and tutors.
12. Increased family support to learners of disadvantaged groups.
13. More family assistance and support for distance study.
14. Organization of extension lectures by women working in government and voluntary organizations for women's development.

15. Periodical meetings of students and their family members at study centers.
16. Facilities for games, sports and cultural programmers.
17. Visits on the days of counseling by senior faculty members from other distance teaching institutions.
18. Periodical surveys to get feedback from the students on course materials, counseling sessions, examinations, assignments, results etc.
19. Organization of seminars, workshops, debates, symposia etc so as to encourage the participation of girls.

Conclusion

Today in the changing scenario the opportunities must be given to the women so that it pays important opportunity for women's self-development and also it helps in the development of social or cultural development. To ensure that distance education programs meet women's needs, curriculum design committees at parent universities comprised of academics, representatives from industry and research and development organizations, and subject area experts should invite women from different cultural, social, and economic backgrounds to actively participate in designing the curriculum. Programs should help students attain increasingly sophisticated knowledge and skills as they proceed through the stages of education. Curricula and teaching materials should be sensitive to women's specific needs and provide opportunities for them to become equal partners in society.

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IMAPCT OF ICT ON EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE OF DISTANCE LEARNERS

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Introduction

Distance education compiles the provision of educational opportunities and also supplements the training programme by means of multiple media. Information technology and Cybernetics are simultaneously being utilized for upgrading both knowledge & skills. The last 20 years have seen some remarkable innovations in the delivery of education. The technologies available today and those about to emerge, have the potential to transform the nature of education and the roles of learners in the learning process.

Utility of ICT by Distance Learners

- ICT in DE has the capacity to accelerate major changes training as well as learn professional development.
- ICT-based teaching-learning programmes can overcome a teacher's isolation by breaking down their classroom walls and connecting them to colleagues, mentors, curriculum experts and the global teacher community.
- Use of ICT in DE change teaching and learning behavior.
- ICT facilitates the educational transaction between providers and users by keeping students well informed about the courses, enhancing teacher-learner contact through e-mail, chat sessions, etc., encouraging active learning, sharing ideas, providing immediate feedback.

ICTs and ICT Applications in DL in the India

ICTs used to support DL can be classified into two main categories, the first being hardware and second being, software. The hardware currently in use are roughly the same among all Indian institutions: radio, television, telephone (land, mobile, fax, Voice over Internet Protocol or VoIP), and computers. ICTs have now converged thanks to recent advances and enhancements made to the infrastructure, such as the laying of fiber optic cables and satellite and microwave transmission facilities. What differ, however, are the levels of use and applications of specific hardware technologies and purpose driving their use.

Delivering Instructional Content

Depending on learner needs and appropriate pedagogy, instructional contents are packaged in various formats using different media. As mentioned, the development of DL in the India witnessed instructional packages delivered in print, audiotapes, videotapes, and CD-ROMs. In recent years, going online has made Web-enhanced teaching and learning possible, using rich online resources to supplement and update instructional materials.

Delivering Support Services to DE Learners

Communication between and among students can also be facilitated by mobile phone technology. Use of cellular phones can facilitate 'cohort socialization' or can serve as a support mechanism to encourage students along in their DE studies. Socialization via cell

phones can provide that much needed thwart feelings of isolation, and promote their 'sense of belonging,' psycho-social aspects that were typically missing in older generations of DE. Emotional intelligence plays a key role in the life of Distance Learners. It includes self-awareness, self-management, Empathy, Handling relationship and mood management. ICT influences a lot on Emotional Intelligence of Distance learners.

Innovations in Distance Education
- Research and Development Work
- Performing Management and Administration Functions
- Document Tracking System (DTS) for application for admission
- Online registration system
- Online submission of grades
- Digitization of student records
- Orientation of new/ incoming Students
- Extend the culture of discussion and debate to enhance critical and higher order thinking

Enculturation and Promotion:
- Rally policy makers and resource providers to support DE
- Enhances DE's credibility in the eyes of industry and other groups whose personnel may benefit from DE, or conversely, may hire graduates of DE programs
- Secure funding for academic institutions seeking to use DE modalities to reach student populations previously unattainable

Ensuring Quality Education in a Technology-Driven Mode of Learning

Quality of DE has always been contentious. Detractors of distance education, somehow equate quality of DE with that of physical face-to-face traditional education in the classrooms. Educational providers must strive to use quality and reliable ICT hardware (connections should be available, 24/7) and software (i.e., the LMS). Just as important, these systems must be supported by highly skilled individuals, armed with the knowledge and skills they need to ensure hard and software runs smoothly.

Conclusion

The distance learners should utilize ICT for maintaining their emotional intelligence and for their professional growth and development. If distance learners implement ICT in their learning process, they will become good educators. Educational institutions should understand knowledge and skills for implementing effectively ICT in their work environment.

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LEARNER SUPPORT SERVICES IN OPEN AND DISTANCE LEARNING: A CASE STUDY OF IGNOU REGIONAL CENTRE, KORAPUT, ODISHA

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Introduction

IGNOU Regional Centre, Koraput started as a Sub-Regional Centre way back in 2004. It was subsequently elevated to a Regional Centre in 2005. Since its inception, the Regional Centre has been functioning in a small government building given on free lease basis by the District Administration, Koraput. It started with only 12 Study Centres to cater to the educational needs of some of the most backward districts of the country located in the southern part of Odisha, but now it has gone up to 57 now. Likewise the yearly enrolment of the Regional Centre has gone up from 1771 (in 2004) to 4995 (in 2014). The establishment of Special Programme Study Centres for MBA, Engineering, Law and BED programmes have opened new avenues for providing professional and technical education to the disadvantaged students of this region. The opening of Special Study Centres in Central Jail of Jagdalpur and District Jail, Koraput has provided educational opportunities to the jail inmates to facilitate their return to the mainstream life after acquittal.   The Regional Centre started with only 2 regular staff but now it has 08 which includes the Regional Director and 3 Assistant Regional Directors and 1 Section Officer, 1 Sr. Asst, 1 DEO and 1 Semi-Professional Assistant. Over the years it has made great strides in the establishment of Study Centres, strengthening of student support services, extension of its services for the capacity building of teachers working in government schools through collaborative projects with agencies like the UNICEF and the Departments of ST/SC Development, School and Mass Education, Govt of Odisha.

The average literacy in this region hovers around 40% and the total number of people living below poverty line is as high as 70%. On the top of it, out of 12 districts under its jurisdiction, 10 are maoist-infested. Most of the learners belong to minority communities, socially and economically disadvantaged groups and tribal and low literacy areas. Moreover, the number of institutions offering higher educational facilities in the professional and technical programmes is very limited. As a result of that more than 50 % of students after high school examinations are not able to continue their higher education.

Research Design and Methodology

Both descriptive as well as case study research methods have been employed in carrying out the study. Descriptive research is facilitated by survey of opinions and suggestions of the stakeholders. For this purpose data was collected from the beneficiaries and stakeholders with the help of structured and semi-structured questionnaires. The focus of the tools was to enquire about dimensions and quality of learner support services at pre-entry, during programme stage and post programme stage.

Research Objectives

The study was formulated and designed to know that to what extent the organisation is able to meet the requirements of the beneficiaries for whom it is designed. The specific research objectives of this study was to study the perception of different stakeholders under IGNOU Regional Centres, Koraput about the type and quality of learner support services being provided to them at pre-entry, during the study and post-study stage.

Population and Sample

The population for the study consisted of all the study centres functioning under the Regional Centre, Koraput. Their number was 42 across 12 districts of the region. The sample for the study consisted of fifteen study centre functionaries; Fifty distance learners and twenty academic counsellors. The key informants such as Learners, Academic Counsellors, and Study Centre Functionaries and Regional Centre functionaries were selected from the institutions covered under the sample following incidental/purposive sampling techniques.

Major Findings

Student Support Services at Pre-Admission Stage

Learners' needs are unlimited and as far as possible they need to be properly addressed in Distance Education System in order to save them from maladjustment and from dropping out prematurely. In the Pre- Admission stage the learner comes to the Learner Support Centres to enquire about various types of information pertaining to the availability of programmes, duration of programmes, programme fee, recognition of degrees, methods of teaching, study materials etc. Taking into consideration all these dimensions of Pre-Admission Stage the learners, the academic counsellors and Study Centre functionaries were asked various questions to assess the quality of support services available with the Regional Centre/Study Centre at this stage. The responses of the respondents with regard to the support services at pre- Admission stage are presented in table-1

Table-1 : Responses of Learners on the Student Support Services at Pre- Admission Stage (%)

Sl. No	Support at Pre-study Stage	Yes	No	Undecided
1	A dedicated counsellor/official is available in the RC/ LSC to provide required information regarding different programmes.	41	48	11
2	The detailed information regarding various programme are available at the" May I Help You" Counter in the LSC / RC.	52	36	12
3	The admission procedure in distance education is student - friendly.	57	30	13
4	The Walk-in-Admission facility at the Regional Centre is very useful and effective.	61	10	29
5	Advertisement of distance learning institutions for admission through print media is very useful.	59	09	32
6	The promotional literature available with the Regional Centre are very useful to know about the various programmes and their usefulness for building different careers	47	34	19
7	The information available on the website helped me choose the right programme.	64	27	9

The results provided in table 1 indicate the responses of learners towards the student support services at Pre- Admission stage. With regard to the availability of counsellor to provide required information regarding different programmes at Regional Centre and Study Centre level, 48 % of learners responded negatively whereas 41% of learners were positive towards the availability of the counsellors for this purpose but 11% of them were undecided. In response to the question on the availability of detailed information at the May I Help You Counter both at the RC/LSC, 52 % of the learners responded positively, 36% responded

negatively and 12% were undecided. With regard to the admission process in distance education being student-friendly, 57 % of learners responded in the positive, 30% responded in the negative and only 13% could not decided what to do. The next statement that " The facility of Walk in admission is useful and effective" had 61 % of learners responding positively, 10% responding negatively and as many as 29% of the learners could not decide and remained undecided. Regarding the usefulness of advertisement of distance learning institutions for admission through print media, 59% of learners viewed positively whereas only 9 % of learners responded negatively on this aspect and 32% did preferred to remain undecided. While responding to the question on the usefulness of the promotional literature available with the Regional Centre are for knowing about the various programmes and their usefulness for building different careers, 47% replied in the positive, 34% replied in the negative and 19% were undecided. Likewise, in response to the statement on the usefulness of the information available on the website in choosing the right programme 64% learners responded in the positive, 27% responded in the negative and a mere 9% of them preferred to go for the option "undecided".

Student Support Services During the Study

   Proper learner support services start after the admission of the learners into IGNOU programmes. Considering the significance of the support services during the study in this section the analysis has been made on the following vital aspects of distance education system:

Academic Counselling

   Academic Counselling in Distance education include both counselling and tutoring to the distance learners. Counselling in distance education is widely used for giving advice both academic and non-academic to learners.

- It reveals from the analysis that 57 % of learners attend the counselling sessions during the study in the study area. Whereas31% of learners do not attend the sessions and 12% of them not responded to this question.

- With regard to the effectiveness of counselling sessions 47% of learners responded positively whereas 19 % of learners responded negatively and 34 % of learners did not reply to this point.

- Majority of the Study centre functionaries (74%) informed students regarding the academic counselling schedules well in advance, whereas 17 % of functionaries could not provide such information timely. Majority of the respondents (68%) agreed that counselling sessions help students for better understanding of the content.

   With regard to the usefulness of the counselling sessions for better understanding of the concepts 67 % of the counsellors responded positively whereas 33 % of them remain undecided to this statement as depicted in Figure-3. Regarding the freeness of the students while discussing their doubts with the counsellors as high as 73 % of counsellors responded positively. Majority of the respondents (61%) agreed on providing guidance to the students for preparation of assignments whereas 39 % of them were not sure of their activities.

Usefulness of Self Learning Materials

   The course materials are significant inputs of learning in distance education system. These are specially designed and prepared and are highly structured materials usually in print form.

Table - 2 Responses of Learners on the Usefulness of Self Learning Materials

Sl. No	Activities for Self Learning	Yes	No	Un Decided
1	The study materials provided are highly self instructional.	61	23	16
2	The language used in study materials is easy to understand.	67	33	Nil
3	The learner is allowed to work at his/her own pace.	78		22
4	There are adequate number of illustrations, tables and diagrams to explain the concepts and ideas.	51	31	18
7	The Self-Check Exercises within the Units are very useful in assessing my progress from time to time.	58	12	30
8	The ideas of different concepts are properly organized.	52	21	27

As per Table-2, 61 % of learners responded that the self instructional values of the study materials are highly instructional whereas 23 % of learners expressed their dissatisfaction with the self instructional value of the study materials. Regarding the easiness of the language for understanding the content 67 % of learners responded positively whereas 33 % of learners opined negatively. Majority of the learners (78%) expressed positively regarding the scope to work at their own pace whereas 22 % of them were not sure of that scope. On the adequacy of the illustrations, tables and diagrams for the explanation of concepts and ideas 51 % of learners responded positively whereas 31 % of respondents expressed their dissatisfaction over this. Majority of the learners (58%) agreed on the usefulness of the self check exercises and 30 % of them were not sure over this but 12 % responded negatively to this statement. Regarding the proper organisation of ideas of different concepts 52 % of learners responded positively whereas 21 % of learners opined negatively.

On the same topic the responses of the study centre functionaries were also collected and it has been observed that on some statements the responses are quite similar with the responses of the learners. With regard to the availability of the study materials after admission 51% of functionaries agreed whereas 31 % of functionaries expressed concern over the non-availability of materials in time and 18% of them were not sure of this. Regarding the usefulness of the study materials for the students as high as 78 % of functionaries responded positively. With regard to the difficulty in understanding the language of the study materials by the students 46 % of functionaries responded positively whereas 32 % of respondents viewed that the language is difficult for some of the students and 22 % of functionaries were not sure of it.

Administrative Support

The responses of the learners are also collected on various aspects of administrative support like supply of printed study materials, availability of information regarding the academic counselling sessions, examinations and the support through teleconferencing and video conferencing sessions etc. Some of the important views of the stakeholders are as follows:

- While discussing the receipt of the printed study materials 41 % of learners responded positively whereas 31 % learners responded negatively to the timely availability of the materials.

- Regarding the communication of information particularly on counselling sessions and examination by the study centres majority of the learners (72%) responded positively whereas 28 % of them expressed their dissatisfaction over the non-availability such kind of information in time.
- Almost all learners under sample responded the non conduct of teleconferencing sessions at study centres with regard to the courses of the programme.
- With regard to the conduciveness of the physical environment of the study centre for the teaching learning process 71 % of learners responded positively whereas 29 % of them expressed non availability of such environment for teaching learning process.
- Regarding the friendly behaviour of the LSC functionaries towards the learners 61 % of learners responded positively whereas 31 % of them responded negatively.

Assessment and Evaluation

Evaluation is an important component of distance education system. There are various components inbuilt in the evaluation system of IGNOU to evaluate the progress of the learners continuously. In this section the responses of learners and study centre functionaries on different components of evaluation are analysed.

The responses of the learners on different aspects of the assessment and evaluation system. With regard to the usefulness of the continuous assessment through assignment 61 % of learners were satisfied whereas 39 % of them were not viewed anything. Regarding the timely return of the evaluated assignments 45 % of the learners agreed on this statement whereas 39 % of the learners replied they did not receive the assignments timely and 16 % of them remained undecided to this statement. Regarding the usefulness of the comments on the assignment by the tutors help the learners to improve their performance only 31 % of learners replied positively whereas 58 % were viewed negatively to this statement. While responding to the friendliness of the Term End Examination 58 % of the respondents replied positively whereas 42 % of them remained undecided to this statement.

Student Support Services at Post Study Stage

Considering the significance of the support services at post study stage, an attempt has been made to collect the opinions and views of the stakeholders on important aspects of distance education like declaration of results, award of final degrees, and availability of opportunities for career guidance and placement and organisation of Alumni Meet etc. The results pertaining to these aspects are as follows:

- Regarding the timely declaration of results 58 % of learners viewed positively whereas 30 % of learners expressed their dissatisfaction on the declaration of results.
- Regarding the necessity of the involvement of Alumni in the academic activities of the university for the creation of the brand image of the university 65 % of learners responded positively whereas 35 % of them were not sure of this.
- Regarding the receipt of the grade card and provisional certificates by the learners after the declaration of results 48% of functionaries responded positively whereas 27 % of them were not sure of it and 25 % of functionaries responded negatively to this statement.
- With regard to the communication to the students regarding the availability of other programmes after the declaration of the results 62 % of functionaries communicated to the students whereas 38 % of them were not sure of this.
- Most of the students receive the grade cards and provisional certificates after the declaration of the results.

Major Issues and Challenges related to Learner Support Services

- Most of the students of ST category and female students don't come to the study centre to attend the counselling sessions. As a result of which, it is very difficult to communicate to them necessary information regarding examination, the dates of form fill up, the dates of Re-Registration.
- Dropout increases among the students of these categories because of lack communication between the students and the study centre functionaries.
- It is very difficult to get qualified and experienced academic counsellors in the study centres located in rural areas or block headquarters. As a result of which it is not possible to activate various academic programmes in those study centres.
- Students residing in rural and interior pockets have no access to internet facility and also don't know the use of internet for various purposes like downloading assignments, checking the results of Term End Examinations, Dates of Re-Registration etc.
- The study centre functionaries cannot make necessary arrangements to watch the audio-visual programmes on Gyandarshan –II and also don't conduct any teleconferencing session at study centre level.

Conclusions

In distance learning student support services plays an important role. Student support, especially student guidance and counselling, tutor support, and effective information and administrative systems all provide a range of activity that impacts not only in terms of teaching but also affectively, that is to say reinforcing the student sense of confidence, self-esteem and progress. Therefore we need to strengthen the student support services in Open and Distance mode of learning.

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NEW DEVELOPMENT IN OPEN DISTANCE LEARNING

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Introduction

In the World today, Open and Distance Education (ODE) system has been gaining widespread popularity over the years. The explosive growth of Open and Distance Learning (ODL) institutions and their scale of operations has been facilitated by continuous experiments and technological innovation in the field of ODE. In the light of these developments there is a need to assess the quality of the ODL in Globalisation. The main objective of this Paper is therefore to look into the different factors that contribute to the use of various Instructional Technologies in Open and Distance Education Institutions to suit the learners' needs to continue life long education. Open Learning has an important role to play by exploring new frontiers and developments in Open and Distance Education. The prominent users of this mode are worldwide in general and Asian region in particular. The growth of the ODE system in India and throughout the world has been phenomenal, particularly during the last two decades. Rapid changes have taken place in the practice of ODE, mainly driven by changes in Information and Communication Technologies (ICT). The revolution in ICT coupled with the social demand for education for all and the need for lifelong and continuing education have resulted in the new vistas of open learning for knowledge society.

Learner-centric approach plays a pivotal role in ODE. Learners' are heterogeneous group and their level of understanding differs from individual to individual and they are from different segments of the population from different places. To teach and learn, ICT facilitated in different ways; Print based learning is being supplemented by Electronic Media- based, Satellite network.

These Open and Distance Education Institutions play a crucial role in promoting the education in a knowledge society by leveraging different methodologies.
1. Access and Reach
2. Equity and gender
3. Quality and effectiveness
4. Cost-effective education for all
5. Bringing quality education to the door step of millions.

In the present day world when sustained development has become a watchword, the systems approach to quality has gained utmost importance and relevance even in the area of open and distance education. Globalization and increased domestic competition have brought a sense of urgency in introducing highly successful Total Quality Management techniques to Indian organizations. Quality is not an accident. It is always the result of high intention, sincere efforts, intelligent direction and skillful execution. It can be classified as an attitude or a characteristic. The concept of total quality management can be adopted to evolve all new Total Quality Management Education System (TQMES) which needs to encompass the following components:

Quality Planning

Identification Needs: Identification needs include students' development, faculty development and development of processes. Quality being a complex issue can be referred to in terms of products, process and systems. The search for quality has become the single most important force leading to organizational success and growth in both national and

international markets in the new mille3nnium. The organizations that will succeed are those that can maintain a dedication to quality in each and every organizational function.

Setting Standard Performance

Setting standards for every activity in the field of management education against which performance can be measured. Quality awareness must begin at the inception of any system and then should transgress every stage so that the concept of TQM is imbibed in the whole system.   Right from identifying the key players in the system to identifying the needs of the players and setting their performance standards is done in this stage.

Quality concept in Distance Education:

Purpose of quality improvement programmes at educational institution
- To ensure continuous improvement of total institutional performance
- To ensure stakeholders of institutional accountability
- To evolve mechanisms and procedures for effective and progressive performance
- Equitable access to benefits of higher education to all
- Optimization and integration of modern methods of teaching and learning
- Credibility of evaluation procedures
- Proper allocation of support and services and
- Research sharing though networks of collaboration.

Total Quality Management is a recent concept popular among management circles. TQM considers quality primarily as that perceived by the customer of the service or product. In education it means the meeting of the changing demands of students, employers, knowledge producers and society. It's a people driven process. It strives for empowerment and autonomy of the people involved in using the processes of production.   It asks people to continuously look for new ways to adapt to the changing environment.

Five components of TQM
- The customer is anyone, internal or external, who receives or is affected by the product, process or services.
- Continuous improvement is essential to reach the stage of zero defects.
- Faculty development should ensure diligent updating at par with state-of-the-art methodology
- Teamwork and stakeholder involvement are the key to achieve TQM
- Monitoring progress with review of objectives is a necessary function.

Quality Implementation
- Implementation of standards
- Identifying the chasm between standard and actual performance level
- Reformulating the plans to eliminate the causes of deviation
- Implementation of the reformulated plans

Learning Environment

To develop the individual's ability to manage his own learning needs. With the tremendous speed at which latest knowledge is replacing the old one it is impossible for standardize courses to cater to mass individual needs. Open and Distance Education Institutions are to raise more revenue. But quality should not be given up. The large-scale

expansion in the number of ODL institutions offering Open and Distance Mode at various levels has been of varying quality during the last century.   In the 21st century assuring the quality in higher education has become an integral part of the development of this type of education in India. The need of the hour is to ensure quality of education in the country for the cause of credibility of the entire system of Open and distance Mode. The huge quantitative expansion has taken place at the cost of quality, especially, during the 20th century. The period might be described literally as the" Era of Open and Distance Education" in the history of education in India.

Empowering the Teaching – Learning talents

The Teaching – Learning talents for imparting education to learner as chosen by various CCIs and Open Universities vary from institutions to institutions. The print material is the master media, which is supplemented and complemented by audio, video lessons, Radio and Television programmes. To provide education to the heterogeneous learners the multi-media is inevitable in distance learning. Globalization and today's Information and Communication Technology have given a new expression to Open and Distance Learning. In order to strengthen the Distance Mode sharing of information among the Open and Distance Learning institutions and maintenance of the quality study material and quality audio/video programmes is in vogue among the institutions.

Learner-Centered Teaching

Open and Distance education institutions are different from that of the conventional Universities in Teaching – Learning process. This system is more learner-centered and the learner is an active participant in the process. Most of the instructions are imparted though various multimedia approaches to the different learners and their choice to choose and use the media mix in the learning process.

Online Learning

Online resources vary widely, from minor enhancements of the printed material to fully-online learning activities.   The level of online enhancement is usually determined by the nature of the target group, the unit learning objectives and the teaching interests of staff. Online resources frequently take the form of discussion forums, self tests and quizzes. Fully online units where all teaching and learning resources and activities occur online are becoming more popular.

E – Learning

E-learning increases access to learners worldwide by way of instruction. Dramatic changes have taken place in instructional design to the distance learners. Instructional design is gaining movement in recent years. Distance teachers to teach impressively to learners in different difficult subjects e.g. Science courses etc., by way of diagrams, cartoons not only helps lesson teaching but also to easily understand purpose to include, animation, and graphics and mixed with light music. This will facilitate to the learner to learn and understand the subject matter easily. Lessons Designed by animators, web-designers is to suit the varied distance learners in mind. Prepared lessons are in such a way to learners to learn with joy. This will induce the learner to go for lifelong learning.

Conclusion

To sum up, the process of globalisation is bringing in many new dimensions, one of which is the maintenance of high standards in educational material and service, which are

expected to be comparable and competitive at National and International levels. This is causing concern for quality.

Recently, a new shift in providers of education is taking place. Besides the conventional university institutions, unconventional institutions, often originating from various sectors such as industry, banking etc., are becoming providers of education partly to fulfill their sectoral needs. Some are entering into the educational market to offer marketable programmes in the areas of management, computers and mechanisms for assessing quality and accrediting institutions for the benefit of the students.

To fulfill the learners' desires to continue their education lifelong one must provide the necessary quality education and inputs through Distance Education Course for sharing educational information and exchanging educational services worldwide. . Learners' choice is the order of the day. Higher Education at any time and pace anywhere can provide by Open and Distance Education Institutions through Information and Communication Technologies in a changing global scenario.

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OPEN AND DISTANCE EDUCATION IN INDIA: A BIRD'S EYE VIEW

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Introduction

ODL is a term that accepts the philosophy of "openness" and uses the "distance mode" of learning. It is "open" in the sense that it removes whatever obstacles exist in face-to-face conventional classrooms. Flexibility achieved through 'Openness' expands opportunities for those who aspiring for higher education but not having access to it through the conventional mode. Scaling it up with equal quality is what places Open Universities on a different pedestal as compared to conventional Universities. Distance learning where the Teacher and the learner are separated by distance and in time, also involves e-learning, open learning, flexible learning, on-line learning, resource-based learning, technology-mediated learning etc.

Nature of Open Distance Learning:

The Open Distance Learning (ODL) known as Distance Education (DE) has evolved as one of the effective modes of education and training. The development of ODL system, from the stage of print material oriented correspondence education to the stage of self-instructional packages with an integrated multi-media approach, and incorporation of interactive communication technologies, leading towards building of virtual learning institutions is significant. The application of new interactive communication technologies in providing flexible and cost-effective programmes through distance mode is now widely recognized and appreciated. Modern satellite and communication technologies, internet and other electronic media are expanding at an unprecedented rate. With the gradual and effective adoption to distant places and people, communication technology is continuously changing the face and pace of open and distance education system in the country. The growth and access to ICT is bound to bring revolutionary changes in higher education, particularly, in the quality of content and student support services along with enhanced scope and reach of open and distance learning system across the country.

In a competitive environment, institutions can only attract learners if their image projects a commitment and a reputation to offer the best that is available, is a well accepted fact. The ODL system is now growing faster compared to the conventional system. In a new and innovative system like open and distance education, quality assurance, therefore, becomes absolutely essential to create a sense of credibility among learners. The effective management of Student Support system at a distance poses considerable challenges in comparison to conventional system. It requires the distance education institutions to establish robust system for maintaining effective mechanisms to monitor quality for various processes such as planning of programme, development of study material and multi-media packages, incorporation of R&D for offering better educational products and services. The major characteristics of the distance education system are its high productivity, greater flexibility and above all its capacity to respond to varying demands.

Development of ODL in India

Realizing the important role education plays in the overall national development, a number of Education Commissions and Committees were set up from time to time to look into the problems of education and to suggest solutions. On the suggestion of Central Advisory Board of Education (CABE), the Government of India constituted an Expert

Committee in 1961 headed by Dr. D.S. Kothari, to look into the suitability of Correspondence Courses for expanding educational opportunities. The Committee recommended introduction of Correspondence Courses to expand and equalize the educational opportunities. Thus, ODL in India was introduced by Delhi University in 1962 through the School of Correspondence Courses and Continuing Education to enable those, who had the inclination and aptitude to acquire further knowledge and improve their professional competence. Subsequently in 1968, Correspondence Courses were started by Punjabi University and University of Rajasthan. Meerut and Mysore University started these courses in 1969. Slowly, many Universities followed suit. Rapid expansion of the ODL courses took place during the seventies when 19 more universities started Institutions/Directorates of Correspondence Courses.

In the eighties, the distance education system expanded further. Not only did more and more universities started opening correspondence education Directorates, but the beginning of establishing single mode Open Universities also began in this decade. Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Open University, Hyderabad was established in 1982 by the State of Andhra Pradesh. It was followed by the setting up of Indira Gandhi National Open University by the Government of India in 1985 by an Act of the Parliament. The establishment of IGNOU is considered to be a landmark development in the field of distance education in the country. The growth of distance education has been exponential over the last four decades, beginning in 1962, in our country. As of now in addition to IGNOU, 13 State Open Universities and around 242 Distance Education Institutions are offering programmes in diverse disciplines. The table given below shows the year wise growth of ODL Institutions in India.

Sl.No.	Year of Establishment	Single Mode Open Universities	Dual Mode Universities/ Institutes	Total Distance Education Institutions
1	1962	-	1	1
2	1975	-	22	22
3	1982	1	34	35
4	1985	2	38	40
5	1990	5	46	51
6	2000	9	70	79
7	2005	13	106	119
8	2010	14	242	256

(Source from DEC website)

During the initial years the student enrolment increased slowly from 11,122 in 1962 to 29,500 in 1970-71. It abundantly increased during the next two decades to about 6 lakh in 1990-91. In 2000-01, there were about 14 lakh students in distance mode which further went up to about 16 lakh in 2005-06. Then it rose to about 37 lakh in the year 2009-10. Thus, with the fresh enrolment in ODL programmes at approximately 40 lakh annually, the share of distance education in the GER is about 22-23 % which is significant.

Year	Conventional Universities/ Colleges	Distance Education	Percentage share of DE	Total
1962-63	7,52,095	1,112	0.147	7,53,207

1975-76	24,26,109	64,210	2.578	24,90,319
1980-81	27,52,437	1,66,428	5.701	29,18,865
1990-91	49,24,868	5,92,814	10.744	55,17,682
1994-95	61,13,929	8,03,176	11.611	69,17,105
1995-96	65,74,005	10,03,000	13.237	75,77,005
2000-01	83,99,443	13,78,000	14.094	97,77,443
2005-06	1,10,28,020	18,33,524	14.256	1,28,61,544
2009-10	1,24,68,560	37,36,744	23.35	1,60,00,000 (Apprx)

(Source from DEC website)

The potential of open and distance learning

As in every other walk of modern life, the answer to the challenge of education for development will include the use of information and communication technologies, provided the necessary organizational and policy changes can be implemented to make the technologies effective. A range of technological devices is now widely available and relatively cheap (e.g.CD-ROM, various Internet services). They are accepted and often available for domestic use as well as in the workplace. Governments are concerned that educational institutions become connected to the emerging networks, that curricula include the knowledge of and acquaintance with new technologies, and that teachers are prepared and trained to use these new resources.

Among the benefits expected from new information and communication technologies, besides that of outreach, are efficiencies derived from economies of scale and qualitative improvements such as greater individualization of learning, easier access to information, and more use of simulation techniques. In addition, the use of new forms of technology will have an impact on the cognitive functions of children and youth.

In efforts to meet the new and changing demands for education and training, open and distance learning may be seen as an approach that is at least complementary and under certain circumstances an appropriate substitute for the face-to-face methods that still dominate most educational systems. While its benefits can be evaluated by technical, social and economic criteria, distance learning methods also have their own pedagogical merit, leading to different ways of conceiving knowledge generation and acquisition.

To the learner, open and distance learning means more freedom of access, and thereby a wider range of opportunities for learning and qualification. The barriers that may be overcome by distance learning include not only geographical distance, but also other confining circumstances, such as personal constraints, cultural and social barriers and lack of educational infrastructure. For the student it is often a cheaper alternative to pursuing a course through conventional methods. Since many people cannot afford to leave their work in order to study, it is important that distance education and training may be combined with work. Distance and open learning may also mean a more learner-centred approach, allowing greater flexibility and choice of content as well as more personal organization of the learning programme.

For employers, open and distance learning offers the possibility of organizing learning and professional development in the workplace itself, which is often more flexible and saves costs of travel, subsistence etc. The use of distance learning often puts both the firm and employees in a position of co investment (of money and time) in the pursuit of common goals, based on shared values and culture. It increases productivity and supports the development of communication and other work-related skills. With sufficient numbers of

employees being trained, open and distance learning is usually cost-effective. Other advantages for the employer include the increased availability of the employee during the course of the training programme, and the portability of training programmes and processes.

These advantages to learners and employers are also important features from the perspective of governments. Traditionally, governments have introduced distance education provision in order to

- increase access to learning and training opportunity
- provide increased opportunities for updating, retraining and personal enrichment
- improve cost-effectiveness of educational resources
- support the quality and variety of existing educational structures
- enhance and consolidate capacity

In the light of the experiences of the past twenty or more years, there is today recognition of other, related, benefits. Some of these are:

- balancing inequalities between age groups
- extending geographical access to education
- delivering educational campaigns and other education for large udiences
- providing speedy and efficient training for key target groups
- expanding the capacity for education in new and multidisciplinary subject areas
- offering the combination of education with work and family life
- developing multiple competencies through recurrent and continuing education
- enhancing the international dimension of educational experience
- improving the quality of existing educational services

Conclusion

The ODL in Indian Higher Education achieves its greatness as it minimises the illiteracy rate and promoting the skill based education. It also caters the needs of underprivileged, dropouts, prisoners, destitute women and other in order to enrich their life style. The UGC and the State Governments have to offer enough financial assistance on par with the conventional universities to enhance the services of the ODL institutions.

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THE 3rd REVOLUTION AND THE 3 'E'S'
TEACHING STRATEGIES FOR DISTANCE EDUCATION - ONLINE MODE

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Introduction

There is an unending explosive demand in many countries for access to higher education as a way of improving the people's quality of life. Yet, the conventional institutions do not have absorptive capacity to meet the needs of such teeming population, hence, the existence of ODL institutions. Very crucial among the challenges in Open Distance Learning (ODL) generally, is how to harness and regularly arrange learning materials and facilities to prompt positive academic behaviour to benefit academic brigade, as complacent learners. As higher education enters a sea of uncertainty at the beginning of the 21st century, the intense focus on education delivered online is causing great waves of change, hope, new enthusiasm, through the academic community. In order to put this whole technological and pedagogical dilemma in perspective, let's examine how the current educational revolution compares with educational revolutions in the past. Two times in the historical past, education has undergone dramatic transformations: "From the oral dialogue of Socrates' day toward educational forms that included reading and writing; and from independent scholars teaching independent learners in 'ad hoc' settings in the early middle ages to a new mode of learning: organized scholars and students working within university campuses" (Ehrmann). During the third revolution, we are in danger of compromising the quality of education because we may too easily lose sight of the goal: learning.

Learning Process

Learning is an abstract, invisible, unending and permanent phenomenon. Everyone, no matter the age, academic qualification, social level, marital status or gender difference, is bound to learn, although the pace of learning and the ability to comprehend the learnt information may however, differ from person to person. The reality is that any meaningful learning is expected to lead to behavioural change in the recipient.

1. Encourage cooperation among students
Competition vs. Collaboration

Learning is enhanced when it is more like a team effort than a solo race. Good learning, like good work, is collaborative and social, not competitive and isolated. Working with others often increases involvement in learning. Sharing one's own ideas and responding to others' actions sharpens thinking and deepens understanding.

Cooperative learning can be characterized by five elements:

1. Positive interdependence
2. Personal responsibility
3. Group processing
4. Face-to-face interaction
5. Collaborative skills

"Asynchronous communication can help to promote collaboration among students when it incorporates a simulated learning approach whereby students can relate ideas being discussed to their own working environment". By collaborating with one another, students may be more able to transfer what they are learning to their own particular situation. Asynchronous discussion groups via course bulletin boards or listservs are another channel for student collaboration. As with using e-mail, clear guidelines for using these tools should be

established. Guidelines should be established as to the proper netiquette expected in postings with asynchronous tools. Synchronous communication can be more motivating and can better focus the energy of the group than asynchronous communication. Real-time interaction helps students to know one another and to "develop a sense of 'social presence' and group cohesion. Synchronous systems provide instantaneous feedback on ideas, and they support consensus and decision making. Synchronous events encourage people to keep up-to-date on assigned work and provide structure and discipline".

Some ways to encourage student cooperation in online courses

- Design collaborative group projects that require input from each group member and that are recursive, that is, the project requires multiple iterations to be completed.
- Make sure the students know how to participate in a group project. At the beginning of the project, assign group roles to students and rotate the roles within the group.
- Provide a number of milestones for the project so students have a way to assess their own progress.
- Provide examples of good, mediocre, and bad projects.
- Make sure the students know how to use the electronic tools necessary to complete the project.
- Keep membership in groups small, no more than four or five.
- Assign only one major group project per term. Assign the project early in the term so students will have ample time to work on it.
- Make participation in discussion groups mandatory. Define what constitutes a contribution to the discussion groups.
- Provide a focus for course discussions, such as a summary, analysis, or synthesis.
- Give students feedback on the quality of their discussions. This will reduce student stress by letting them know their standing in the course.
- Provide "weaving" comments when and where necessary to bring related ideas together.
- However, the instructor should not dominate the discussion.
- Have students post their biographies and interests to help them make connections with one another. Include photographs if possible.

2. Engage Active learning

Active learning in the online course is not an option, it is a necessity. "In fact, a student's very existence depends on active participation." The very nature of the online course and the World Wide Web demand active participation by online students. The sheer volume of information available on the World Wide Web precludes neatly packaged bits of information–there is always more available. Students must actively seek out information relevant to the course and integrate it into their own knowledge base. In the online classroom, even more so than in the traditional classroom, "learners must be viewed as meaning makers who actively select, organize, and integrate their experiences with existing knowledge." Information in the age of a networked world is so volatile that it becomes meaningless for any person to "know" everything about a particular subject. The critical skill for students is to learn how to learn, and that means being an active participant in the process, rather than a passive receptor for "knowledge." All learning involves the transfer of information from one knowledge base to another, with the creation of new internal relationships between what is already known and what has remained unknown. The ability to internalize knowledge is one type of transfer. Externalize and extend knowledge is another type of transfer. Learning requires the ability to do both. The more actively learners work to capture, comprehend, and

understand new concepts, the more likely they will be to acquire a deep and enduring level of learning. "'Doing helps transfer new knowledge from short term memory to long term memory. Both internal and external transfer depends on the student's ability to identify and abstract relationships. There are two types of student-generated relationships thatare useful in designing distance learning instruction. "First, learners must construct relationships among the information read in instructional materials. Second, learners must relate this new information to their existing knowledge structures in order to form new meanings and conceptual relationships" (Morrison & Guenther, 2000, p.19).

One of the most effective methods to engage students actively in their own learning is to use case-based and/or problem-based learning. These two types of learning immerse students in examples that help them to understand and integrate concepts. Cases and problems can be presented in many formats: video clips, written, software-based, in games. Follow-up discussion ensures that the targeted concepts have transferred and give the instructor an opportunity to identify and remedy any misconceptions.

Some ways to encourage active learning in online courses

- Require students to construct deep explanations, justifications, and reasons for what they think and do. Require participation in course discussion, posting messages in their own words to help them analyze and synthesize disparate chunks of information.
- Develop question-response-clarification cycles between professor and students or among students. Use listservs and/or bulletin boards to lessen the instructor work load.
- Provide opportunities for students in online classrooms to engage in high-level discussions by framing and presenting ideas, formulating challenging questions for peers, and responding to those questions to clarify misconceptions that arise.
- Provide explicit instructions to students for participating in online discussions.
- Get students to relate ideas that they are learning to real-world issues.
- Assign "real-world" projects or authentic assignments. Help students to abstract the principles that underpin the learning objective(s) for the assignments.
- Require students to present their work to the rest of the class.
- Require class members to give feedback on the projects that are presented.
- Encourage students to challenge the ideas of the instructor, of other students, or those presented in the readings or other course materials.

3. Explore diverse talents and Multiple Intelligence

Multiple Intelligence and respect for diverse talents and ways of learning styles is not so much concerned with catering to each student's strength as it is about defining a way of viewing the world. Students bring to the course different talents, different styles of learning, different cultural and educational backgrounds, different expectations, different assumptions. Online learning with its toolbox of presentation techniques makes it possible to provide learning experiences in multiple formats. This does not mean that every lesson or learning module need be presented in every possible format. It does make it possible to present material across the course in many different formats, with the effect of providing some material to students in their preferred learning style while requiring them to experience other learning styles and to acquire additional learning skills, what Alley and Jansak term "intellectual cross-training" (2001, p. 14). Allowing students to learn at their own pace is almost built in to the online environment. Students can turn the flow of information on and off at will in the online environment, a situation that does not exist in the typical traditional

classroom. In order to facilitate this ability, the instructor must break down units of study into smaller pieces to give students many opportunities to stop and reflect on what they are learning (Alley & Jansak, 2001). Project-based learning, rather than strictly sequenced learning activities, also allows students a great deal of latitude in choosing their preferred method of acquiring knowledge. Students in online courses, even more so than in traditional courses, may come from around the globe. In a highly participatory course, this richness of diversity and background can bring a facet to the online course that may not exist in a traditional, place-bound course. Compensation may have to be made for students using second or third languages, for differing cultural expectations and practices, for differing expectations based on age and experience, for time differences, and for the multitude of other differences.

Some ways to respect diverse talents and ways of learning in online courses adapted from Graham, et al. (2000)
- Allow students to shape their own coursework by choosing project topics.
- Attempt to learn about the different backgrounds and interests of the students.
- Encourage students to express their diverse points of view.
- Include learning exercises filled with real-life examples that represent diverse, unique perspectives.
- Encourage students from diverse backgrounds to collaborate on projects.
- Limit the use of idioms and colloquialisms, or explain their meaning.

Conclusion

We live in a Knowledge era, where, technologies dominate the world. It is not, however, the technologies themselves that cause any change, it is the ways in which we as educators choose to use them. The key to a successful coursework is an interactive relationship between the learner, the task, and the teacher who will largely act as a facilitator of learning without depriving the students of experiencing learning and discovering knowledge on their own. Use of strategies for teaching for effective experiential learning can be designed by using Constructivism and Multiple Intelligence Theory at large to benefit the student community, which will in turn, help the masses to learn and eventually pave way for development of the nations and the whole world.

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THE CHALLENGES OF TEACHING WITH TECHNOLOGY

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Introduction

Teaching with technology is complicated further considering the challenges newer technologies present to teachers. In our work, the word technology applies equally to analog and digital, as well as new and old, technologies. As a matter of practical significance, however, most of the technologies under consideration in current literature are newer and digital and have some inherent properties that make applying them in straightforward ways difficult. By their very nature, newer digital technologies, which are protean, unstable, and opaque, present new challenges to teachers who are struggling to use more technology in their teaching.

Email does not afford synchronous communication in the way that a phone call, a face-to-face conversation, or instant messaging does. Nor does email afford the conveyance of subtleties of tone, intent, or mood possible with face-to-face communication. Understanding how these affordances and constraints of specific technologies influence what teachers do in their classrooms is not straightforward and may require rethinking teacher education and teacher professional development.

An Approach to Thinking about Technology Integration

There is no "one best way" to integrate technology into curriculum. Rather, *integration* efforts should be creatively designed or structured for particular subject matter ideas in specific classroom contexts. Honoring the idea that teaching with technology is a complex, ill-structured task; we propose that understanding approaches to successful technology integration requires educators to develop new ways of comprehending and accommodating this complexity.

At the heart of good teaching with technology are three core components: content, pedagogy, and technology, plus the relationships among and between them. The interactions between and among the three components like playing out differently across diverse contexts, account for the wide variations seen in the extent and quality of educational technology integration. These three knowledge bases (content, pedagogy and technology) form the core of the technology, pedagogy, and content knowledge (TPACK) framework.

The TPACK Framework

In this model, there are three main components of teachers' knowledge: content, pedagogy, and technology. Equally important to the model are the interactions between and among these bodies of knowledge, represented as PCK, TCK (technological content knowledge), TPK (technological pedagogical knowledge) and TPACK.

Content Knowledge

Content Knowledge (CK) is teachers' knowledge about the subject matter to be learned or taught. The content to be covered in middle school science or history is different from the content to be covered in an undergraduate course on art appreciation or a graduate seminar on astrophysics. Knowledge of content is of critical importance for teachers.

Knowledge and the nature of inquiry differ greatly between fields, and teachers should understand the deeper knowledge fundamentals of the disciplines in which they teach. In the case of science, for example, this would include knowledge of scientific facts and theories, the scientific method, and evidence-based reasoning. In the case of art appreciation, such knowledge would include knowledge of art history, famous paintings, sculptures, artists and their historical contexts, as well as knowledge of aesthetic and psychological theories for evaluating art.

Pedagogical Knowledge

Pedagogical knowledge (PK) is teachers' deep knowledge about the processes and practices or methods of teaching and learning. They encompass, among other things, overall educational purposes, values, and aims. This generic form of knowledge applies to understanding how students learn, general classroom management skills, lesson planning, and student assessment. It includes knowledge about techniques or methods used in the classroom; the nature of the target audience; and strategies for evaluating student understanding. A teacher with deep pedagogical knowledge understands how students construct knowledge and acquire skills and how they develop habits of mind and positive dispositions toward learning. As such, pedagogical knowledge requires an understanding of cognitive, social, and developmental theories of learning and how they apply to students in the classroom.

Pedagogical Content Knowledge

PCK is consistent with and similar to Shulman's idea of knowledge of pedagogy that is applicable to the teaching of specific content. Central to Shulman's conceptualization of PCK is the notion of the transformation of the subject matter for teaching. PCK covers the core business of teaching, learning, curriculum, assessment and reporting, such as the conditions that promote learning and the links among curriculum, assessment, and pedagogy. An awareness of common misconceptions and ways of looking at them, the importance of forging connections among different content-based ideas, students' prior knowledge, alternative teaching strategies, and the flexibility that comes from exploring alternative ways of looking at the same idea or problem are all essential for effective teaching.

Technology Knowledge

The definition of TK used in the TPACK framework is close to that of Fluency of Information Technology (Fitness), as proposed by the Committee of Information Technology Literacy of the National Research Council (NRC, 1999). They argue that Fitness goes beyond traditional notions of computer literacy to require that persons understand information technology broadly enough to apply it productively at work and in their everyday lives, to recognize when information technology can assist or impede the achievement of a goal, and to continually adapt to changes in information technology.

Fitness, therefore, requires a deeper, more essential understanding and mastery of information technology for information processing, communication, and problem solving than does the traditional definition of computer literacy.

Technological Content Knowledge

Technology and content knowledge have a deep historical relationship. Progress in fields as diverse as medicine, history, archeology, and physics have coincided with the development of new technologies that afford the representation and manipulation of data in new and fruitful ways. Consider Roentgen's discovery of X-rays or the technique of carbon-

14 dating and the influence of these technologies in the fields of medicine and archeology. Consider also how the advent of the digital computer changed the nature of physics and mathematics and placed a greater emphasis on the role of simulation in understanding phenomena. Technological changes have also offered new metaphors for understanding the world. Viewing the heart as a pump, or the brain as an information processing machine are just some of the ways in which technologies have provided new perspectives for understanding phenomena. These representational and metaphorical connections are not superficial. They often have led to fundamental changes in the natures of the disciplines.

Technology can constrain the types of possible representations, but also can afford the construction of newer and more varied representations. Furthermore, technological tools can provide a greater degree of flexibility in navigating across these representations.

TCK, then, is an understanding of the manner in which technology and content influence and constrain one another. Teachers need to master more than the subject matter they teach; they must also have a deep understanding of the manner in which the subject matter (or the kinds of representations that can be constructed) can be changed by the application of particular technologies. Teachers need to understand which specific technologies are best suited for addressing subject-matter learning in their domains and how the content dictates or perhaps even changes the technology or vice versa.

Technological Pedagogical Knowledge

TPK is an understanding of how teaching and learning can change when particular technologies are used in particular ways. This includes knowing the pedagogical affordances and constraints of a range of technological tools as they relate to disciplinarily and developmentally appropriate pedagogical designs and strategies. To build TPK, a deeper understanding of the constraints and affordances of technologies and the disciplinary contexts within which they function is needed. For example, consider how whiteboards may be used in classrooms. Because a whiteboard is typically immobile, visible to many, and easily editable, its uses in classrooms are presupposed. Thus, the whiteboard is usually placed at the front of the classroom and is controlled by the teacher. This location imposes a particular physical order in the classroom by determining the placement of tables and chairs and framing the nature of student-teacher interaction, since students often can use it only when called upon by the teacher.

TPK becomes particularly important because most popular software programs are not designed for educational purposes. Software programs such as the Microsoft Office Suite (Word, PowerPoint, Excel, Entourage, and MSN Messenger) are usually designed for business environments. Web-based technologies such as blogs or podcasts are designed for purposes of entertainment, communication, and social networking. Teachers need to reject functional fixedness (Duncker, 1945) and develop skills to look beyond most common uses for technologies, reconfiguring them for customized pedagogical purposes. Thus, TPK requires a forward-looking, creative, and open-minded seeking of technology use, not for its own sake but for the sake of advancing student learning and understanding.

Technology, Pedagogy and Content Knowledge

TPACK is an emergent form of knowledge that goes beyond all three "core" components (content, pedagogy, and technology). Technological pedagogical content knowledge is an understanding that emerges from interactions among content, pedagogy, and technology knowledge. Underlying truly meaningful and deeply skilled teaching with technology, TPACK is different from knowledge of all three concepts individually. Instead, TPACK is the basis of effective teaching with technology, requiring an understanding of the

representation of concepts using technologies; pedagogical techniques that use technologies in constructive ways to teach content; knowledge of what makes concepts difficult or easy to learn and how technology can help redress some of the problems that students face; knowledge of students' prior knowledge and theories of epistemology; and knowledge of how technologies can be used to build on existing knowledge to develop new epistemologies or strengthen old ones.

Implications of the TPACK Framework

TPACK is a professional knowledge to construct. The act of seeing technology, pedagogy and content as three interrelated knowledge bases is not straightforward. As said before, Implications of the TPACK Framework, We have argued that teaching is a complex, ill-structured domain. Underlying this complexity, however, are three key components of teacher knowledge: understanding of content, understanding of teaching, and understanding of technology. The complexity of technology integration comes from an appreciation of the rich connections of knowledge among these three components and the complex ways in which these are applied in multifaceted and dynamic classroom contexts.

Since the late 1960's a strand of educational research has aimed at understanding and explaining "how and why the observable activities of teachers' professional lives take on the forms and functions they do" (Clark & Petersen, 1986, p. 255; Jackson, 1968). A primary goal of this research is to understand the relationships between two key domains: (a) teacher thought processes and knowledge and (b) teachers' actions and their observable effects. The current work on the TPACK framework seeks to extend this tradition of research and scholarship by bringing technology integration into the kinds of knowledge that teachers need to consider when teaching. The TPACK framework seeks to assist the development of better techniques for discovering and describing how technology-related professional knowledge is implemented and instantiated in practice.

Conclusion

By better describing the types of knowledge teachers need (in the form of content, pedagogy, technology, contexts and their interactions), educators are in a better position to understand the variance in levels of technology integration occurring. In addition, the TPACK framework offers several possibilities for promoting research in teacher education, teacher professional development, and teachers' use of technology. It offers options for looking at a complex phenomenon like technology integration in ways that are now amenable to analysis and development. Moreover, it allows teachers, researchers, and teacher educators to move beyond oversimplified approaches that treat technology as an "add-on" instead to focus again, and in a more ecological way, upon the connections among technology, content, and pedagogy as they play out in classroom contexts.

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RETHINKING DISTANCE LEARNING FOR EFFECTIVE ENGAGEMENT OF STUDENTS - A BLENDED LEARNING APPROACH

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Introduction

The word "Blended learning" (BL) has stretched substantial attention in recent years as an explanation of particular forms of instruction merged with technology. The definition of Blended learning is different and distinct. For example, Whitelock & Jefts (2003), Alavi & Gallupe (2003), Arbaugh (2005) and Peterson (2003) referred to Blended Learning as the integrated combination of traditional learning with web-based online approaches, the combination of media and tools deployed in an e-learning environment and the combination of a number of pedagogical approaches, irrespective of the learning technology used in each case. Teaching through blended learning method would be more effective if the teacher uses blended learning educators competencies along with conventional teaching method in distance education. "Competencies" denote a set of conscious, trainable skills and abilities which make a teacher effective in the context of variability and uniqueness of each and every educational situation. Blended learning competencies in distance education are important because they enable a transition to mastery-based progression, personalization, and effective use of technology. It creates and cultivates a culture of ongoing learning and innovation among students and teachers. Blended learning competencies along with pedagogical practices mixes various event based activities, including face-to-face classrooms, live e-learning and self-paced learning. In this paper an attempt is made to integrate blended learning competencies with pedagogical practices to foster active learning community through distance education mode.

The Relevance of E- Competence in Education Innovation

Lifelong learning is more possible in distance education which facilitate learner to learn for their betterment of life. For this effective learning e-competence is needed for both teacher and learner. The e-competence referred in this paper conveys the ability or skills possed by both teacher and learner with the help of ICT. In the higher education area, recent discussions have evolved in eLearning on thestrategic challenge to implement new technologies in a sustainable way into universities (Euler & Seufert 2004; Duderstadt, Atkins & Van Houweling 2003). Its main interest is on the role of the humanfactor in technology-driven innovation in universities. In current human resource managementmodels, individual competences of the employees are defined as the most limited resource ofthe organisation (Albrecht, Frommann & Phan Tan 2005; North 2005). When we apply this assumption to e-Learning the higher education sector, eCompetence is, at its core, dealing with the development of personal competences in the creative use of ICT. One cannot innovate distance learning as a whole without developing the competences of teachers.

Competences are capacities, capable of development, of people to act in an adequate, purposeful and motivated manner in certain situations, i.e. to choose and relateappropriate procedures to achieve the desired results. Competences are complex by nature, refer to underlying skill, knowledge and attitudinal domains, and are appliedand developed in a

context. The contents of competences have several dimensions. According to Weinert's (2001) competence is defined as a complex system including cognitive, attitudinal, social andskill-related aspects.

The delivery of material is technically easier in online or recorded courses, only it consumes more time in preparation of materials.Whatever the context or specific situation, the instructor must often prepare for multiple student audiences simultaneously, one in the traditional classroom and the other by distance learning. The presence of teacher is more important for active engagement of the student. Blended learning is a hybrid of both face-to-face class and technology enhanced class.

Blended Teaching E- Competencies

Teacher needs to possess certain competencies for teaching in distance learning mode. Competency is defined as "an underlying characteristic of an individual that is causally related to effective or superior performance (Boyatzis, 1982, p97)." These characteristics include enduring motives, traits, self-concepts, values, knowledge, and skills that can be assessed and differentiated (Boyatzis, 1982; Spencer & Spencer, 1993; Hunt & Weintraub, 2007; Vazirani, 2010). Competencies means effective actions applied to acquire skills and abilities to reach certain goals. E-competence is possessed by both teachers and students in distance learning but not in the same dimensions; it varies according to the context. The primary goal of the teacher is to teach, the primary goal of the student is to learn. But the success of a particular method depends on the degree in which competencies of teachers and competencies of student are effectively used or not.

Effective Engagement of Students

Some students often seek individual flexibility and at the same time many need or prefer group collaboration and social unity. Both these individual flexibility and group collaboration is possible in Blended learning programme which can be conducted for distance course. There are different types of learning which fosters effective engagement for learning. This paper discusses three main types of learning namelycooperative learning or collaborative learning, online learning and individual learning. These types of learning allow students to have optimal individual freedom within online learning communities.

Individual, Cooperative and Collaborative Learning

Technology supports both individual learning and social networks. The focus of classroom is also changed by using many social network platforms for teaching and learning processes. For example the online platforms such as MOODLE, EDMODO, FACE BOOK, WIKISPACE and WEBCT greatly enhances teaching and learning process for both individual learning and group learning.

Students work together to maximize their own learning and other group learning in cooperative learning. Gokhale (1995, p. 23) presents a very similar definition of collaborative learning stating that it is: "An instruction method in which students work in groups toward a common academic goal".

- *Individual learning* affords superior individual flexibility, but very limited attraction to aLearning community. It has a strong position in online education delivered by educational institutionswith a tradition in distance education.
- *Collaborative* learning requires participation of each students or members in a learning community, but it limitsindividual flexibility. One may say that collaborative learning requires that students sinkor swim together. Collaborative learning is commonly seen in online education offered bytraditional face-to-face institutions.

- *Cooperative learning* focuses on opportunities to encourage both individual flexibilityand attraction to a learning community. Cooperative learning seeks to foster some benefitsfrom individual freedom and other benefits from cooperation in online learningcommunities. It increases in virtual learning environments that emphasize individualfreedom within online learning communities.

- *E-learning (Online learning)* is defined as use of new multimedia technologies and internet to improve quality of learning by facilitating access to resources and services on line (Picciano, 2006). Recent research on online learning tend to incorporate pedagogical principles in teaching. While there is little consensus on a precise definition, e-learning, as defined by the American Society of Training and Development (ASTD,n.d.), covers a wide set of applications and processes, such as web-based learning, computer based learning , virtual classrooms and digital collaboration. It includes delivery of content via Internet, intranet/extranet (LAN/WAN), audio and videotape, satellite broadcast, interaction TV, CD-Rom and more. In online learning traditional face-to-face learning is limited.

If more individual flexibility is provided then students are more attracted to learning community. Individual flexibility is more possible in virtual learning environment that is collaborative learning environment. In collaborative learning environment teaching and learning occurs both individually and in group. Students' progress may be assessed both individually and in group. Therefore in collaborative learning students students gets more active engagement. The activities which make them more active engagement are Students profile and list, Assignment, Quizzes' ,Assessment, Submission system and discussion forum.

Discussion Forums

Discussion forums are excellent means to access and promote effective learning communities. Number of learning activities happens in discussion forum, teacher post the topic and asked the student to post in the discussion forum based on the number of the threads in the forum students' progress increases. So students voluntarily involve in discussion forum to achieve their maximum progress.

Submission System

Assignment and assessment are part of teaching and learning process which increases inclusiveness among diversified group. The online platform will be designed in such a manner that lime limit will be fixed and due date will be given to complete the assignment. If the students are failed to submit on time means it will show as late submission and grade will be given accordingly. Therefore the submission system actually finds the deviations between the actual submission date and the planned submission date and registration of grades.

Student Profile and List

Student list are important tools which shows students who were access to a Learning community. Student catalogues usually provide information about all students enrolled in a course. However, students can access information and maintain communication with other students and teachers for active learning. This communicationmay be through e-mail addresses, telephone Numbers, chatting identities, forums etc. that could support electronic communication. It also includes progress information of students particular mail Id.

 Assessment

Assessment could be of different types namely self-assessment, computer assessment, teacher assessment and peer assessment. Computer assessment check for how many times replied, time used and sharing scores etc. Self-assessment encourage students to identify their level and access information from other students and compare their level.*Peer assessment* is

cooperative if students are encouraged to voluntary assess each other's work. *Teacher assessment* could be cooperative if the students have access to some of the information the teacher provides or derives from assessing other students. If students involve in all such activities automatically active engagement of students takes place in distance education.

Distance Education as Support for Independent and Online Learning

Students should need particular qualities to learn through online collaborative learning. First they should have a mindset of using latest technology during learning process. Students should feel free to share success and failure openly in the forum and share. Students should always be ready to learn things beyond classroom. They should possess good communication skill to learn. So by using Blended learning method student can attain good progress.

In management of Blended Learning in distance education experience teacher and student should understand the face-to-face and online components of lesson planning and organization within a blended course.Provide balanced opportunities for students to participate in asynchronous and synchronous modalities.Teacher should develop, practice, model, and embody respectful behaviors in both face-to-face and online learning environments.Demonstrate technical troubleshooting skills during the online component of learning (e.g., change passwords, download plug-ins, etc.). In using Instructional Tools teacher should use learning management system and other online collaborative tools to organize and manage the blended learning environment in distance education.

Blended Learning in Distance Education for Creating Active Learning Communities in Classroom

Blended learning in distance education is a combination of conventional and online learning. It allows student to be active participants in education by keeping them active at every activities. The learners who participate in both face to face and online learning are called blended learning communities. In blended learning community is mostly seen in distance education system, learners support and assist one another, make decisions synergistically, and communicate with each other about topics beyond those assigned. They spend more time working individually and collaboratively on assignments, projects, and activities. Faculty spend less time lecturing and more time reviewing and evaluating student work and guiding and interacting with students. Blended learning increases participation and decreases student isolation. It also increases the likelihood of introducing different perspectives and supports the use of interactive instructional strategies. Teacher with blended teaching competencies can strengthen blended learning communities in classroom. Thus it improves the activities for the students and strengthens the pedagogical practices.

Impacts of Blended Learning on Distance Learning

Emerging technological functions convey certain ways in which this increased power could enhance the communications channel in distance learning. The present scenario itself act as digital natives, students feel handicapped without technology in the classroom. Many ideas for improving education centered on enhancing individualization, students' active construction of knowledge; collaborative learning, situated learning, experiential learning , sophisticated evaluation strategies, improved pedagogical practices between teachers and intelligent tools, So these emerging technologies creates well progressed communication system.

Conclusion

The new functionalities are altering the characteristics of the communications channel between student and subject, distance learning is particularly affected. Our paradigm for distance learning must progress so that we can replicate the workplaces and communities of the future in educational institution today. This will support students in mastering, filtering and interpretation of the complex informational environments in to sophisticated media for learning in society. Distance learning is not only a method of delivering instructional services when conventional classroom approaches are impossible; student familiarity with technology experience is vital for students to manage with the surrounding.

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EMPOWERING THE SCHOOL TEACHERS IN RURAL AREAS THROUGH SATELLITE BASEDCONNECTIVITY: EXPERIENCES OF RAJIV GANDHI PROJECT FOR EDUSAT SUPPORTED ELEMENTARY EDUCATION

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Background of "Rajiv Gandhi Project for EduSat Supported Elementary Education" (RGPEEE)

There has been a growing realization among the decision making circles that technology can suitably mitigate the perennial problems of Access, Retention and Quality in Indian School Education particularly in geographically inaccessible areas. Millennium Development Goals have further intensified this concern leading to a spade of activities to meet the targets.

With the major strides taken by the country for space technology and capabilities acquired by the Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) the new possibilities of using Satellite Technologies have come to the forefront. Satellite technologies are cheaper and specially suited for a country like India where a sizeable proportion of population lives in geographically difficult areas poorly connected by efficient transport network.

Under the prevailing circumstances when most of the rural schools are starving for good quality infrastructure and academic expertise, technology enabled solutions can immediately come to our rescue. Technological interventionscan empower the school teachers, help them to enhance learning outcomes and ultimately make the learning interesting for target groups. EduSat, the dedicated satellite for the education was designed to put in place ground-breakingOut of Box solutionsfor school education sector. The satellite was launched in 2002 with a major focus to strengthen *"SarvaShikshaAbhiyaan"* in the country. The satellite had special features to create Virtual Class Rooms, interactivity among remote users, On-demand video and several other interesting features. Open and Distance Learning systems of the country have been very quick to grab this opportunity. However, to deploy the technological solutions on large scale, we need to test its suitability at systemic level and gain experience for utilization in large scale.

The Satellite Based Capabilities were tested in *Chamraj Nagar* of Karnataka State where a network of Receive Only Terminals (ROTs) established in different schools and connected to a Hub had delivered excellent results. However no such experience was available in Northern States where Hindi speaking is being a link language, a large scale networking was possible.In order to gain experience in utilization of Satellite Based Communication in School Education, a pilot project was conceived in 2005 with a major focus on Hindi Speaking Sates.The project was unique in the following ways:

a) The project conceptualized that teachers identified from Rural Schools need to be at the focus of the entire content generation process. Since the rural teachers are in day to day contact with their students, they are the best persons to decide the content which need to be developed. The experience has been gained by rural teachers through years of interactions in class rooms with their students. They know the problems of their students well and can inform us their learning behavior. Hence project officials visualized that rural teachers should be at centre stage and decided that they should lead the entire process of content generation.

b) It gives recognition to the rich pool of tacit knowledge which the rural teachers possess and helps them to articulate their ideas through suitably blending their capabilities with ICT competencies. However, it was a major challenge to identify the motivated teachers and develop their competencies before they were put to job. The project planners carefully planned these activities through regular workshops and training programmes.The identification of teachers and organizing their training programmes was done in war footing before the project actually started in December 2005.

Launch of RGPEEE and its Subsequent Expansions

The project was launched in December 2005 in Sidhi, Madhya Pradesh and subsequently project activities started across the project area. The state Government of Madhya Pradesh came forward to allot space for construction of the studios and uplink station at *Prantiya Shiksha Mahavidyalay (PSM), Jabalpur,* which is the major institution of teachers' training in Madhya Pradesh. Besides, Jabalpur was advantageous location due to another premier institution DPM-IIIT Jabalpur, which agreed to give technical support in the process of context generation. These developments created a collaborative situation for setting up of a Hub at Jabalpur. The officials of ISRO visited Jabalpur in September 2005 and immediately proceeded for identification of schools in the rural areas. The identification of schools and setting up of Hub simultaneously started and within a short span of 3 months the project's basic network including transmission station and receiving sites in the target areas came to a workable level. Project started with this basic network in 20th December 2005. While the network and Earth Station was being put in place, the orientation of rural teachers, identification of hard spots and training of script writing was simultaneously going on. This entire exercise was carefully undertaken so that by the time the network became functional, Project officials had already developed a trained force of rural teachers who were specially oriented to take up the job of context generation. Such specially - motivated teachers who were deputed to IGNOU HQ, Maidan Garhi, New Delhi for specialized training on script writing and video recording. Since most of them were not exposed to the Camera and ICT techniques, it was felt that they had to be trained about how their ideas will be conceived through eye of the camera. The major focus was to help them articulate their ideas through special camera tricks. It was a major challenge because most of teachers were from villages and had poor exposure about technology oriented delivery. They were too hesitant to come forward with new ideas. We had to work hard with them to instill the required level of confidence in them so that they could articulate their ideas. These teachers had to lead the entire content generation process and therefore we taken this step with repeated sessions. Our results led to expected result and within 3 months of the launch of the project we had created an impressive repository of scripts/programmes.Project soon expanded to other Hindi speaking states and the network has sizeable presence in Hindi speaking states. The existing network is given below.

Constraints and Challenges of RGPEEE

The project activities have accumulated rich experience of content generation, developed impressive repository of video programmes, trained manpower spread over project area and created infrastructure ready for teachers training. The content generated by the project is of exceptional quality. It depicts the articulation of ideas given by the rural teachers. While writing video scripts they used to give commendable ideas which even surprised the eminent professors of education. The RGPEEE has therefore unfolded a paradigmatically new approach of *"End User Led Content Generation"*. The videos

developed by the project have generated over whelming enthusiasm for such content and the various studies have appreciated the value of this content. Several research studies have analyzed the impact of the RGPEEE.The different aspects of the impact studies done by the researchers are given below. Most of these studies are based on questionnaire surveys or the case studies done on the RGPEEE.

Specific Features of RGPEEE

Despite its successful implementation RGPEEE has faced several constraints, mostly of administrative nature. The major constraints were about the monitoring and security of the equipments provided at different receiving sites. Some of the issues which hindered the smooth implementation of the project are described follows:

(a) *Administrative Issues:* IGNOU being the nodal agency the entire responsibility of monitoring and feedback had to be carried out by IGNOU's officials. However the receiving sites were in schools/DIETs of the State Governments. It was difficult to coordinate this process, as the schools and DIETwere not part of the hierarchical framework of IGNOU. Quite often theyperceived the IGNOU as outside agency. The teachers of schools were found overburdened with already assigned responsibility. They were too apprehensive that additional responsibilities will disturb their commitments for host institution. There were no arrangements for security of the infrastructure in the school which added to their problems and insecurities. It was observed that in a large number of receiving sites the equipments were stolen and the school Principals could do a little to save the situations. The issues of maintenance continued to remain a problem, primarily due to remoteness of the receiving sites. Though the project officials made consistent efforts to set right the maintenance problems, the delays did take place which adversely affected the scheduled activities. The insurance of the equipments was provided but the procedures involved a cumbersome way of claiming the insurance claims. However such issues were confirmed to selected pockets and in rest of the places the response was appreciable.

(b) *Academic Issues:* The entire idea was to synchronize the telecast with regular classroom lectures. However keeping in view of the different level of manpower available at different locations, it was difficult for the schools to utilize the telecast schedule. Repeat telecast was also conducted but the solar panel could give limited back-up for running the TV. The rural - teachers whose expertise was needed for content generation at Hub, could not be spared by their schools for long spells of time. It hinderedthe content generation process. The limited number of school teacherswho were trained for content generation, were under routine transfers of the department, which further restricted their availability. It constrained the content generation exercise.

Recommendations and Conclusion

(a) RGPEEE has established the utility of satellite communication for school education sector. Satellite technologies are cheaper and low operational cost makes them ideal option to enhance the reach of school education. Besides, the maintenance expenditures are low, which is the added advantage. However, despite the low operational cost and enhanced reach of satellite technologies, we need to be careful about the community's participation in the implementation of such projects. The major hassle in the implementation of RGPEEE was large scale thefts of the equipments supplied to receiving sites. It was surprising that community members did not hesitate to indulge in thefts, though the facility was primarily created for their

welfare. We need to be careful on this aspect. As long as community truly owns the project, it will be difficult to realize it's fully potential. Hence, the ICT designs should emerge in consultation with community. The community based organizations at the level of villages, parent - teachers meetings etc., should be involved in the security of the equipments and monitoring of its utilization.

(b) The RGPEEE has helped to evolve a paradigmatically new approach for content generation. The project involved the teachers from rural schools, developed their capacities and ultimately generated the contents suiting the learning styles of the rural students. The project has been able to develop a huge repository of such lessons which has evoked enthusiastic response. Thus the content generation process was led by End User.

(c) The project has been able to create huge man power available in the rural schools which are suitably oriented to implement ICT interventions in classrooms. Besides, the rural students have got the exposure of technology enabled academic delivery, at very early age in their life. Thepositive psychological atmosphere created by the project in the villages will be helpful for creating further innovation in class rooms.

The existing infrastructure generated by the project can be immensely useful for any other developmentintervention in the villages. For example, there has been a great need for connecting the people at the developmental planning at state level and the field functionaries at village level. The RGPEEE has created a unique opportunity to link the decision making circles of the Government with field level staff. During its initial project conceptualization stage RGPEEE was even thought to be useful for telemedicine. Such possibilities can be explored through added infrastructure at Satellite Interactive Terminals (SIT's) of the project.

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NEED FOR AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION THROUGH ICTs IN DISTANCE EDUCATION OF TAMIL NADU

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Introduction

India is well-known around the world for its rapid economic growth rates over the last fifteen years or so, fuelled in part by the spectacular growth in its export oriented software and ICT (Information and Communication Technologies) based services sector. Many other countries look to India as a model for global outsourcing and try to imitate elements of this in their own strategies. Success at a particular period of time does not, of course, guarantee its continuation and commentators have expressed concerns such as rising wage rates and skill shortages of ICT professionals and increasing completion from countries such as China. It is likely, however, that India will remain a major player in the ICT industry for years to come and thus its global image as an ICT success story will continue.

Agriculture in India is the pivotal sector for ensuring food and nutritional security, sustainable development and for alleviation of poverty. It is a key sector for generating employment opportunity. Indian agriculture sector contributes 14 per cent of GDP, provides food to one billion people, sustains 65 per cent of the population and contributes about 11 per cent of the export earnings. Indian agriculture contributes to 8 per cent global agriculture gross domestic product to support 18 per cent of world population on only 9 per cent of world's arable land and 2.3 of geographical area. This sector also influences essential ecosystem services such as water and carbon sequestration. Milestones in agricultural economics development in India includes: Green Revolution, Evergreen Revolution, Blue Revolution, White Revolution, Yellow Revolution, Bio-technology Revolution, ICT Revolution and so on.

Objectives of ICT in Agricultural Sector

ICT in agriculture sector meets several objectives and thereby achieving agricultural growth, rural employment, enhanced productivity and happy livelihood. Following are some of the main objectives of ICT enabled agriculture.

1. To ensure ownership and develop entrepreneurship in farmers of Indian villages.
2. To develop local content and create awareness.
3. To spread knowledge of technologies crop cycle, suitable use of fertilizers, etc.,
4. To ensure language and cultural pertinence and active participation of farmers.
5. To help the villagers augment the growth of agriculture and contribute in GDP growth.
6. To implement a frame work for agricultural development strategies, investment and programs.
7. To increase public investment in agriculture.
8. To provide local as well as global markets.
9. To improve access to financial and banking services.

Economic Benefit of ICT in Agriculture

Management of technological information which includes price and market information; weather conditions; economic variables; communication with peers and business transactions etc., plays a significant role in achieving competitiveness. ICTs provide transparency in implementation mechanisms that could be seen in paddy procurement systems in Government of Haryana State and several other purchase schemes of various crops all across the country. The money is directly transferred to bank account of farmers that reduces the possibility of malpractice by agents and also addresses the corruption menace to large extent.

The department of weather forecasting predicts about rain and weather in general, helps the farmers in planning managing of various stages of agriculture. ICT plays crucial role in agriculture production, crop management and others. However, the implementation is affected by several factors such as required infrastructure for access and affordability of ICT tools and facilities; internet connectivity in production and commercial areas; outreach of awareness programmes, the quality and availability of suitable information content; limitation of the media; choices and appropriation of individuals towards ICT based approaches etc.,

Economics of Land Management through Distance Education

Agricultural Economics deals with wasted in completing the formalities related to updating of land records that are required in order to avail government benefits and schemes. ICT plays important role in the help of government personnel, the farmers are guided how to get their work done related to land records. Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and Remote Sensing (RS) techniques are used as important keys assisting ICT solutions for land planning and management. GIS helps cater multiple layers of information, drawn from different sources. Mobile phones to push information on climate friendly agriculture to farmers and gives opportunity better and efficient mechanism to farmers and purchasers of their crops. ICT – Agriculture center should situated in all government schools or colleges in around Tamil Nadu with the help of Distance Education Administrators. This center should provide constantly advice to agriculture production and arrangements of training in farmers.

Green Environmental Agriculture

Agricultural progress and subsequent increased production are very important advantages of ICT enabled agriculture. However, environmental issues need to be taken care of so that the harmful effect of augmented crop production and marketing could not affect the society and mankind. Climate change and green growth are always to be top agricultural development agenda. Agricultural productivity should not be achieved at the cost of environmental adverse effects. Actually, limited resources population growth and environmental concerns are some of the challenges in augmenting the agricultural productivity and this could further be affected if there is adverse effect.

Outcome of ICT in Agriculture

ICT has helped agriculture sector to great extent that further making livelihood of rural people better; finally the service of importance for the nation since GDP of the country is controlled by agriculture. Following are some major outcome of ICT enabled agriculture:

1. The farmers will get the information, services and even some advisories through ICT portal. The content may include information about the schemes, advisories from the experts, markets.
2. Innovations in Agriculture through electronic media that supports education and training.

3. Timely market information will give better bargaining power to the farmer.
4. ICT Portal will also integrate existing farmer database of the farmers.
5. Creation of new opportunities and the development of human and social capital.
6. Achieving improved process control transparency in market information.
7. The relevant information will be provided to farmers in their own or regional languages.
8. Reduction transaction costs in tracking of consumer needs.
9. Enhanced food security and support rural to livelihoods.
10. Poverty alleviation through modern agriculture.
11. Expansion of perspective of local communities in terms of national or global development.
12. Information on schemes and programmes of Government of India can help every farmer to reap benefit out of these schemes thus widening the footprint of these schemes.

The above outcome can be seen in various ICT based agricultural implementation by several government agencies. Few of them are AQUA, Kisaan Kerala, TNAU Agritech Portal, AGRISNET, DACNET, e-krishi, ASHA, Indian Development Gateway (InDG Portal), Rice Knowledge Management Portal (RKMP), Agropedia, Indiancommodities.com, Mahindra Kisaan Mitra, IFFCO Agri-Portal, Agro Watch Portal, iKisaan, Village Knowledge Centers, MSSRF, Village Resources Centers, ISRO, Common Service Centers, Kissan Call Centre, Fisher Friend, Reuters Market Light, Mobile Advisory Services by Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR), e-Arik, E-sagu, Digital Green, Knowledge Share Centers and so on.

Challenges of ICT in Agricultural Sector

The use of ICTs in most of agricultural implementations is gaining importance but there are some challenges in implementation of ICT based services that need attention and requires a many research work. Following are major challenges in this field:

1. There is no provision for self generation of finances for the maintenance of the portal.
2. Lack of understanding and awareness of the needs and challenges of small scale farmers.
3. Lack of standardized approaches of ICT usage in national poverty reduction schemes.
4. There is no provision for self generation of finances for the maintenance of the ICT portal.
5. The function of this ICT portal is like one way information flow. The farmers will not receive any information until and unless he asked for the same.
6. The mechanism of evaluation is lack or unsystematic in the ICT portal system.
7. Need of appropriate socio cultural issues to achieve the desired objectives.
8. Poor connectivity, low bandwidth, problems of electricity connection and user driven information.

Conclusion

Following this framework, the literature analyzed in this paper suggests that ICTs have contributed to economic facilities through initiatives such as tele-centres, the use of mobile phones for farmers and others, improved agricultural supply chains and better banking services. There are also some early signs contributions of ICTs to improved healthcare which Prof.Amartiya Sen argue that ICTs are changing all the spheres of human lives and agriculture cannot be an exception. ICTs now many act as an agent for changing agrarian and farmers' life by improving access of information and sharing knowledge. All ICTs portal

can improve the productivity of the agriculture by adopting different measures. ICT tool can change the ideas, activities and knowledge of the farmers. Farmers can adopt appropriate measures at the time of need.

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UTILITY OF MOBILE DEVICES IN THE DISTANT LEARNING PROCESS

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Introduction

Information Communication technology (ICT) and the internet have been disruptive and influential to both distance education and conventional higher education. They have opened the door to new thinking about approaches to teaching and learning. ICT is seen as an opportunity to apply new approaches to distance education. It also works as a catalyst for conventional higher education to examine and rethink the dominant approaches to teaching and learning. Distance education institutions have used a variety of technologies to enhance interaction but none has been as readily available and accessible as cell phones. The distant form of learning and the absence of interaction is a challenge for both students who need help and lecturers who want to assist students in cognitive development. The key to the successful enactment of interaction in distance education, "rests on the philosophy of distance education which informs the decisions about techniques and technology" (Evans and Nation, 1989, and not only on the way the course is presented and delivered. The nature of distance education compels providers to use mediated forms of interaction to support their students. This enables students to communicate with their lectures and talk with each other in an effort to understand the course content. Throughout the history of distance education, theorists and researchers have been concerned with explaining the functioning of the concept of interaction in enhancing and supporting learning in distance education. The idea is to find an accessible and available technological tool that can be used to support distance education students. Studies have shown that students' development is determined by social interaction through problem-solving under the guidance of a teacher or in collaboration with capable peers (Brindley, Paul, 2004; Garrison, Shale 1990; Lave, Wenger, 1991). Mobile technologies, such as cell phones, hold a lot of promise for distance education as a cognitive delivery tool to enhance interactive collaborative learning while addressing the challenge of student isolation which is often associated with the correspondence nature of distance education.

Present Scenario of Distant Learning

Recent trends have changed the view point of distance education, once it is considered as an ineffective training programme. Today, distance education looks beyond the traditional reference books and course end assessments. In fact, the collaborative learning and interactive environments are integral parts of the teaching-learning pedagogy at leading distance education universities or institutes. The distance learning mode doesn't disrupt job continuity and equips working professionals with a professional degree, heading them towards steady career progress. Add to that, through a distance learning course employers get the benefit of using the existing workforce for expanded job-roles, without having to invest on induction and training.

Role of ICT in Distance Education

Information and communication technology is group of technologies by which various support services shall be provided at different phases of student learning life cycle in distance learning. The various phases are the admission phase (programme details, fee structure, admission procedure and registration & re-registration), the learning phase (learning schedule, programme delivery(lectures through video conferencing, webinars, audio & video programmes, multimedia presentations and case studies), the evaluation phase (examination schedule, internal &external assessment, examinations, improvement, valuation, revaluation and result declaration) and the certification phase (marks/grades updates, certificate printing & issuing and convocation schedule). In conventional system, learners are able to interact with one another face-to-face, which is a prerequisite to more meaningful social intercourse. Since, there is no such facility in the distance learning, web-based student learning and support system shall be developed and implemented using ICT to provide services at all different phases in student learning life cycle and also for knowledge and information sharing as done in a conventional system of education.

Mobile phones theoretically make learner-centered learning possible by enabling students to customize the transfer of and access to information in order to build on their skills and knowledge and to meet their own educational goals (Sharples et al., 2007). M Learning thus exerts a democratizing effect on the learning experience as learners take a greater responsibility for the learning process instead of being passively fed information by an instructor. Whereas in traditional models of education the goal is the transfer of knowledge from teacher to student, m Learning empowers students to actively participate in the learning process to make it a process of construction and not mere instruction (Dela Pena-Bandalaria, 2007). M Learning thus represents learning that is not 'just-in-case,' education for the sake of producing a bank of knowledge, but rather represents learning that is 'just-in-time,' 'just enough,' or 'just-for-me' (Traxler, 2007). As a facilitator of new learning, m Learning goes beyond an emphasis on the possession of information to enabling learners to find, identify, manipulate, and evaluate existing information (Brown, 2003).

Mobile devices:

The m Learning ecosystem is made up of a wide variety of devices connected to different kinds of networks. The most common mobile devices are mobile phones, Smartphone, personal digital assistants (PDAs), net books, tablets, e-readers, digital cameras, portable media players, and gaming devices. The largest category of devices for mobile learning is "feature phones" (Woodill, 2011). These devices make phone calls, send and receive text messages (SMS), and take pictures (New Media Consortium; EDUCAUSE Learning Initiative, 2011). Another rapidly growing category comprises of "Smartphone's" which run mobile device operating systems such as iOS, Android, Windows Mobile, Blackberry, Symbian, etc. Smartphone, in many ways, offer the same functionality as laptop computers, allowing access to the web, e-mail, documents, office productivity tools, and are currently seen as the most suitable platform for mobile learning purposes (Woodill, 2011).

Mobile Education

Mobile education is being recommended as the path to follow in distance education for developing nations (Motlik 2008). Internet-based distance education, as Motlik suggests, is not as good of a fit for many developing nations as a mobile distance education model. While mobile telephony is more common and accessible, the Internet is not as widely available, especially in those countries that find the majority of their populations in rural areas. The infrastructure of mobile telephony exceeds the penetration of Internet connections.

That, coupled with mobile tariff rates being held low due to competition and the availability of low-cost handsets, makes mobile learning affordable for even the financially constrained groups (Gronlund and Islam, 2010).

Video Conferencing in Distance Education

Video Conferencing systems are often used for distance learning, linking distant teachers and learner's for instruction delivery. Some of the ways the technology is used for achieving this goal, bringing benefits to teachers, administrators and students include the following (1) Students can take classes not offered at their institution (2) Learning institutions can offer classes during off-hours and to students who cannot attend traditional classes(3) Teachers can team teach with remote teachers, sharing subject matter expertise or a unique approach to topic (4) Students can meet with tutors for enrichment remediation or a helpful bit of personal attention. This is a good way for works best as an interactive medium and audience and speaker will have to be prepared to use the technology effectively.

Social Networking Groups

Social networking had a greater impact on affective aspects of the online class, making a significant difference in student motivation, retention, engagement, and satisfaction. This was reflected not only in the comments about the online course and structure, but in positive reactions to the instructor(s) because all class participants had become more "real."

Short Message Service (SMS) for distant learners

The Short Messaging Services (SMS) provided by the Mobile phones could be used effectively as a supporting tool for teaching-learning process. Kadirire (2005) showed that SMS can be successfully used in group discussions. It preserves anonymity, which allows people to articulate their views without fear of being criticized and is relatively easy to use. In distance education, the process is usually reduced from a dialogue to a monologue where a lecturer sends out pre-packaged study material to students. The assumption is that distance learners, do not need mediation or support as they go through their study material. However, many studies have reported the students need for mediated conversation between themselves and the teacher through integrated and structured dialogue both in the study material and in other interventions aimed at formative development of a student (Holmberg, 1983; Moore, 1983; Thorpe, 2001). The lack of contact and limited feedback from their lecturers is of great concern for distance education students. Most of them do not have the confidence to learn independently and a result they have trouble in self-evaluation. Students need lecturers to help and support them as they engage with their study material. To keep students motivated, lecturers should send students feedback almost immediately because students rely on lecturers' comments on their assignments and they can also send motivational SMSs. When the lecturer send information via personal and situated devices such as cell phones, students feel supported, they develop a positive relationship with their lecturers and the university and they find learning more pleasurable and this in turn supports to the distant learning process.

Cell phone for self Assessment

Cell phones can also be used to enhance this interaction through weekly self-assessment quizzes where students can test themselves on basic factual information. This will also encourage students to pace themselves as they go through their study material. Cell phone downloadable audio files can also be used to add a voice and provide a narrative to the content. The combination of printed study material, cell phone based self-assessment quizzes and audio can guide a student through the maze of learning material while assisting them to

pace them. Information receives through cell phone updates the information regarding exam results, contact classes etc. This helps the learners to move according to their self pace.

Mobiles can also supposedly facilitate knowledge-centered learning by providing efficient and inventive methods by which students can learn with understanding – meaning that they deepen their understanding of a specific subject matter rather than merely memorizing large amounts of information – and then use this knowledge as a basis for new learning through integration and interconnection. Mobile devices make possible assessment-centered learning as well by enabling the provision of continual feedback throughout the learning process, presenting learners with diagnosis and formative guidance as to what might be improved or what might be learned next. Moreover, in providing prompt feedback, m Learning maintains the appeal of learning and provides a motivating factor that can at times be lacking in traditional modes of education (Geddes, 2004). Mobile phones also facilitate community-centered learning, meaning learning that the learner deems valuable because of its relevance to the surrounding social context; m Learning facilitates learning that can be used to achieve socio-economic goals that respond to problems, such as problems related to health or family care confronting the surrounding community (Sharples et al., 2007, p. 223; Wagner & Kozma, 2005).

Conclusion

Distance education institutions have used a variety of technologies to enhance interaction but none has been as readily available and accessible as cell phones. Mobile SMS information service allow students to receive updated information about exam results, important registration dates, registration status, account balance, program schedules, face-to-face counseling schedules, and their student status through SMS messages. This kind of service is very useful for distant learners and also it saves times. This paper highlights the mobile devices, application devices, learning styles, utility of SMS and also for self assessment.

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STUDY ON LEARNERS' FEEDBACK ON USE OF MOBILE-LINKED VIDEO LESSONS AT THE BOU-OPEN SCHOOL

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Introduction

Mobile technology is growing popularity as it enables learners with the continuous connectivity; therefore, the learning industry is making use of mobile devices to deliver just-in-time learning and to create better and more impactful avenues of learning. In Bangladesh, users of the mobile has been growing day-by-day and, in turn, younger generation are fond of newer generation mobile sets which integrates – SMS, social media, internet-based phone calls, video viewing facilities, FMs, internet radio-TV, community radio, and audio-video memory cards. The Open School of Bangladesh Open University (BOU-OS) uses self-learning materials (SLMs) , tutorial support services (TSSs), and ICT (radio-TV broadcasts-RTVs) for running the Secondary School Certificate (SSC) programme – Grade: 9-10 and then, Higher Secondary Certificate (HSC) – Grade: 11-12. In line with the development of teaching-leaning process, BOU responds quite positively as there are paradigm shifts in the process of teaching-learning from instructivism – teacher takes the central role and transfers their knowledge – then, behaviourism – learner is essentially passive, responding to environmental stimuli – then, constructivism – learner is not passive recipient of knowledge but that knowledge is 'constructed' by learners in some way and then, finally, connectivism – connecting materials and interaction lead to knowing and creating knowledge. Latest learning process– connectivism – supports that ICT-enabled materials can improve the quality of teaching and learning by providing access to a great variety of educational resources based on participatory pedagogies. Use of technology at the BOU is not the option; this is compulsory as per the BOU Act 1992. The current administration has been very active to implement the mobile linked video and audio materials along with the print and this requires a study to evaluate the how effective this ICT-based learning materials within the learners. The current study aims to assess the effectiveness of the Open School's mobile-linked ICT materials. Three investigation areas are studied. They are the effects of video lectures in providing learning help, in providing effective final exam, and on course grades. The main aim of this research study is to better understand and measure students' attitudes towards the effectiveness of mobile linked video lesions.

Literature and Justification of Study

In conventional schooling teaching is done through face-to-face (F2F) lectures at the classroom where the learners have interaction with teachers and fellow learners. On the other hand, distance learners do not have this opportunity and the distance learners at the school level study under 'open schooling system' which is mainly based on 'print' as main instruction known as 'Print Media" and 'ICT' (audio-video, radio-TV broadcasts, and computer mediated materials) as supplementary instruction known as 'Electronic Media'. It also uses tutorial session at learners' corners as 'Human Media' for short time in the weekend (Rahman and Panda, 2010). All these media is not equally effective in all context; among them video sometimes very popular to the learners. Phelps and Evans (2006) find that video lectures work effectively as it provides learners with visual effects which help acquiring the

active learning. Martin et al (1997) demonstrate the learning value of supplemental instruction based on a combination of live-lecture videos and live tutoring of the videos' content. Their application focuses on students who were unprepared for rigorous academic challenge. They found the video is very effective for acquiring the active learning and it, in fact, provides positive impact on engagement in the learning activities. Rahman and Panda (2012) state that distance learners normally face the academic challenges of their exam preparation. Merrill et al (1992) finds the similar result of Martin (1997) and they depicts that video lectures reduce cognitive load for beginning students and is expected to increase learning and grade performance. Kirschner (2002) finds that informal supplemental instruction through videos are very effective for critical thinking as it effects on learning of interactive study, student control of the learning process, and active engagement in learning. Endean (2003) adds a fourth characteristic: engaging in learning for open and distance learning. Bryant and Hunton (2000) discuss educational technology's attributes as teachers make the learning through citing examples and explanations in the face–to-face (f2f) classroom; but in the ODL delivery learners rely on expiations in the learning materials which is sometimes difficult to exhibit in the print. Video is appropriate to provide more explanations on the concepts. Distance learners, most of the time, miss to watch the broadcasted videos because of fixed schedule. But, Adler and Milne (1995) apply instructional scaffolding (Rosenshine & Meister, 1992) to demonstrate the importance of student control of the learning process to long-lasting learning. Therefore, distance learning course emphasizes on incorporating the videos as part of its delivery; but it is expensive. At present, ICT enables to overcome this situation and Mabey et al (1998) study ICT students control the learning process and influence which content is studied. Print and interactive audio, video can simultaneously be sent to the learners.

Zhang et al (2006) studied interactive video where video segments can be directly chosen for study and they found that play-interaction improves learning. The current study uses mobile-linked video programmes which are not absolutely interactive; contents are discussed in a segmented manner and any time usable. Nemanich et al (2009) find that content relevance and social richness in a course's learning environment are positively associated with student enjoyment. Additionally, Bryant and Hunton (2000) examine the influence of visual and audio elements on learning outcomes in distance education. In the current study, video content is highly relevant to the course's learning objectives and students' exam performance. The current study tests students' attitudes of video lectures as academic help through mobile memory cards. Tutorial characteristics of the videos include more-slowly paced lectures with step-by-step topic explanations, the use of narrative from the course instructor, and students' ability to control the lecture through pauses and selecting topics. The current study concentrates that video lectures impacts on learning process. Finally, the literature has addressed that video lecture implicitly forces learner to be an active in learning process.

In the current study, features of mobile-linked video lectures, student control on it, and active learning exist in the use of video lectures. The lecturer controls available content, but students may choose the whole or segments of the video lectures they want to study. They can pause the lecture while they think through the material, and they can repeat explanations until they are fully understood as it is his or her mobile. The Open School acts as technology deployers in consistent with its development; for instance, the School used mobile phones for language learning for HSC programme under a project entitled 'Virtual Interactive Classroom – VIC'. Mobile devices allow students to review, listen and practice speaking, and provide services such as phrase translation, quizzes and live coaching. The School's VIC project used SMS technology to have "Drill and feedback" on content specific questions, gather student

responses rapidly and anonymously. Based on the lesson learned from the VIC project and legal obligation, the University launches mobile-linked audio-visual lessons through the memory card. Al-Fahad (2009) state that the biggest advantage of this technology is that it can be used anywhere, anytime and adopt their mobile learning systems with the aim of improving communication and enriching students' learning experiences in their open and distance learning. Bangladesh has tremendous prospect in e-learning as the users of internet in the mobile device are increasing day-by-day; at present, nearly, 97% internet users uses internet in the mobile devices (see chart 1) and 100 per cent area has been under the mobile network (Rahman, 2015).

Aims and objectives

Therefore, the aim of the current research is to determine the relationship between OS learner use of m-learning proficiency in the BOU-OS; it also investigates to what extend the mobile-linked video lesson impacts on the OS's learners' learning activities; and to find out how effectively the learners are benefited through using the m-learning. It also achieves the following specific objectives:

- to investigate usability of the mobile linked learning and teaching materials as supplementary of the self-learning materials (SLMs) with particular emphasis on the BOU Open School context;
- to measure the how much the learners are beneficial in completing their learning activities; and
- to, based-on the above two, suggest the Open School in deploying the technology where appropriate.

Hypothesis

We therefore hypothesize that the mobile linked ICT learning materials are effective for the Open School learners.

Research Methods

In order to study the attitudes of Open School learners on the effectiveness of mobile-linked video lessons, a questionnaire was developed with 32 items designed to measure students' attitudes on the effectives of mobile learning for open schooling. A five point Likert Scale with Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Undecided (UD); Disagree (DA); and Strongly Disagree (SD), was used from main items. Attitude scale is very commonly used in research distance education field (Biner, 1993; Roberts et al, 2005). The study conducts a survey within 75 Secondary School Certificate (SSC) students who are doing the compulsory course titled 'English'. It is reported that BOU-Open School has nearly 10,000+ students in the SSC programme and sample size is definitely 600-700+; but it is certainly quite a big task. That's why; a focus group discussions (FGDs) has been conducted and FGD (held on 4 April 2015 in Dhaka), N = 35 and the researchers took 40 respondents from his PhD data as it is the instrument for this research is the segmented of the PhD studies; altogether 75 (44 male and 31 female) respondents are included in this study. An interview with the FGD students is analyzed with respect to their making sense of and ascribing meaning to their learning through mobile-linked video lessons of the course selected - English. This sample seems to be very reliable and valid as the nature of the learner's background is identical at the BOU Open School. In addition, it also deploys the case study analysis to have the views on the above areas of the m-learning. SPSS statistical package will be used to analyze data and to draw conclusions. All the students who participated in this survey owned cellular phone. This leads to an important issue to be considered in any future m-learning implementation.

Analysis and results
Attitudes towards m-learning

Malladi and Agrawal (2002) state that mobile technologies consist of two aspects: mobility and computing. They also claims that mobile computing represents users' continuous access to network resources without limitation of time and location. It is completely wireless that means any form of data-text, voice, video or image can be transmitted without using wires (Dubendorf, 2003). Therefore, mobile device is freedom of time and location limitation.

Table 1: Attitudes towards m-learning

Items	No.	SA %	A %	UD %	D %	SD %	Mean
A mobile device can help me to attain more ideas in learning	69	40.6	26.1	23.2	5.8	4.3	3.93
A mobile device is helpful for my learning	70	44.3	40.0	8.6	5.7	1.4	4.2
A mobile device can enhance my desire to learn	71	46.5	21.1	21.1	4.2	7.0	3.96
I feel bored using a mobile device for learning	70	35.7	14.3	14.3	5.7	30.0	3.2
I am not good at using a mobile device	68	38.2	7.4	7.4	20.6	26.5	3.1
I hope to apply mobile devices in learning activities	68	61.8	29.4	5.9	1.5	1.5	4.49
I hope to have a regular time to use a mobile device for learning	69	59.4	18.8	8.7	7.2	5.8	4.19
I can use a mobile device independently without other's help	72	59.4	18.8	8.7	7.2	5.8	3.97
It is quite fun to use a mobile device for learning	71	45.1	29.6	12.7	9.9	2.8	4.04
I love to use mobile devices for my exam preparation for subject	67	55.2	13.4	16.4	7.5	7.5	4.01
It saves time when I use mobile devices because I can learn without space and time constraints	61	52.5	14.8	23.0	8.2	1.6	4.08

Seven items was presented to students representing attitudes towards m-learning and the results are presented in Table 1. The scale was tested for reliability. About 60% of the cohort was agreed they like mobile for using their learning. Although 90% of the cohort liked the mobile phones extensively for developing their courses of studies and mean value is 4.49; this means that almost every student does have mobile phone they are adamant to use the smart phone for their subject preparation at the terminal examination. Mean value of items of the variables of the towards m-learning group is of nearly 4/and or 4+; this indicates that student are ready to the use Open School's audio video in their personal mobile through memory cards.

The learners' self-efficacy of the m-learning

Students must have a high level of confidence in using mobile technology as part of their teaching and learning process; this is essential to ensure that m-leaning would be successful. Ten items were used in this study to measure students' mobile self-efficacy in an m-learning environment (Table 2).

Table 2: Learners' self-efficacy of the m-learning

Items	No.	SA %	A %	UD %	D %	SD %	Mean
I can download a figure from the internet using a mobile device	75	65.3	13.3	8.0	8.0	5.3	4.25
I can key in a website address to enter the site using a mobile device	65	40.0	27.7	15.4	9.2	7.7	3.83
I can check a hyperlink to enter another website using a mobile device	70	40.0	27.7	15.4	9.2	7.7	3.86
I can enter words into a document using a mobile device	70	57.1	7.1	14.3	14.3	7.1	3.93
I could use the mobile device to discuss with my peers about the reading materials	72	37.5	2.8	20.8	16.7	22.2	3.17
I can take pictures with my phone to show the related information about the assigned tasks	75	53.5	14.1	16.9	8.5	7.0	4.01
I could use the mobile device to film some clips and share with my peers about what we have learned in the tutorial session	70	40.6	27.5	11.6	15.9	4.3	3.86
The mobile phone is like a toy to me and I love to use it for tasks	69	43.5	30.4	14.5	7.2	4.3	4.22
It is very cool to use mobile phones for learning and I shared some learning materials with my friends too	68	42.6	5.9	39.7	5.9	5.9	3.74
I think mobile phones are ideal for learning	70	45.7	28.6	14.3	7.1	4.3	4.04

The findings indicated that only four items were classified at a high level, namely the item: "I can download a figure from the internet using a mobile device". This item scored a mean = 4.24. This shows that students uses internet in the mobile. The other items "I can take pictures with my phone to show the related information about the assigned tasks" had a mean = 4.01; "the mobile phone is like a toy to me and I love to use it for tasks"; had mean = 4.22; and "I think mobile phones are ideal for learning", had mean = 4-04. Meanwhile the item with the lowest mean was "I could use the mobile device to discuss with my peers about the reading materials" with a mean = 3.17. These findings showed that the respondents had a high level of self- efficacy in using m-learning and they have moderate level of peer discussion on the learning materials.

Attitude towards OS's audio/video lectures in the memory cards

Smart phones are run by advanced operating systems, the most popular being.... books, audio and video recordings of lectures and links to useful mobile apps. With mobile wireless devices, users can access network information anytime, anywhere (Hahn, 2008). For example, people can carry wireless laptops anytime, anywhere and can access a network in public places, such as an airport and a library. In addition, handheld devices can be carried and connected to a network anywhere, anytime using public stations (e.g., antenna). In this study, eleven items were presented to students representing attitude towards OS's audio/video lectures in the memory cards and the results are presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Attitude towards OS's audio/video lectures in the memory cards

Items	No.	SA %	A %	UD %	D %	SD %	Mean
OS's Audio/video lecture is a good use of technology for learning at a distance	69	50.7	23.2	7.2	17.4	1.4	4.04
OS's Audio/video lecture enhances self-learner's learning	65	47.7	20.0	20.0	7.7	4.6	3.98
Tutor-facilitated OS's audio/video lecture in the tutorial sessions motivates learners to learn content effectively	71	29.6	5.6	22.5	26.8	15.5	3.07
The use of OS's audio/video is more effective as a learning tool with today's learners than previous generations of learners	68	32.4	38.2	16.2	5.9	7.4	3.88
Pictures, diagrams, and graphics included in the OS's video in teaching enhance learning	68	57.4	19.1	11.8	8.8	2.9	4.19
Prior or foundational knowledge are required to make a OS's video environment effective for learning	66	37.9	24.2	30.3	4.5	3.0	3.89
Video animations should be designed to address individual learners' needs and issues including learning styles	70	37.1	37.1	11.4	0	14.3	3.97
Video animations must be adaptable and user-friendly if they are to be used for tutoring	67	53.7	10.4	28.4	3.0	4.5	4.06
To be effective in open schooling, video must be designed based upon what is known about principles of distance learning	69	56.5	15.9	10.1	7.2	10.1	4.01
I believe that OS's audio/video in any subject is a valuable use of instructional time	68	36.8	22.1	25.0	10.3	5.9	3.74
The use of audio/video memory cards in any subject for teaching and learning will likely grow in the near future	68	58.8	11.8	16.2	10.3	2.9	4.13

In addition, in the FGD, the students were asked to questions based on the checklist which is treated as the qualitative data. Interviews with the students after exposure to the memory card-linked audio/video lecture indicated that some students were very enthusiastic about the videos and some of them listened to OS audio-video lectures downloaded from the "Open Bangla" Youtube channel on their smart phones whilst travelling to Tutorial Centres or carrying out other tasks. Chart 3 shows the students' responses for the various items on attitudes regarding the memory card-linked audio/video. Four items have been classified as strong perceptions namely the item; "OS's Audio/video lecture is a good use of technology for learning at a distance"; had mean value = 4.04; "Pictures, diagrams, and graphics included in the OS's video in teaching enhance learning"; had mean value = 4.19; "video animations must be adaptable and user-friendly if they are to be used for tutoring"; had mean value = 4.06; "to be effective in open schooling, video must be designed based upon what is known about principles of distance learning; had mean value = 4.01; and finally, "the use of audio/video memory cards in any subject for teaching and learning will likely grow in the near future"; had mean value = 4.13. These findings showed that the respondents had a high level of interest in using m-learning for their learning materials.

Case study: Rumi Talukder (22)

Mr. Rumy Talukder is an Open School learner who is attending Grade 9 of the Secondary School Certificate (SSC) programme; while talking to him – he was found very good at ICT and uses a smart phone where he already downloaded the BOU Open School's video programme from the BOU run Youtube channel titled 'Open Bangla'. In is reported that BOU, under its OER policy, made available all the self-learning materials and audio-video programme in the BOU-domain and made free download. Rumi fully exercised this opportunity and encourages the other fellow learners. As a matter of fact, he downloaded all prints from the net and uses the memory card of his mobile. Rumi also reported that he never bring book in the tutorial centre; but use smart phone in the sessions as it is handy and easy to use.

Conclusion

This paper investigates the attitudes of 75 Open School learners towards effectiveness of mobile-linked video lessons in their studies. The researchers analyzed the answers to the qualitative questions in the FGD and quantitative survey questionnaires for gaining an understanding of how the learners view the use of mobile devices in learning environments. The analysis of the learners attitude on m-learning particularly through the mobile memory card-linked video lessons points to the fact that mobile learning is widely embraced by the student community of the Open School. The majority of student supported the notion that the smart phones increase the flexibility of access to resources in learning. The students also were keen to use all sources of m-learning approaches through lab tops, and mobile phones so that access to information would be anytime and anywhere. Analysis reveals that m-learning activities can much better engage students in the learning process. Learners in this study changed from passive learners to truly engaged learners who are behaviorally, intellectually and emotionally involved in their learning task that means there is certainly a paradigm shift from constructivism to connectivism. The mobile technologies are perceived as an effective tool in improving communication and learning. In developing country like Bangladesh, where mobile technologies are popular due to the less cost involved in owning and using such higher-end mobile technologies do hold tremendous potential which can be strategically used to support and improve students' learning. This study has huge implications to the policy developers at the national level. At a wider level, it will have implications for the entire education sector as the second chance education is performing the major role of the educational provision. M-learning has a huge potential to transform and revolutionize the learning process. Mobile gadgets such as the hand phone, Personal Digital Assistant, Smart phone, and iPod not only allow the user to communicate or be entertained, but they also support m-learning. This study showed that Open School students have personal innovativeness and are ready embrace m-learning as an integral part of their learning process. From this study it is clear that there is student demand for video lectures for a range of reasons. The use of a digital voice recorder allows the possibility of producing audio of lectures with minimal overhead for the lecturer. It is also evident from this study that the perceived quality of the mobile is not an issue for the vast majority of students. A lecture and direct upload of the material is a viable model for m-learning. It is suggested that a lecture be made available to potential mobile users and that a centralised server needs to be available to host material.

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LEARNING ASSESSMENT IN A SELF -LEARNING MATERIAL

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Introduction

Assessment is a generic term for a set of processes that measure the outcomes of students learning in terms of knowledge acquired, understanding, developed and skill gained. Assessment serves many purposes. It enables students to obtain feedback on their learning and helps them improve their performance (Boud, & Falchikov (2007). Whenever we learn we question ourselves. How am I doing? Is this enough? How can I tell? Should I go further? In the act of questioning is the act **of** judging ourselves and making decision about the next step. This is self assessment (Baud, 2005). Self- assessment is about students developing their learning skills. Self assessment has great potential when it seen from the point of view of contributing to students learning and when it is used to engage students more deeply in the subject areas being studied. As Yorke, (2003) notes: the act of assessing has an effect on the assessor as well as the student. Assessors learn about the extent to which they [students] have developed expertise and can tailor their teaching accordingly. The past ten years has seen a counter- movement to the emphasis on what Peter knight, (2006) has termed "high-stakes assessment". Assessment for learning has begun to take a place on the agenda within institutions although it still takes a secondary place in public policy debates and in the media (Boud, & Falchikov 2007).

Assessment in distance learning is of paramount importance since the question of credibility and quality of open and distance learning system. Learning assessment is an attempt to gain knowledge of the learner's competencies. In particular, what competencies have they acquired as a result of learning process. Learning activities is designed to facilitate learner to learn various kinds of knowledge and skills related to the objectives developed earlier. As the result of these activities, the learner will gain their capabilities related to the objectives. There are five domains of competencies to be gained as the result of the learning activities. The domains are intellectual skills, cognitive, information, psychomotor and affective.

Methodology

The proposed paper mainly is descriptive-analytical in nature. Relevant books, articles and newspapers are used in this paper. Data and information are collected from the concern sources as per need to strengthen my research. Interpretative approach has been followed in this research.

The Purposes of Assessment

There are two main purposes for learning assessment:
1. To aid learners in their subsequent learning.
2. To report on what they have learned.

The first use of assessment is known as formative assessment since it is meant to form the learner's learning. The second is summative because it sums up what each has achieved.

The Role of Assessment in Self-learning Material

Self-learning materials or modules are designed for students or trainees to study individually with less assistance from other people. A student or a trainee is expected to comprehend the learning content by reading the module as well as by conventional face-to-

face tutorial. What could you do to active that objective? Try to discuss it, and then compare what you have discussed to the description below.

A high quality self-learning material or module should contain sufficient activities to stimulate student to study constantly. The integrated activities within the module should be able to create a certain situation similar to classroom learning activity. One of the stimulation's is question or practice form. Question and activity within module can be constructed in order to put back the dialogue between teacher or instructor and student or trainees occur in learning activity (Grange, Briggs and Wager, 1992). With the given question or task, student is encouraged to read the description or explanation within a module, so the learner can answer the question or solve the problem proposed. They are encouraged to read since they realize that without reading the description or explanation they will not be able to answer the question or the assignment.

The other role of the learning assessment is as a measuring tool to recognize whether a student or a trainee has understood the material the learner has learnt individually or by assistance of teacher or instructor. Through a self-test, a student or a trainee can measure his/her learning progress. Whenever the learner masters the material, the learner can go on with another topic. On the contrary the learner should repeat learning the material if the learner failed to master it.

A teacher or an instructor can use end of module test or end of unit test to measure the student's or trainee's learning progress. This test result can be a measuring tool to determine whether a student or a trainee comprehends the module. According to the result a teacher or an instructor can decide whether a student or a trainee may step in to the next module or unit.

Assessment Question in Self-learning Material

The questions within a module act as a substitution of a teacher is an instructor's question in the classroom. The second function is to measure/assess the learning progress after reading the module. For both reasons, there are several types of question or assignment that can be put in a module. At least there are five type of learning assessment tools could be included in a self-learning material. The assessment tools are intext question, self -assessment question, assignment, end of module test, and end of unit test (Jenkins, 1987). Each question has its own purpose. Some of them are just to encourage learner to study actively. While the other are as tools to measure learner's achievement in learning.

Self-assessment question

Self-assessment question is such a task that requires written answer from a learner. As the learner completes the task, he/she is asking to check his/her answer with the answer key provided in the module. A distance learner rarely meets his/her teacher. That is way the task should be given within the module in which the learner can check the answer by his/her own. Accordingly, the learner knows his/her learning progress. Transformation of assessment approach from assessment by teacher to self-assessment by learner is one of the characteristics of open and distance learning.

Assignment

Another assessment tool in self-learning material is assignment. Assignment is more substantial rather than a self-assessment question. Assignment is an application of what the learners learnt from the module into their own situation. Assignment could be presented in many ways such as mini project, observation report, and description of learner's experience regarding the materials they learnt. This type assignment tool will present a unique lesson for each learner.

Unlike self-assignment test, assignment generally requires some feedback from the instructor. Based on this feedback, a learner understands their weakness in comprehending the material from a module. The most important function of an assignment is to provide the learners with feedback about their product that they could not measure themselves. For a practical reason, usually the assignment has a time limitation. This limitation will help the learners to manage their own pace in learning the self-learning material.

Assignments within a self-learning material will help learners in their learning process. Assignment will help the learner to focus their attention to the main idea and the most important competency included in the self-learning material. It will help them finishing the assignment.

End of Module Test

End of module test is a test to be given to the learners after finishing learns is a self-learning material or module. End of module test will assess learner accomplishment of learning a module. If they succeed than they can continue to learn the nest module. In contrary, if they failed they should repeat learning the module until they achieve the objectives. The learners could not assess end of module test. There will be no answer key for this test. Instructor will measure the test and will give the grade to the learners work. The grade of this test will be used to decide whether the learner passes or fails. For the learners, feedback of the end of module test could be used to improve their mastery of the material they just learned.

End of Unit Test

The end of unit test is a test given to learners after they finish studying a set of module. This end of unit test is a summative test for particular lesson comprises several modules. If we compare it with the face-to-face tutorial, the end of unit test is similar to the test given to learners after a course is accomplished. As like as a end of module test, the end of unit test is not assessed by the learner but assessed by the instructor. The report of this test result is an assessment to the success or failure of a learner in accomplishing a particular lesson or course.

Referring to the purpose of the test, the first three types of assessment question described above are classified as formative assessments. The feedback from answer key or from comments of instructor intends to encourage learners rather than to make final assessment of their learning outcomes. The following two types of test- -end of module and end of unit- - are summative ones since they assess learner's learning outcomes after accomplishing a module of a set of module (Rowntree, 1995).

Concluding Remarks

Of all ideas associated with assessment, self assessment provides the fundamental link with learning. Self assessment is concerned with learners valuing their own learning and achievements on the basis of evidence from themselves and from others. It occurs within a particular context, with respect to particular domains of knowledge and with particular goals in mind. The necessity of emphasizing learning assessment is perhaps best reflected in the constant thirst for innovations and radical advances, which is the essence of competitiveness in post modern society today. As such distance education providers must explore and provide an assessment mechanism to promote distance learning. Along with this comes the need to evaluate the way distance learning material is written and presented and perhaps the way courses are conducted.

In distance education context, the assessment model should accommodate the possibility of little communication and different pace of learning and yet be flexible enough to allow distance learners and teachers to make appropriate decisions such as assessment criteria and the number of assessments to be taken throughout the course. Distance education institution must ensure a transparent and valid assessment mechanism to continue to enjoy public acceptability since distance education itself owes its credibility, after all, to arguments that face to face contract between teachers and students is not essential and learning can take place in a non-contiguous mode. Due to spatial and temporal separation between teachers and learners, assessment provides perhaps the only indication of the student progress in the learning process. Learning assessment thus becomes a necessity in gauging an effective mechanism for promoting self-learning material.

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A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF RIGHT TO EDUCATION   IN INDIA WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO JAMMU & KASHMIR: *NEED TO STREGHTHEN OPEN SCHOOLING SYSTEM TO CURB INCREASING DROP-OUT RATE*

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Introduction

Education, a social security, under its umbrella covers knowledge, values and skills. Bright mind, noble heart, and skillful hand are model components, and their interplay in an adequate quantity, results in process value addition. An inadequacy in any of these three variables will ultimately slow down the pace of socio-economic-educational uplift (Gilkar, 2015). The biggest challenge is to meet the needs and requirements of twenty-first century society, which is marked as the society of knowledge, information and education. ₍*Madhukar.2003* ₎, Why should India not respect all its children? The Right to Education Act will not only help bring all into schools, more than half of whom continue to be pushed out of the system,   but will actually ensure that the substantial funds allocated   will go towards raising 'quality' of education. To fulfill the constitutional mandate for "education for all", all the Policy Statements and Commissions from *Kothari Commission*(1964-66) , including the   famous *National Policy on Education (1986) to*   Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009(hereinafter referred to RTE Act,2009) have also pushed forth a case for strengthening the Open and Distance Learning (Bist, 2008).

The purpose of this paper is to highlight the measures adopted by Government of India   to attain the goal of education for all starting from universalisation of education to right to education (RTE).The paper will also highlight various ills afflicting the Indian education system and impediments for poor implementation of laws, unethical/corrupt practices, growing absenteeism of teachers, lack of accountability, and mismanagement/ misappropriation of funds earmarked for implementation of RTE and eradication of dropout rate in India with special reference to Jammu and Kashmir.

RTE & Dropout Rate in India: A Strange Situation

The National Curriculum Framework (2005) questions the perceived 'quality' divide between government and private schools, though the latter select students from privileged homes and claim better examination results. Be it gender parity, out of school children or dropout rate, there is hardly any count on which   lauds Indian performance. In fact, the UNESCO Report(2002-03) gives India minus point,1.7, in reducing the number of illiterates among adults above the – age of 15 and places it along with countries like Ethiopia and Pakistan. This is in complete contrast to regularly monitored and updated figures of *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA)* which show that the dropout rate is coming down and more and more girls are going to school. SSA is now concentrating on getting children of marginal groups (SCs/STs/minorities) into its universalisation of elementary education programme. The report reveals:

1. Kerala, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu have achieved universal schooling. The rate of out- of -school children (OOSC) is 0 .5% t0 2.1%.

2. In case of states, highest dropout rate is seen in Bihar (17%) followed by Jharkhand (10.9%), West Bengal (8.7%), Madhya Pradesh (8.6%), UP (8.2%) and Rajasthan (6.9%).

3. Rate of out- of-school children(OOSC) is 7%(6.2% for boys and 7.9% for girls). While in urban areas dropout rate is same for boys and girls, in rural areas it is 6.8% for boys and 9.1% for girls.

4. Dropout rate among various social groups also varies: 10% for Muslims, 9.5% for STs, 8.2 for SCs, 6.9% for OBCs and merely 3.7% for remaining social groups. More SC and Muslim boys are out - of - school than girls.

Moreover, private schools and also *Kendriya Vidyalayas* neglect the child's mother tongue and inhibit it to construct knowledge in meaningful ways. According to the UNESCO Report, India is top in gender disparity and comes close to Arabian countries. It also says that though 90% children get enrolled in primary schools, only 79% study till class V. Again, only 71% of these enroll for lower secondary and only 40% reach secondary level. In fact, the quality of schools needs to be questioned, on account of the unhealthy pressure and the competitive atmosphere in which these results are sought, which deprives students of crucial processes of cooperative learning and often makes them self-centered individuals.

Status of RTE in Jammu &Kashmir: Increasing Trend of Dropouts & OOSC Rate

There is hardly any remote area in the State of Jammu and Kashmir that does not have a school but for lack of supervision, commitment, quality of education and infrastructure, roll in these schools has considerably declined. The State , undoubtedly has the distinction of making education compulsory and free upto the post-graduation level much before any other state in the subcontinent did it. Nevertheless, for the wrong policies of the government, standards of education have been abysmally declining. As per the reports published *"as per official figures,at least 2342 schools including primary schools are without drinking water in Kashmir* (*GK, June 23,2013*)."

Most of the schools surveyed lack in proper classroom accommodation, playgrounds toilet facilities and to talk about library and computer lab is like building castles in the air. While calling upon the Government to ensure that private schools provide good environment and education to students. It also needs to improve conditions of the government schools.

(I) Out of school children (OOSC) or dropouts

In a disturbing trend, the number of out-of-school children (OOSC) in Jammu and Kashmir has increased manifold over the past few years notwithstanding the government efforts to achieve cent percent literacy. According to official data presented at the 208th meeting of the Project Approval Board of *Sarva Shikhsha Abhiyan* (SSA), , the number of out-of-school children (OOSC) in 2014 was 49,819.

A cursory look at the comparative data brings out the facts about the ever-increasing rate of out of school children. As per the data, the number of out-of-school children was 36281 in 2011.While in 2012, 43153 children were recorded out of school (dropouts plus who never enrolled) in JK, the same increased by 6000 in 2014 and reached to 49,819 by the end of 2014 . The apex court of the country has also asserted and declared in *Environmental & Consumer Protect. Found.v. Delhi Administration(supra)* that "empirical researches have indicated that wherever toilet facilities are not provided in the schools, parents do not send their children particularly girls to schools. It clearly violates the right to free and compulsory education of children guaranteed under article 21-A of the Constitution". This and similar other causes as discussed in this study are responsible for ever-increasing drop-out rate or out-of-school children (OOSC).

As per the data, the number of out of school children in the age group of 6-7 years is 13077. Out of these 5391 are boys and 7686 girls. Similarly, in the age group of 8-10 years, the number of children not attending schools is 16027. Out of these, 6605 are boys and 9422 girls.

The number of such children in the age group of 11-14 years is 20715 out of which 8391 are boys and 12324 girls. The worry for the stakeholders is that the illiterate population in JK is highest among the northern states and the number of out-of-school children is increasing with each passing year. A cursory look at the comparative data brings out the facts about the ever-increasing rate of out of school children. While in 2012, 43153 children were recorded out of school (dropouts plus who never enrolled) in JK, the same increased by 6000 in 2014. As per the data, the number of out-of-school children was 36281 in 2011. Educationists say the number of OOSC is a matter of worry and points out the failure of government in universalization of education.

Lack of accountability in government schools is taking the sheen off schemes introduced to encourage universalization of education in the state. Stakeholders said that "On papers there are many schemes but on ground there is hardly any implementation," "The drop-out children should be provided incentives as they come from poor economic background. Educationists say the number of OOSC is a matter of worry and point out the failure of government in universalisation of education. Lack of accountability in government schools is taking the sheen off schemes introduced to encourage universalisation of education in the state (e-paper version *of Greater Kashmir*, 20 July,2014).

(II) Enrolment & Quality : Private versus Government Schools

The Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) rural survey 2014 has highlighted the poor education standards at private schools in Jammu and Kashmir even as more than half of students pay Rs 300 or more per month on tuitions other than the usual fee at their schools. The ASER survey, which is known as the largest citizen-led annual household survey in education in India has raised fingers at the lack of quality control at private schools in rural areas in JK.

According to the survey report, 48.1 percent of children between ages 6-14 are in private schools and 48.9 percent are in government schools. The survey showed a clear trend towards increased enrolment in private schools on yearly basis. Regarding the out-of-school children, the survey says that the drop-out rate tends to increase with age. Under age 6-14, only 2.2 percent of children are out of schools but under age 15-16, the percentage of such children rises to 11.4 percent.

The survey exposed the hollow claims of quality education of private school with its figures. The survey revealed that in private schools only 58.8 percent of students in standard V can read standard II level text and 74.3 pe0rcent of children in standard IV can read at least standard I level text. The figures are worst in respect of mathematics, where only 38 percent of private school children in standard V can do division and 69.1 percent of children in standard IV can do subtraction. According to the survey the private schools fail to provide complete education to children and every year more and more students are forced to go for additional tuitions to supplement their education. The survey says that for classes I-V, 13.3 percent of private school students have to take private tuitions whereas in 2011 only 8.5 percent of such students were going for additional tuitions. Similarly in 2011, 7.9 percent of private school students (standard VI-VIII) were taking additional tuitions whereas the percentage has increased to 13.1 percent in 2014.

The hiring of private teachers for the students has put additional burden on families. According to this survey, for standard I-V, 28.9 percent of private school students have to pay

Rs 300 and above per month and 63.2 percent of students have to pay Rs 100-200 per month in private tuitions. For government school students, the corresponding percentage is 20.7 and 61.1 percent respectively.For classes VI-VIII a hefty percentage of 54.7 students in private schools and 51.7 of students in government schools have to pay Rs 300 and above per month for the private tuition. With no effective monitoring on the quality of education imparted in private schools, the parents have to spend double the amount on their education.

(III) *Dropout rate from class 10th to 12th*

In a major embarrassment for the state government, Jammu and Kashmir has bagged the unenviable distinction of having one of the high dropout rates in secondary education as compared to other states and union territories. According to the official data presented at the 40th Project Approval Board (PAB) of the RMSA (*Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan*), government has painted a gloomy picture of secondary education in the state. The data reveals that the dropout rate at state level in J & K from class 10th to 12th is 25.33 percent "which is very high." It further mentions that out of 22 districts in J&K, the dropout rate in 12 districts is higher than the state level dropout rate. In comparison to Jammu region, districts in Kashmir are having higher dropout rates in secondary educational institutions. "Districts having very high dropout rate are Kulgam 41.62 percent, Islamabad (Anantnag) 41.33 percent, Budgam 40.90 percent, Ganderbal 38.51 percent and Baramulla 37.09 percent,"

The Report submitted to Central Government further reveals:"Huge difference in gross enrollment ratio (GER) at upper primary level and secondary level is also a cause of concern. GER at the upper primary level is 96.7 percent, whereas GER at the secondary level is very low i.e. 63.45," the report mentions.The State has a Gross Access Ratio of 77.56 percent. Out of 29494 habitations, 22876 habitations are covered by Secondary Schooling facility within 5km distance. 6618 habitations do not have secondary schools within 5 km distance. The report states that J &K has 4063 secondary schools, 2344 schools (57.69 %) are Government Secondary Schools and 1672 private unaided schools which constitute 41.15 % of the total schools. As many as 47 schools are Central Schools (1 %).(*Greater Kashmir*, 13Aug.,2014.). Analysis of the published reports, reveal various reasons for this abysmal performance such as lack of accountability, absenteeism, mismanagement of funds etc; The worry for the stakeholders is that the illiterate population in J & K is highest among the northern states and the number of OOSC is increasing with each passing year.

(IV) Reasons for Abysmal Situation

There are various reasons for higher dropout rates in secondary level for which state government is solely responsible. According to stakeholders, corruption is the root cause which has kept away private sector for investing in the education sector. Had that not been the case our education system would have flourished like other states.

- Analysis of reports published in media reveals that over the years it has been observed that transaction of students from secondary level to higher levels i.e colleges has witnessed discouraging trends. Failure of authorities to update academic curriculum viz-a-viz introduction of employable courses has resulted in higher dropout rates in secondary education in the state.
- As per the reports of the stake-holders, the failure of State Government to revamp the traditional educational module at secondary and higher education level 'is the root cause of higher number of dropouts in secondary education.The department of school education has been converted into industry of transfers and corruption and that political intervention and nepotism have brought it to the brink of devastatio**n** *(EJAC & JKTF, president,)* .

- Students of government schools are not born unfortunate but are made unfortunate by the government's policies and those teachers who take least interest in their duties. Why action is not taken against those teachers who often remain busy with meetings of associations and rallies during duty hours.
- The government is least bothered about these poor, needy and orphan students. Has anyone given it a thought how many politicians and officers have their children admitted in government schools. The answer is none, because they know the educational standards of these schools. It seems the policy has been made only to play with the future of the students of government schools instead of securing it. *(The material presented a mixed response on the issue, Greater Kashmir, 11 Feb. 2015).*
- The Open Schooling System has not been encouraged in the State of Jammu and Kashmir as an alternative mode of Open and Distance Learning system. This system has the potential of providing education to all irrespective of geographical, economic, social and time constraints. It has the scope of providing education to children at their doorsteps. The basic pillars of this system are: equity, accessibility, equality, relevance and quality, which are also the parameters of RTE Act. This policy should consolidate the education department, take care of future, give room to modern education along with revolutionary changes in the field of education.

Conclusion

The right to education flows directly from right to life. The RTE Act was intended to ensure quality education to be available freely and compulsorily to children between 6 to 14 years of age. In an increasingly globalised economy, knowledge and skills are the key differentiators of nations as well as individuals. In the process of education, the Supreme Court has identified three actors who are legally responsible for facilitating the RTE viz; the parents/ legal guardians, the society and the state. To thrive in this new world, developed and developing countries alike need to focus on building the creative and productive capacities of their workforce.

Today, powerful new tools are making it easier than ever to disseminate knowledge and expand educational opportunities. Now, universities offer online lectures, discussion groups, examinations, and degrees to students all over the world. Technology is making higher education- and economic opportunity-available to more people regardless of their location. India is a great example of the power of this approach. An emphasis on education has been the catalyst for the rise of an information technology industry that has created new opportunities for hundreds of thousands of people and established India as an important global centre for innovation. Effective pedagogy adds value to the learning behaviour. Focus now is on learner-centric pedagogy to enhance learner skills through the right use of ICT. Likewise in primary and secondary schools, educators should integrate technology tools into the curriculum so that they can access classroom materials that will enable them to improve educational quality and teach the relevant skills that are the foundation for success in today's world. In Jammu and Kashmir, no one cares for these fake and wrong educational policies. No one stands for these unfortunate students of government schools who belong to the deprived class of the society. This is an urgent need that educationists and policy makers shall re-think over current education policy. Excellence in the academic process is the outcome for which all other variables offer core material. Excellence therefore is the function of a variety of variables interacting with each other. When transparency effectively interacts with accountability in academic affairs in the system process enrichment is assured. On papers there are many schemes in vogue to curb dropout rate in J& K but on ground there is hardly any implementation. The drop-out children should be provided incentives as they

come from poor economic background. Why don't we implement them the way they ought to be implemented to meet the standards of modern education?

These steps can be the parameters of new state education policy as Jammu and Kashmir is the only state without its own policy on education and adopt different Modes including the Open Schooling mode as an alternative to curb ever-increasing drop-out rate in J&K..Somebody has rightly said 'please wake up and save these deprived students before it is too late'. An innovative education policy needs to be framed for the state.

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ASSESSMENT OF OPEN EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES (OER) PRACTICES IN ASIAN CONTINENT AND BUILDING UP OF SYNERGETIC MODELS

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The Emergence of new technology as Open Educational Resource

The growth of distance education can be seen from its philosophy i.e. it has travelled from being a correspondence mode of education to present open and distance mode of education. The postal, asynchronous communication has transformed into synchronous mode of communication in the form of real time transfer of information. Different teacher educators have proposed different models of distance education based on the use of technology. Two of these are being discussed below. A potentially useful framework (Table 1) for organising such a knowledge base is provided by the emergence of different generations of distance education (Taylor, 1995). Taylor has added the fifth generation to the fold in 1999, which is intelligent flexible learning, which adds a high degree of automation and student control to asynchronous online learning and interactive media.

In the same way based on the medium of communication involved in the distance mode programmes the history of distance education has been divided into five different generations which is given in the following figure (Moore & Kearsley, 2012).
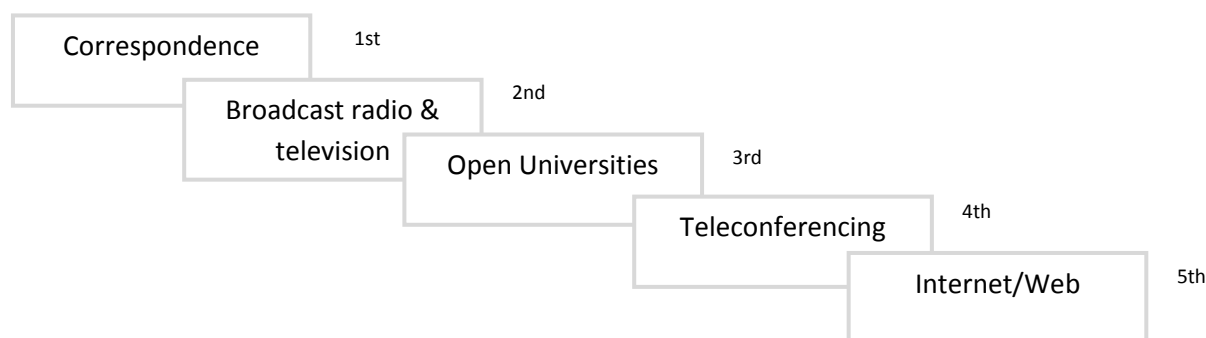
Figure 1 Five generations of distance education (Moore & Kearsley, 2012)

This new generation has paved way for accessibility of the different open sources to the learners. Thus, the concept of Open Educational Resources (OER) has emerged.

The term OER is educational resources that are *"openly available for use by educators and students, without an accompanying need to pay royalties or licence fees" (Butcher, 2011, p. 5).* The term Open Educational Resources (OER) was coined at UNESCO's 2002 Forum on Open Courseware and designates *"teaching, learning and research materials in any medium, digital or otherwise, that reside in the public domain or have been released under an open license that permits no-cost access, use, adaptation and redistribution by others with no or limited restrictions. Open licensing is built within the existing framework of intellectual property rights as defined by relevant international conventions and respects the authorship of the work"* (UNESCO, 2012).

Ongoing trends of OER

To know the ongoing trends in Asian countries, the author has examined a table, which is presented below.

Table 2: Familiarity with and awareness of OER (after Dhanarajan & Abeywardena, 2012, in (Dhanarajan & Abeywardena, 2013))

Country	Familiarity and awareness			
	Yes	No	Unsure	Total (N)
China	40	21	11	72
	55.60%	29.10%	15.30%	100.00%
Hong Kong	8	9	2	19
	42.10%	47.40%	10.50%	100.00%
India	25	14	9	48
	52.10%	29.20%	18.80%	100.00%
Indonesia	27	7	4	38
	71.10%	18.40%	10.50%	100.00%
Japan	5	4	0	9
	55.60%	44.40%	0.00%	100.00%
Malaysia	16	3	4	23
	69.60%	13.00%	17.40%	100.00%
Philippines	20	1	3	24
	83.30%	4.20%	12.50%	100.00%
South Korea	46	10	6	62
	74.20%	16.10%	9.70%	100.00%
Vietnam	15	4	1	20
	75.00%	20.00%	5.00%	100.00%

It is interesting to know that most of the countries are aware and familiar of OER (as indicated by the average percentage of respondents in the table). This is a good sign and one can expect a better future for OER in Higher Educational Institutes. But, the data further indicates that most of the Indians are not familiar and aware of OER, the percentage of awareness is just above the percentage of Hong Kong, which is last position in the table of awareness of OER. Hence, there is a great need for popularising OER sources in India and Government has to initiate various programmes for this.

The precursor of Open Educational Resources

The Open Educational Resources (OER) is the offshoot of the existing Information Communication Technology (ICT) facilities. Hence, a meta analysis of the studies done in this regard is done by the authors to find out the use of digitised educational resources, availability of sources of these digital resources, types of digital resources and their frequency of use, perceived benefits of accessing and using OER and barriers in use of OER in Asian context. It is mostly presumed that the educators are not familiar with the OERs. Contrary to this it is found that about 97% of the respondents had Knowledge of and Familiarity of OER in Indonesia (Daryono & Belawati, 2013). This is strong motivation for those who are working in the field.

Digitised Educational Resources

Among use of Digitised Educational Resources in Asian Higher Education it is found that personal computer, world wide-web, email and power point are used by most of the academicians in higher education (Dhanarajan & Abeywardena, 2013). In addition to this there are several other resources available like Resented lectures, Posted course website, Linked course website, Student research projects, Student digital multimedia, Student review, Used in tests and quizzes, Online lectures, Online discussion, but Harishankar, Balaji, & Ganapuram, (2013) found that the educators have been utilising resources other than these.

Sources of digital resources

The friends, co-workers, professional bodies, institutes provide information about various digital resources. In the study of Dhanarajan & Abeywardena, 2012, it was found that Search engines/directories (e.g. Google, Yahoo!) are being utilised by most of the users almost all the time, where as other sources are not being utilised (Dhanarajan & Abeywardena, 2013). In china personal computer, World Wide Web, emails are used more (Yawan & Ying, 2013). The respondents opine that they have used other sources than the Professional societies, Recommended by campus librarian, Word of mouth from colleagues, Word of mouth from students, Campus department instructional technology as source of digital Resource (Harishankar, Balaji, & Ganapuram, 2013). Thus, there are large numbers of resources which guide the educators to relevant digital resources for collection of OER.

The Indonesian Respondents' sources of information about OER include

- Professional Societies or discussion lists (e.g. H-Net, Humanist Discussion, List, etc.)
- Recommendations from campus librarian
- Word of mouth from colleagues
- A campus department devoted to instructional technology (Daryono & Belawati, 2013).

Types of digital resources used and their frequency

The study of Dhanarajan & Abeywardena, 2012 with regard to types of digital resources and their frequency of use indicated that four types of resources like Digital readers, image or visual material, online reference resources, online or digitised documents are used often or almost all the time by the users (Dhanarajan & Abeywardena, 2013). The investigators ascertained use of various digital resources in use like Image materials, Maps, Simulations, Digital video, Audio materials, Digital facsimiles, Online documents, Government digital documents, Data archives, Media sources, Online reference materials, Online diaries, Online classes, Circular materials, Course packs, Digital readers, Ebook readers, but found that other type of resources are used more (Harishankar, Balaji, & Ganapuram, 2013). The study of Harishankar, Balaji, & Ganapuram (2013) indicated more usage of resources by the respondents among various available resources. Further, it was also found that the respondents use Online catalogue, Traditional library catalogue, Abstracting and indexing databases most number of times. The respondents have agreed that they have used others sources in teaching rather than producing by themselves (Harishankar, Balaji, & Ganapuram, 2013).

Many a time reluctance to share the material to the audience is found in some writers. However, contrary to this in a study the respondents were more interested to share their material globally and happy to make their teaching material through their own institution, and also deposit in other repositories of OER (Harishankar, Balaji, & Ganapuram, 2013).

It is important to understand what types of digital resources were most often used by most of the respondents in Indonesia (Daryono & Belawati, 2013). These includes,

- Online or digitised documents (including translations)
- Images or visual materials (drawings, photographs, art, posters, etc.)
- Curricular materials and websites that are created by other faculty and/
- or other institutions (e.g., MIT's OpenCourseWare, World Lecture Hall,
- MERLOT)
- News or other media sources and archives
- Government documents in digital format

- Online class discussions (including archived discussions)
- Online reference resources (e.g., dictionaries)

How to locate OER and effectiveness of the sources

As far as Locating OER and the Effectiveness of Existing OER Searches it is known that most of the users google the sources to know about OER material. Studies have been conducted to have concrete information about the way to locate the material. This is also known from the study of Harishankar, Balaji, & Ganapuram, (2013). The effectiveness of existing OER searches indicates that majority of the respondents agree that WikiEducator search facilities, Specific facilities of OER repositories such as OCW, Connexions, etc., are more effective in locating specific OER content (Harishankar, Balaji, & Ganapuram, 2013).

Benefits of accessing and using OER

The open educational resources (OER) movement allows more people to receive education by offering a wide variety of freely available educational resources. OER provide greater educational opportunities for learners and enables schools to offer quality educational content. The Perceived benefits of accessing and using OER as found by (Dhanarajan & Abeywardena, 2013) includes, Gaining access to the best possible Resources, Promoting scientific research and education as publicly open activities, Bringing down costs for students, Bringing down costs of course development for institutions, Providing outreach to disadvantaged Communities, Assisting developing countries, Becoming independent of publishers, Creating more flexible materials, Conducting research and Development, Building sustainable partnerships.

In addition to this there are individual and institutional benefits for the users, the individuals feel that the publication of the material enhances university reputation, enhances personal reputation and enhances current practices, where as the institutions are of the opinion similar to individuals and express that publication enhances university reputations, enhances users' knowledge of the course and subject (Yawan & Ying, 2013). Those who were interested in OER appreciated the potential benefits for institutional and personal reputation, enhancing users' knowledge, sharing best practices and improving students' access to learning resources (Yuen & Wong, 2013). The perceived benefits of publishing OER includes Enhance Personal reputation, Enhanced user's knowledge of course, Share best practices, Develop Communities and build connections, Support developing nations in equal and strong manner (Harishankar, Balaji, & Ganapuram, 2013).

Barriers to producing and utilising OER

Dhanarajan & Abeywardena, (2013) found large number of barriers to producing utilising OER, but the major barrier felt was lack of awareness about OER, which is also true in the study conducted by Yawan & Ying, (2013) in China too. Interestingly, the Indian study conducted by Harishankar, Balaji, & Ganapuram (2013) indicates that lack of awareness is not a major barrier. It is also interesting to note that the major barrier in publishing of OER is Lack of reward and recognition for individuals and Fear over copyright infringement for the institution. The educational institutes of China sometimes deal with copyright issues in producing or assembling educational resources while, majority of individuals do not deal with it. The study indicates that more than 30% institutions do not have any budgetary allocation (zero Chinese Yuan) for developing OER, which is surprising but truth (Yawan & Ying, 2013). Creative Commons licensing was not given due attention required in Hong Kong. (Yuen & Wong, 2013), which also works as a hurdle.

Apart from this production barriers, use and reuse barriers are present. Other barriers included the school or institutional policy and lack of reward and recognition. The majority of respondents in Korea did not think that there was full awareness of OER, nor did they consider educational institutions willing to give full-fledged assistance with OER. Most respondents were cognisant of the terms "copyright" and "Creative Commons licence" but did not have a clear or deep understanding of the terms (Kim, 2013).

Policies

It is observed that most of the Governments in Asia are not having proper policies with regard to OER. However, creative commons (CC) policies are in place. With regard to the study on Policies on OER the study of (Dhanarajan & Abeywardena, 2013) indicates that almost all respondents (97%) have Knowledge of copyright, which is followed by Knowledge of CC licences (63%). With regard to the study on Policies on OER the study of (Dhanarajan & Abeywardena, 2013) indicates that almost all respondents (97%) have Knowledge of copyright, which is followed by Knowledge of CC licences (63%). This gives a ray of hope for better future plan of OER programmes and requires individuals and institutions have to work properly.

Co-operation and Synergy

The individuals feel that they do not have any co-operation with people from other educational institutions for PRODUCING/EXCHANGING open educational content, whereas the Institutes are involved in co-operation with people from other educational institutions for PRODUCING/EXCHANGING open educational content (Yawan & Ying, 2013). Most of the individuals have submitted their OER material for publications (49.2%) and even also a majority (67.7%) indicates that they are willing to submit OER material in future too. There is a similar but lesser trend as in case of institutional responses, where about 34.6% and 57.7% have indicated that they have submitted the OER material and later group is also willing to submit in future too respectively (Yawan & Ying, 2013). The USE of open educational content, The PRODUCTION of open educational content, The USE of open source software and The PRODUCTION of open source software and the production is more encouraged by the management (Harishankar, Balaji, & Ganapuram, 2013). As far as submitting OER for publication is concerned, most of the respondents agree that they have submitted teaching and learning resources for publication as OER (Harishankar, Balaji, & Ganapuram, 2013).

The respondents like to publish their material in the form of Podcast, Presentation Slides, Assessment Questions, Reading lists, Images, Video in equal manner to the maximum extent (Harishankar, Balaji, & Ganapuram, 2013). Yamada (2013) has listed the GLOBE Member Organisations, who are partners in planning, preparation, sharing of OER material.

The Future

The future of OER is great which can be understood by underpinning the potential is a robust technological infrastructure, high level of IT literacy, transparent legal framework, abundance of tools and positive attitude towards the benefits and value of OER (Yuen & Wong, 2013). To ensure the successful use of OER in schools, attention must be paid to the development and storage of diverse materials, quality assurance, and guidance on legal issues and copyright. The necessary authoring tools should also be developed, and practices for using OER should be disseminated to make OER more accessible.

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A FEW MODELS OF TEACHING THE COMPUTER ERA

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Introduction

It is a model which models pedagogical models. This means that pedagogical models could be described in terms of the meta-model. This is of importance when you want to express semantic relationships between pedagogical entities and want to be pedagogical neutral. Compare this for instance with a text editor like MS-Word is neutral to the type of text you can edit with it. It is possible to write memos, letters, poetry and literature. That's flexibility. However, MS word has no real means of validating whether the text you have edited really is a poem or a letter, given all the varieties of poems and letters in practice. You can imagine what great help it would be when these types of tools are aware of the type of content you are editing. These commonalities are the focus of a meta-model; the differences are made by parameterization of the meta-model. This idea has led us to the work in the meta-model behind EML.

Content of the Meta Model

The main topics of the static structure of the pedagogical meta- model are expressed in UML diagrams here. The pedagogical semantics of EML are designed according to this model. The model is based on educational research, specifically in the field of learning psychology and instructional design. Most of these models in literature are expressed in natural language and ad hoc schemas. Most of the classes have more elaboration. Like all models this model abstracts reality. It must not be confused with the reality itself and it is not the only model possible describing learning from instruction. This is also when courses are instantiated and used in real practice. Also, what I have drawn in the UML diagrams are expressions of the pedagogical models underlying units of study. It highlights the important points. In its details of implementation the models have more complexity.

Traditionally, in instruction, we have focused on the information presented or available for learning and have seen the activity of the learner as a vehicle for moving that information into the head. Hence the activity is a matter of processing the information. The constructivists, however, view the learning as the activity in context. The situation as a whole must be examined and understood in order to understand the learning. Rather than the content domain sitting as central, with activity and the 'rest' of the context serving a supporting role, the entire gestalt is integral to what is learned.'

Conclusion

In this article the pedagogical meta-model behind EML is presented. In our analysis, the thinking about 'learning objects' has some shortcomings. These were addressed and a containing work for typed learning objects was provided. This framework ensures that the structure units of study used in e-learning is valid. However, this is at itself not the same as an effective, efficient and attractive pedagogical design; whether a design conforms to these criteria comes for a large part from the theories and principles of learning and instruction.

EML makes the use of pedagogical models explicit. This is one of the factors needed to enhance the quality of a pedagogical design. So the combination of good design and good structuring of the design in a notation will bring us the quality of learning we are searching

for. EML provides the framework of notate and communicate the designs in a complete form, validate them on completeness in structure, makes it possible to identify the functionality of learning objects within the context of study and provides means for real interoperability and re-usability.

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ICT TOOLS FOR ASSESSMENT IN OPEN AND DISTANCE LEARNING

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Introduction

The existing system of education alone cannot cope up with the current and future demand for education. Open and Distance learning enabled and delivered through Information and Communication Technology can address the question of access and provide new and alternative forms of capacity building. The biggest challenge faced in education therefore, is the provision of quality education to the greatest number at the lowest possible cost to the learner and this is where ICT enabled open and distance learning can bridge the distance between the learner and instructor by transcending the barriers of space and time. In the field of education day today regular assessment plays a vital and important role but in ODL learners face so many constraints to interact with facilitator, but no ample solution has been found to meet these constraints. While no sample solution to deal with such constraints are available and an endeavour can be made to search for solution through ICT which provides different assessment tools that could provide some solutions especially in Open Distance Learning.

What is Assessment?

The Kothari Commission (1964-66) pointed out that evaluation is a continuous process forming an integral part of the total system of education, which is intimately related to educational objectives. Hence techniques of evaluation should be valid, reliable, objective, and practical while assessing learners.

The National Policy on Education (1986) envisaged the need for Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation (CCE) at all stages of school education, incorporating both scholastic and non-scholastic aspects of education spread over the entire instructional time. Programme of Action (1992) also reiterated the concept of CCE and stressed for the preparation of a National Examination Reform Framework to serve as a set of guidelines to examining bodies which would give freedom to innovate and adopt the framework to suit the specific situation.

Major Constraints in Delivery System of ODL

- *Temporal Constraints:* In most Open Educational Institutions, the time of a class/Lecture/Period during a Personal Contact Programme (PCP) is very limited, and the learner has a chance to meet a particular facilitator in that particular limited time slot only, as other periods are booked for other individual facilitators. Hence due to the lack of time and such temporal constraints, a learner experiences difficulty in sharing his/her problems with the facilitator. The same constraint applies to the matter of assessment also.

- *Spatial Constraints:* In Open Educational Institutions generally, a learner shares academic problems with the facilitator during PCP within the institute premises. If a learner is not in class, he/she faces problems in interacting with the facilitators. Even if a facilitator allows learners to visit him/her at his/her home, it is not easy for all the

learners to do so. Hence spatial constraints play a crucial role in hindering the facilitation of the learners.

- *Opportunity Constraints:* In Open Educational Institutions, within a small period of 35 to 55 minutes of the duration of a PCP every learner cannot express his/her views. Everybody does not get equal opportunity in the class. Some learners are over active and 'grab' most of the time; those who are shy or unable to speak in public do not get the opportunity to express themselves. Those who have linguistic and pronunciation problems are even more vulnerable. Thus everybody does not get equal opportunity for sharing and expressing themselves in class.

How to Overcome the above Constraints?

The above constraints are very important with reference to assessment practices, but no ample solution has been found to meet these constraints. An Endeavour can be made to search for solutions through ICT which provides different assessment tools that could provide some solutions for these constraints in educational practices, especially in ODL.

ICT Tools for Assessment in ODL

a. *I-Rubric:* I-Rubric is a rubric development assessment, and sharing tool. It is free to individual facilitator and learners. I- Rubric school edition empowers schools with an easy to use system for monitoring a learner's learning outcomes and aligning it with standards. Rubrics are supposed to support learner's self- reflection and self-assessment as well as communication between an assessor and those being assessed. It is an authentic assessment tool used to measure learner's work and seeks to evaluate learner's performance based on the sum of a full range of criteria rather than a single numerical score. It accommodates heterogeneous groups and can be used for both summative and formative evaluation.

b. *Polldaddy:* It is a tool which promotes a social, collaborative and sharing approach to learning. It is specially designed for creating polls and surveys and can easily be utilized to create online quizzes for a course. Tests/quizzes are taken and graded online and shared online too. Online Assignments are generated quickly according to the specifications given by the facilitator. Facilitators can create a survey to collect the learner's feedback on the course. It compiles the results instantly, allowing users to focus on making improvements. For Mathematics/educational quizzes, it has easy-to-use quiz editor, correction facility along with the opportunity to collect responses everywhere using email. It has several other features also: it collects responses on any device; can receive e-mail notifications of new participants; controls whether participants see a score at the end; sets a passing score to decide pass/fail; shares results with parents, colleagues, and administrators, creates quizzes in any language; provides support for added security in quizzes; custom starts and finishes messages; as well as redirects, closes quizzes after a certain date or after a response quota has been reached or due to password and participant restrictions etc.

c. *R-Campus:* R-campus is a comprehensive education management system (EMS) and collaborative learning environment. It is a tool for facilitators and learners to manage personal and group websites, courses, e-portfolios, e- learning, rubrics, courseware, clubs, facilitator groups, classes, grades, assessments etc. Account can be accessed by the user from anywhere, anytime, using any computer with an internet connection. User can quickly access various tools using a single login. There is nothing to download or install. All information is protected, including e-mail addresses. It consists of access to-many and east-to –use tools which require no training. It can be

seen as a mini learning management system. Due its multi-functionality, it is being used as one of the best integrated assessment and evaluation tool.

d. **E-Portfolio:** E- Portfolio is a digitized collection of artefacts, including demonstration, resources and accomplishments that represent an individual, group, community, organization or institutions. This collection can be comprised of text-based, graphic or multimedia elements archived on a website or on other electronic media. It has six major functions. These are used to used to plan educational programmes; document knowledge, skills, abilities and learning ; track developments within a programme; find a job; evaluate a course and monitor; and evaluate performance . This tool can be used for comprehensive evaluation through regular periodic assessments.

e. **Survey Monkey:** Survey monkey provides a platform for surveys by allowing users to create and upgrade accounts, design surveys, collect responses, analyse data and manage accounts. The data collected is kept private and confidential. The user is the owner of the data collected or uploaded into surveys. Whenever assessment is needed, it can be done through questions like multiple choice questions.

f. **School Tube:** School Tube provides a space on the internet for facilitators and learners to post videos for the classroom. Like many other video sharing websites, School tube lets users upload videos they create. This site also allows facilitators to set up a channel for class materials that learners can access and contribute to, making it a safe place to share school work. Learners can be motivated to create videos while they are learning. Suppose the process of drawing a circle is needed to be evaluated, the learner may be told to create videos through collaboration while they are drawing circles. These videos can be uploaded on school tube and used for better assessment and evaluation as an integral part of learning.

Conclusion

ICT have a proven importance and indispensability in the delivery system of ODL for assessment, and is an integral part of this comprehensive process. Keeping in mind their reach and globalised accessibility, facilitators too will have to explore more and more ways to use the power of ICT in various fields of education including assessment and evaluation. It creates temporal-free, spatial –free and equal opportunity based environment providing maximum freedom of participation to open and distant learners. ICT makes it more process-focused and product-focused, providing more validity, authenticity and evidence for learning. Thus it can be used in the best possible way for assessment and evaluation. I-Rubric, Protagonize, Rubistar, Poll Daddy, R- Campus, E-Portfolio, Survey Monkey, School Tube and Mahara are some of the Prominent ICT tools which can be used for effective assessment and comprehensive evaluation of open and distant learning. It can ensure a service to the at most satisfaction of a learner in Open Distant Learning system.

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MOVING TOWARDS CHOICE BASED CREDIT SYSTEM IN B.Ed. PROGRAMME IN BRAOU – A CASE STUDY ON REGULAR B.Ed. TRAINEES

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Introduction

To ensure quality, National Knowledge Commission (NKC) has called for reform of existing universities to ensure frequent curricula revisions, introduction of course credit system, enhancing reliance on internal assessment, encouraging research, and reforming governance of institutions. The 11th plan recognized the need to introduce the academic reform in the university and college education system. The academic reform necessarily includes changes in admission procedures in various courses, modification in assessment and examination methods, switch over from annual to semester system, acceptance of grade and credit system, Choice Based Credit System (CBCS), teachers' assessment, and other related reforms. In Assam University the CBCS has been started in its PG level courses across the discipline since 2010. As this is the reformed structure of education system, so still this system has not been materialized in full form. The students as well as the teachers community has different perception and attitude regarding this new form of curriculum as well as examination system. The present study is an attempt to know the level of attitude of PG level Social Studies and Maths/Science students towards CBCS. The study is conducted with a small number of samples i.e. 56 in Assam University only. The study reveals that Maths/Science background students and Male students are having higher level positive attitudes towards CBCS in comparison to Social Studies and Female students.

Backdrop of the Study

Choice based credit system (CBCS) has several unique features: Enhanced learning opportunities, ability to match students' scholastic needs and aspirations, inter -institution transferability of students (following the completion of a semester), part-completion of an academic programme in the institution of enrolment and part-completion in a specialized (and recognized) institution, improvement in educational quality and excellence, flexibility for working students to complete the programme over an extended period of time, standardization and comparability of educational programmes across the country, etc. The CBCS imminently fits into the emerging socio economic milieu, and could effectively respond to the educational and occupational aspirations of the upcoming generations. In view of this, institutions of higher education in India would do well to invest through and resources into introducing CBCS. Aided by modern communication and information technology, CBCS has a high probability to be operationalised efficiently and effectively - elevating students, institutions and higher education system in the country to newer heights. It might be added that a large number of universities and institutions in the country are already having their undergraduate and post-graduate 'papers' subdivided into units and sub-units. In switching on to CBCS, the task of such institutions would be relatively easy. In a generalized manner, the sequence of CBCS would be: **Paper – Unit - Sub-Unit = Credits**

Even National Council for teacher Education (NCTE) given in its 2014 Regulations mandatory the CBCS in all teacher education programmes in regular as well as ODL mode from the academic year 2015-16 on wards. In ODL mode the IGNOU is already in practice the system from 2013-15 on wards in their teacher education programmes. Even in regular mode in United Andhra Pradesh the system was practiced from the academic year 2014-15 too. With these circumstances the investigator wants to know the attitudes/reflections of the

regular B.Ed. learners towards the system and make moving the same in the ODL mode B.Ed. Programme.

Statement of the Problem
The present study of the topic entitled 'Moving towards Choice Based Credit System (CBCS) in B.Ed. Programme in BRAOU – A case study on regular B.Ed. Trainees'

Objectives of the Study
1. To study the attitude of regular B.Ed. Trainees towards CBCS in B.Ed. programme.
2. To find out significance difference if any regarding the attitude towards CBCS among the regular B.Ed. Trainees.

Hypotheses
1. There is no any significance difference between Social Studies and Maths/Science regular B.Ed. Trainees of BRAO University with regard to CBCS.
2. There is no any significance difference between Male and Female regular B.Ed. Trainees of BRAO University with regard to CBCS.

Methodology
The descriptive survey method has been used in the present study. The researchers have drawn the sample from PG level Social Studies and Maths/Science students of BRAO University. The sample size is 56 out of which 28 are from Maths/Science and 28 from Social Studies department. Again, from each discipline equal numbers of Male and Female students were selected i.e., 14 Male and 14 Females. For this purposive sampling technique has been adopted. To collect the requisite data related attitude towards CBCS self designed attitude scale was used. The researcher established a rapport with them. Initially the researcher was distributed the attitude scale and requisite directions and instructions were given.

Analysis and Interpretation
Keeping in view the objectives the data obtained from the sample were analyzed through qualitative and quantitatively.

Table No-1: Level of attitudes towards CBCS of Social Studies and Maths/Science students

Level of Attitude	Ranges of Scores	Frequency		Percentage	
		Social Studies	Maths/Science	% Social Studies	% Maths/Science
High level Attitude	76 - 112	2	4	7.14	14.28
Moderate level attitude	38-75	24	24	85.71	85.71
Poor level attitude	0-37	2	0	7.14	0

From the above table it is making to known that 7.14% of Social Studies and 14.28% of Maths/Science methodology students has highly favourable attitude towards CBCS. On the other hand, it is also found from the field visit that same percent i.e., 85.71% of Social Studies and Maths/Science methodology students having moderate favourable attitude toward CBCS. Again only 7.14% of Social Studies students has Poor level attitude towards CBCS.

In fact Maths/Science methodology students are having the highest level attitude towards CBCS in comparison to the Social Studies students.

Table No-2: Level of attitudes towards CBCS of Male and Female students

Level of Attitude	Ranges of Scores	Frequency		Percentage	
		Male	**Female**	**% Male**	**% Female**
High level Attitude	76 - 112	4	2	14.28	7.14
Moderate level attitude	38-75	23	25	82.14	80.28
Poor level attitude	0-37	1	1	3.57	3.57

From the above table, it reveals that 14.28% male have high level favourable attitude towards CBCS and 7.14% female have high favourable attitude towards CBCS. On the other hand 82.14% and 89.28% of male and female having moderate level favourable attitude towards CBCS. It is also found from the field visit that same percent i.e., 3.57% of female and male student having poor level attitude towards CBCS. In fact male are having the highest level attitude in comparison to the female students.

Table No-3: Calculation of 't' value for Social Studies and Maths/Sciences students

Group	N	Mean	SD	δD	t	Df	Level of significance	
							5%	**1%**
Social Studies	28	51.07	8.25	2.28	0.43	54	2.01	2.68
Maths/Science	28	52.04	8.85					

The above table reveals that the level of attitude towards CBCS of Social Studies and Maths/Science methodology students has minor differences. The Mean value of the Social Studies and Maths/Science methodology students has reasonably differences i.e., 0.97. The calculation reveals that the standard error of difference is 2.28 and critical ratio of t-value is 0.43. With 54 df, it is found that the calculated t-value is 0.43 is quite smaller than the table value, so it is not significant at 5% level and 1% level of significance. Hence, we may accept the null hypothesis in both level and may be concluded that there is no any difference between Social Studies and Maths/Science methodology students regarding the attitudes towards CBCS.

Table No-4: Calculation of 't' value for Male and Female students

Group	N	Mean	SD	δD	t	df	Level of significance	
							5%	**1%**
Male	28	53.12	8.16	2.24	1.3	54	2.01	2.68
Female	28	50.00	8.68					

The above table it is reveals that the Level of attitudes towards CBCS of male and female students have minor differences. The Mean value of the male and female has reasonably differences i.e. 3.12. The calculation reveals that the standard error of difference is 2.24 and critical ratio of t-value is 1.3. With 54 df, it is found from the calculated t-value 1.3 is quite smaller than the table value, so it is not significant at 5% level and 1% level of significance. Hence, we may accept the null hypothesis in both level and may be concluded that there is no any difference between male and female student regarding the attitudes towards CBCS.

Table No-5: Calculation of 't' value for Male students of Social Studies and Maths/Science

Group/Stream	N	Mean	SD	δD	t	df	Level of significance	
							5%	1%
Male(Social Studies)	14	52.64	6.87	3.13	0.30	26	2.06	2.78
Male(Maths/Science)	14	53.57	9.52					

The above table it is reveals that the level of attitudes towards CBCS of male students of Social Studies and Maths/Science methodology have minor differences. It is found that the male Maths/Science methodology students higher level of attitude towards CBCS. The Mean value of the male students of Social Studies and Maths/Science methodology has rationally differences i.e. 0.93. The calculation reveals that the standard error of difference is 3.13 and t-value is 0.30. With 26 df, it is found that the calculated t value 0.30 is quite lesser than the table value, so it is not significance at 5% level and 1% level of significance. Hence, we may accept the null hypothesis in both level and may be concluded that there is no any difference between male student of Social Studies and Maths/Science methodology regarding the attitudes towards CBCS.

Table No-6: Calculation of 't' value for Female students of Social Studies and Maths/Science

Group/Stream	N	Mean	SD	δD	t	Df	Level of significance	
							5%	1%
Female(Social Studies)	14	49.25	9.43	3.33	1.00	26	2.06	2.78
Female(Maths/Science)	14	50.50	8.18					

The above table it is reveals that the level of attitudes towards CBCS of female students of Social Studies and Maths/Science methodology have less differences. It is found that the female Maths/Science students higher level of attitude towards CBCS .The Mean value of the female students of Social Studies and Maths/Science methodology has rationally differences i.e., 0.5. The calculation reveals that the standard error of difference is 3.33 and t-value is 1.0. With 26 df, it is found that the calculated t-value 1.0 is quite lesser than the table value, so it is not significance at 5% level and 1% level of significance. Hence, we may accept the null hypothesis in both level and may be concluded that there is no any difference between female student of Social Studies and Maths/Science methodology regarding the attitudes towards CBCS.

Major Findings
1) Maths/Science methodologies Students are having the highest level attitude towards CBCS in comparison to the Social Studies Students.
2) Male are having the highest level attitude in comparison to the Female Students.
3) There is no any significance difference between Social Studies and Maths/Science methodology students regarding the attitudes towards CBCS.
4) There is no any significance difference between Male and Female Student regarding the attitudes towards CBCS.

Conclusion
To conclude it can be said that Education is not the end of process but an integral part of Educational spiral and a well designed system of evaluation is a powerful Educational device. Choice Based Credit System is essential for Higher Education. This system increases

the sincerity among the teacher as well as the students. It has improved the academic carrier of many students who were not even much sincere and good percentage holder. In CBCS the span of time which can be allotted for increased so that course of study can be properly acquired by the student. Betterment system should be introduced because the students can better their performance.

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MODUS OPERANDI FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF CHOICE BASED CREDIT SYSTEM THROUGH DISTANCE MODE –A CASE STUDY OF UNIVERSITY OF KASHMIR

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Introduction

The University of Kashmir has notified the new scheme for choice based credit system.. According to the notification issued a credit means one hour of teaching work or two hours of practical work/tutorial per week for 16 weeks in a semester. A candidate compulsorily has to obtain 24 credits per semester i.e., 48 credits in one year programme (2 semesters), 96 credits in two year programme (4 semesters), 144 credits in three year programme (6 semesters) and so on. However, a candidate compulsorily has to obtain 2/4/6 credits from general/open elective from outside the Department in one/two/three years courses respectively. A candidate has to obtain minimum of 24 credits in a semester; 12 credits compulsorily are to be opted from "Core Courses", while the remaining 12 credits can be obtained in either of the following two ways. All the 12 credits can be obtained from within the Department or Faculty from a pool of "Electives (Allied)" offered by the Department/Faculty. However, a minimum of 4 credits from Electives (Open) are to be obtained by a candidate from outside the Department during the Course; or 8 credits can be obtained from the "Electives (Allied)" while 4 credits can be obtained from "Electives (Open)" from outside the Department. A candidate has a provision to go with a slow pace of as low as 20 credits per semester or with an accelerated pace of as high as 32 credits per semester, so as to maintain a total score of 96 credits or above in 2-year programme (4 semesters). A candidate can register for more than the above mentioned minimum requirements during the course all of which can later be counted in the degree.

Objectives

- To study the level of awareness among the PG Students of distance mode regarding what is lacking in the present system of Education
- To study the level of awareness among the PG Students of distance mode regarding the Choice Based credit System(CBCS)
- To study the Problems faced in the implementation of choice based credit system(CBCS) for formal mode students by the University of Kashmir when it was introduced for the first time during session 2014
- To prepare actual case studies regarding what is happening at the grass root level

Sample

Table showing the sample drawn from PG Students

PG Programme	Formal	Distance
MA Education	50	50
MA English	50	50
MCOM	50	50
MA Economics	50	50

Part-A(Distance Mode Students)

Table showing the level of awareness among the PG Students of Distance mode What is lacking in the present system

Sno	Description	Aware	Not Aware
1	Teacher centric approach	80%	20%
2	There is a rigid combination of subjects	90%	10%
3	Curriculum containing many outdated elements	85%	15%
4	Lacks context based approach	88%	12%
5	There are no opportunity for cooperative learning, group work	80%	20%
6	No inter- disciplinary mobility possible	92%	8%
7	Lack of choice for students	89%	11%
8	No opportunity to the learner to walk-in and walk-out to earn a certification	87%	13%
9	Lack of multi-disciplinarity ,closed isolated environment	89%	11%
10	Methodology of teaching confined to lecture method	86%	14%
11	Teaching subordinate to examination	89%	11%
12	High subjectivity and significant errors in the evaluation system	84%	16%
13	Non cognitive aspect of curriculum like development of values lacking	80%	20%
14	degrees not linked to employability	79%	21%
15	Confined knowledge due to strict border between the subjects	81%	19%

The perusal of above Table shows that the majority of the students are aware about the weakness of the present system of education it is because they have experienced the system and are well exposed to the modus operandi of the system .

Table showing the level of awareness among the PG Students of distance mode regarding the Choice Based credit System

Sno	Description	Aware	Not Aware
1	CBCS allows a paradigm shift from teaching oriented education to learner centric mechanism in higher education	9%	91%
2	It provides opportunities to the learner to understand the subject at their own pace ,develop analytical abilities, critical thinking and capacities to solve problems	13%	87%
3	The system allows flexibility to the learner to choose different courses in the process of accumulating the credits	11%	89%
4	While allowing to develop disciplinary knowledge ,it allows knowledge of interdisciplinary subjects as per the choice of the learner	15%	85%
5	The learning is inclusive based on lecturing ,tutorials, practical	12%	88%
6	The system encourages mobility of students through credit transfer among the universities/institutes within and across the country on reciprocal basis which also promotes employability	13%	87%
7	The system encourages total transparency and accountability in evaluation system in an objective manner	11%	89%

Sno	Description	Aware	Not Aware
8	This scheme has a strong element of feedback	10%	90%
9	This scheme makes evaluation a continuous and comprehensive process	11%	89%
10	CBCS provides substantial autonomy to the teachers to formulate their own course curricula	13%	87%
11	It provides a scope for experimenting /innovating in teaching ,learning and evaluation	15%	85%
12	It is a vital tool of bringing the transformation in the traditional higher education system of our state	13%	87%
13	This scheme shall help us to prepare for various competitive examination which require exhaustive study and interdisciplinary knowledge	9%	91%
14	It bridges the gap between professional and liberal education	14%	86%
15	Are you aware about the terms like credit, semesterization, cumulative grade point average, core ,allied elective, open elective, absolute grading vs relative grading	7%	93%

The perusal of above table shows that majority of the students who are enrolled with distance mode are not aware about the choice based credit system , its advantage, how it works . Since distance education has been given a breathing time of one year to its course structure ,study material as per choice based credit system ,it has to conduct awareness /orientation scheme of its faculty ,resource persons, students regarding the scheme because without understanding the scheme lot of problems will crop up .

Part-B (Formal Mode Students)

The University of Kashmir has introduced choice based credit system in all its masters programmes from the session 2014.While discussing this issue with one of the professors at the University of Kashmir he said that credit based system is friendly and has great essence in the today's academic world. It is still early days and as such its implementation may encounter some problems which shall be gradually sorted out .

Problems faced in the implementation of choice based credit system for formal mode students in the first year of its introduction at the University of Kashmir

Sno	Problem Faced
1	Students have to take 96 credits which means 24 credits per semester which is heavy
2	Students not allowed to take open elective from outside the department
3	Lack of coordination between the departments
4	Choice of subjects restricted
5	No major revision in curriculum
6	More stress on PG students
7	Long teaching hours and less time for library study
8	Poorly staffed and overcrowded classrooms
9	Time clash
10	Overlapping in timetables

1. **Case Study-1:** Tasleema is studying in the first semester of her Masters Degree in Education. She was excited to learn that CBCS has been introduced in the university. The authorities in the university told her that she can't take up the subject of her choice. "I wanted to choose Psychology as one of my open-electives. But I was told to take up Guidance and Counseling as they don't have arrangements for outside credits," she said. Guidance and Counseling falls under the Education department while Psychology is a separate department. .The students have to take up an allied elective as their open-elective.

2. **Case Study-2:** Shameem from Political Science Department says he wasn't allowed to take up an open-elective from outside his department. Shameem says he was asked to choose a subject within the department—either from International Law or Development Administration which are related to his program.

3. **Case Study-3:** Voicing similar grievance, another student of Mass Communication and Journalism said, "I and my friend had opted for International Relation as our open-elective. But the department changed our open elective on their own without informing us. How can the department do so when they claim to have introduced a student-friendly system?"

4. **Case Study-4:** Farhat Jan, a student of Mass Communication and Journalism, says the initiative has put more stress on PG students. "If we talk about our core subjects, we have the same syllabus as was in place in previous years." Comparing her syllabus with that of her seniors, she says, "They had just one optional subject, where as we have three to four additional subjects. How is it humanely possible for us to clear all the subjects?"

5. **Case Study-5:** Rafia Gulzar from Political Science Department says the CBCS will adversely affect them, adding that the move will also cut into their library hours. "When you have classes for almost 6 or even more hours, how can you go to library," she asks. "It is unfortunate that PG students at University can't afford to go to library."

6. **Case Study-6:** Aamir Rashid, a first semester student hailing from Budgam, says it is impossible for him and other such students travelling from far off places to stay in the library after six in the evening. "They should cut (reduce) our class timing so that we can spend at least an hour in the library," he suggests. "Now the university authorities will tell us to rent a room for two years, but not everybody can afford that."

7. **Case Study-7:** Students and some faculty members say most of the departments are generally ill equipped, overcrowded, and poorly staffed. "We already don't have proper seating arrangements for our own students. How can we accommodate more students from outside faculty?" asked a KU faculty member. In some classes faculty members have made temporary seating arrangements to accommodate their own students.

8. **Case Study-8**: The investigators talked to ,Director Directorate of Internal Quality Assurance (DICA), Prof. Fayaz Ahmad, who was a member of CBCS decision-making, about how the problems faced in implementing CBCS be tackled. Dr. Fayaz is optimistic that the initiative will work well from the next semester. "Not all students will be in the same class at the same time. We have 45 departments. So these students will be in all these departments, not in one department at one time," he said. Brushing aside the fear of the time-clash, Dr Fayaz said, "We will have to divide classes as per days. For example, we can have classes for core subjects from Monday to Wednesday and then Thursday and Friday for allied-electives and Saturday could be entirely devoted for open classes. This way we will solve the time-clash and other

problems.". While admitting there has been logistic problems, he says students will benefit from it after they get acquainted with the system. He said it will be reviewed at the end of the year to check how successfully it has been implemented.

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STUDY ON LEARNERS' FEEDBACK ON SELECTED LESSONS USING COL TEMPLATE AT THE BOU-OPEN SCHOOL

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Introduction

Bangladesh Open University (BOU) provides both hard and soft copies of the self-learning materials (SLMs) for its learners. But, their template varies programme to programme and similarly, volume of the course books are different, say – some books have around 200 pages, some have 300 pages. As a result, the authority formulated a policy of making texts identical in terms of size and template (BOU, 2014). In addition, popularity of the tablet computer have been tremendous in the recent years and in line with this, the e-book also be surged. Therefore, this policy would provide with the opportunity for making the e-book for the BOU learners. In order to implement the policy, the University adopts the template developed by the Commonwealth of Learning (COL), known as COL template, for its self-learning materials. But, there is a question – whether the template is culturally sensitive and/or responsive to BOU learners or not? This study aims to explore this research question and recommends for whether this is usable for BOU or not. In addition, the Open School, recently, develops SLMs to cope with the creative education approach adopted in the formal school education. This research has tremendous implications for development of creative (innovative) generation texts for BOU-Open School.

Research objectives

The purpose of this paper is to investigate the usability of COL template at the Open School of Bangladesh Open University. This study has two main objectives:

- to find out students' level of attitude towards change in template of textbooks under innovative (structured) education system;
- to examine if there is any statistically significant difference in attitude of students towards change in template of textbooks under innovative education system based on the variables chosen;

Research questions

Based on the objectives, the research questions are:

- What are students' general attitudes towards the new template of textbooks selection under innovative education system?
- Whether the learner background variables show significant difference in students' attitudes towards the textbooks introduced under innovative education system?

Methodology

The SSC (Secondary School Certificate) programme of the School does have 10,000+ learners; therefore, sample size normally be around 400-500. It is necessary to mention that SSC learners' are from more or less same ethnic background and they also

possess the similar attitudes. Liao (2009) reduces the sample size the prevalence estimates are limited. Therefore, sample size reduced 48 and three Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) at three different Tutorial Centers – one in Chittagong, one in Shylhet and one in Dhaka area. The participants who took part in study were students from grade 9. In each TC, the rating scales were distributed to students after establishing rapport with them.

The research discussed here involved two analyses: an analysis of qualitative data collected from BOU SSC learners and an analysis of a follow-up study to a survey into user interactions with template lesson. The researcher collected the quantitative data through a rating scale 'Students attitude towards Template of textbook' for assessing the attitude of students towards the content and style of textbooks to be distributed under innovative education approach. The scale included 36 items, structured as statements with the options 'Strongly Agree' and 'Strongly Disagree'. The questionnaire was reviewed by two experts in ODL text development and two tutors from Open School designated tutorial centres before it was distributed to the participants of the study. The initial scale consisted of 40 items which was reduced to 36 items based on item analysis. The reliability coefficient of the final scale was found to be 0.84. A personal data sheet was also administered to collect the demographic data. In addition, a checklist was used to collect qualitative data. First author and second author are involved in this research in the field and, third author is the PhD supervisor of the second author who provided guidelines to us for completing the research work and edited the paper, as required. His endeavors made the research successful.

Literature and justification

The SLM addresses program compliance with each of the standards and the associated key elements and elaborations for the distance learners who are not in a position to attend the face-to-face (f2f) classes in the conventional educational system. That's why; SLMs are of need-based and programmed. According to Rowntree (1994) among others, to be effective, ODL materials have to be: purposeful, structured, and paced; and subsequently, to these, Endean (2003) adds a fourth characteristic: engaging. The structure of a learning module is of paramount important in maintaining a learner's interest and engaging. Just as with purpose, the structure – template – must be clear to the learners and this will allow them to exert some control over how they learn. Distance learners can feel extremely isolated and a feeling of control is a great boost to self-confidence. There are a number of ways of structuring ODL materials, each of which can be equally effective but each has its distinct advantages and disadvantages. Considering these, each university maintains a template developed in-house. ODL institutes normally use templates for SLMs because templates allow the institute to make professional documents which have a unified appearance. The beneficial aspect is that templates significantly simplify the generation of good texts. Majid (2012) states that support for the instructional design principle was not specific to a particular subject matter.

Templates help making SLMs manageable, reliable, and effective, and they do so through planning. Rather than reviewing plans or procedures that all look different and contain information in varying order, templates allow for a consistency of form that enables users to know where to find what they're looking for in every SLM. Templates ensure that all necessary information is included in a text. Templates enable a document to be created once and then reused over and over again. BOU-Open School does have the same work. The only difference from text to text is the specific information being provided. Most open universities have developed an in-house style design which must be followed by staff when creating documents, presentations, and publications. Because the in-house style is so important in helping communicate the ODL providers. Templates can be used to define the formatting to

the used in text to slides in the digital learning what is known as e-learning, for instance, they can control the style, font size, and color. Templates can ensure that "Standard text" such as the page number, date, time, author, and location appears on every page, usually within the header, footer, logo, information, good looks. BOU templates have weakness, in relation to these, if any, the learners may support to COL template for BOU (BOU, 2014). Therefore, this research is expected to answer this question.

BOU Template

Open School uses the template which is named as 'Unit', normally, we call it chapter, and it is structured as X.0 Introduction X.1 Objectives X.2 Section 1 (Main Theme) x.2.1 Sub-section 1 of Section 1 x.2.2 Sub-section 2 of Section 1 -------------------------------- -------- ------------------------ -------------------------------- X.3 Section 2 (Main Theme) x.3.1 Sub-section 1 of Section 2 x.3.2 Sub-section 2 of Section 2 -------------------------------- -------------- ------------------ -------------------------------- X.4 Summary X.5 Answers to SAQs X.6 Suggested Readings Check Your Progress Check Your Progress Pictures, Cartoons Diagrams and, in-text activities etc.

Distance learners do have lots of reading as they do not attend the f2f classroom. That's why; they need to have structured book. The structure or organization of the text is the arrangement of ideas and the relationships among the ideas. Learners who are unaware of the text structures are at a disadvantage because they do not approach reading with any type of reading plan (Akhondi et al., 2012). SLMs are characterized as self-explanatory - learner can understand without external support. Self-contained - learner may not need additional materials. Self-directed - learner is given necessary guidance, hints, suggestions at each stage of learning; access devices. Self-motivating - materials to arouse curiosity, raise problems, relate to familiar situations, and make learning meaningful. Self-evaluating - SAQs, exercises, activities, unit-end questions, etc. for providing feedback. Teaching through self-learning materials is absolutely programmed; this teaching first involves students in purposeful (to the student) reading and writing, and then pulls out some skills for focused work (Pursell-Gates, 1997; Sasson, 2007). Students' friendly text is of important; and it is wise to use widely used template for the distance learners. COL developed a generic template for the SLMs for using in the member countries after having feedback from learners in some countries. But, in Bangladesh, still this new template is not yet tested; and BOU teachers are being trained to implement this template for its different programmes.

COL Template

COL developed SLM template and tested in different commonwealth countries and institutions, with feedback provided by many instructional designers. The template had to be user friendly and simple. Intuitive, easy to use and customizable, the template is suitable for everyone, regardless of word processing skill level (Roffey, 2006). In line with this BOU made a policy to introduce this template for its texts and digital contents (BOU, 2014).

Findings

In distance learning setting, all possible media – print, audio, video, multimedia, conferencing, web, and face-to-face interaction – are brought together in a judicious media mix to deliver content (that is, teaching) as well as provide learner support. Therefore, learning materials, assignments, practical exercises, tutorials, assessment systems and support systems need to be carefully designed and developed to facilitate effective student learning at a distance (Panda, 2008). That's why; the researchers designed the structured questionnaire to

collect feedback on some variables which are grouped as structure or organization, icons, contents, assessment & feedback, quality, and learning resources. The attitude levels of the students' towards textbook template were found based on mean and standard deviation and the results are discussed below:

Learners' attitude towards structure

SLMs are not same to the books available in the market; for instance, distance education modules do have to have comparatively considerable margin in the left so that learners can use that for notes while reading; but for conventional textbooks, it is not. Therefore, nicely structured SLMs contribute towards students developing a positive attitude towards reading.

An analysis was done to find out whether learners will be difference in attitude towards structure of two templates: BOU template and COL template. Means and standard deviations for the structure for BOU and COL template, students were found COL template is desirable to them as the mean value is of higher than that of BOU.

Table 1: Learners' attitude towards structure

Items	N BOU	N COL	Mean BOU	Mean COL	SD* BOU	SD* COL
The lesson is well structured and organized	48	47	3.13	4.32	1.282	1.002
The lesson's structure is aesthetic and good-looking	46	48	2.98	4.1	1.256	1.077
The lesson's structure is user friendly	44	45	2.73	3.67	1.227	1.128
The lesson's get-up and set-up attracts me to go through it	42	46	2.74	3.85	1.345	1.192
The lesson's structure is different from other textbooks in the market	46	48	2.65	3.88	1.197	1.064
It provides margin space to take notes while reading the content	47	44	2.64	4	1.258	1.22
I am fond of the lesson structure and I would like to stay with this temple	48	44	2.65	4	1.296	1.1

SD = Standard Deviation*

In addition, BOU SD is higher than that of COL template which shows more acceptance of the COL template. Learners are highly agreed on the statement - The lesson is well structured and organized; the mean value is of 4.32 with compare to BOU, that is 3.13. Research has shown that COL template is more motivating and is more likely to result in effective for open school learners.

Learners' attitude towards icons used

Through the textbook, icons appear in the margins to guide students' study of the material based on their learning style. In general, students had a moderately above-neutral positive attitude toward icons used in the BOU template; but opposite found toward icons used in the COL template. The findings may shed light on the design of COL-template textbooks and may help instructors choose the satisfying icons in materials as learner support.

Table 2: Learners' attitude towards icons used

Items	N		Mean		SD	
	BOU	COL	BOU	COL	BOU	COL
The lesson uses different icons or symbols	48	48	3	4.15	1.203	0.989
The lesson's icons in place of wording is interesting	48	48	2.88	4	1.362	1.011
The lesson's icons are culturally sensitive and responsive to Bangladesh context	46	44	2.83	3.82	1.403	1.105
The lesson's icons properly symbolize the linked-theme	43	41	2.6	3.78	1.137	1.194
The icons in the lesson are effective as it reduces the reading time	40	41	2.65	3.76	1.21	1.28
I spend lot of time to think about icons	37	44	2.92	3.8	1.362	1.091
I easily understand what to do under the specific icon	45	46	2.91	3.8	1.345	1.046

These icons serve to "signpost" a particular piece of text, a new task or change in activity; they have been included to help learners to find their way. Icons as visual means of representation can increase the level of clarity, precision and decipherability of information in the textbook. When the textbook makes use of icons throughout – these are a useful "roadmap"; Learners positively passed their opinion on the statement - The lesson uses different icons or symbols – and the mean value is of 4.15 to COL template than that of BOU template, is 3 (see table 2); which shows that learners like icons used in the COL template.

Learners' attitude towards with contents

BOU uses the communicative approach for writing the contents; but as the template specifies the page limit and sometimes it is not possible to accommodate the content with sufficient examples and clarification. In-house style of template has been found compressed and students passed their opinion positively for COL template than that of BOU template. One of the statements of the questionnaire - I could see how the content of this lesson linked with other lessons – has been found very interesting as the responses in favor of the COL template (mean value is 3.77); and in favor of the BOU template (mean value is 2.53).

Overall mean value of COL template is higher than that of BOU template and the standard deviation of COL template shows the lower values than that of BOU template – these indicate the content displayed in the COL template is preferable to the BOU learners.

Table 3: Learners' attitude towards with contents

Items	N		Mean		SD	
	BOU	COL	BOU	COL	BOU	COL
The aims and objectives of the lesson are clear	47	48	3.09	4.33	1.176	0.996
The lesson is written in a lucid language	45	47	2.96	4.17	1.261	1.07
The content is discussed linking the objectives set in the lesson's beginning	41	46	2.85	3.7	1.236	1.093
I could see how the content of this lesson linked with other lessons	38	43	2.53	3.7	1.133	0.996

Examples in the content are based on Bangladesh context	45	45	2.82	3.64	1.336	0.981
Activities in the content are linked to the theoretical aspects of the lesson	44	43	2.91	3.93	1.291	0.985

Presentation of the content in the structured texts is of important for engaging learners for reading as success of the ODL depends on the self-study of the learners. In line with this, COL template is regarded by the students (see table 3).

Learners' attitude towards assessment and feedback

The students should be free to choose their own strategies in order to "bring their performances closer to the goal, that is to self-assess their work" (Oscarsson 2009; Westlake & Zitko, 2010). Self learning questions are incorporated in the bottom part of the lesson with combination of the MCQ and short questions.

Student self-assessment begins with setting learning targets proceeds through the production of work, that aims to achieve those targets to the assessment of the work, to see if it does in fact meet the targets and then finally to the setting of new targets or revising ones that were not achieved. Presentation of self-assessed questions is more preferable to COL template than that of the BOU as the COL standard deviation is less than BOU.

Table 4: Learners' attitude towards assessment and feedback

	N		Mean		SD	
Items	BOU	COL	BOU	COL	BOU	COL
There is a clear link between the type of assessment(s) and the aims of the lesson	45	44	2.96	4.25	1.205	1.014
The assessment criteria are provided when the content is discussed	47	48	2.89	4.1	1.306	1.115
I have received feedback on my reading after completion of the self-assessed questions (SAQs) and made me to go back the content again*	46	47	2.83	3.98	1.419	1.032
I SAQs are well linked to the objectives of the lesson	43	45	2.6	3.91	1.294	1.062
SAQs are mixed i.e. the MCQs, short questions, easy-type questions, etc.	46	47	2.67	3.89	1.367	1.005
SAQs are based on the innovative/structured education	47	45	2.64	3.93	1.358	1.031

The results revealed that most students have a positive attitude toward self-assessment based on their opinions that self-assessment can help them to better reflect their progress and achievement and increase their involvement and responsibility in their learning. But this positive attitude is not accompanied by a good understanding about the concept of self-assessment itself which reflected by the strategies used in the self-assessment process (BOU mean 2.83 and COL mean 3.98).

Research limitations/implications

The study presented here was a small-scale study based only on the templates and involved only 48 respondents. While this is considered sufficient based on the discount usability testing concept, generalization of the results should be made with caution.

The findings should be of value to Open School in terms of improving SLMs management. This study highlights current attitudes of students towards text template in terms of how they interact with them, the features they value and their preferences between COL template and BOU template in the BOU-Open School. This paper provides useful information on students' attitudes towards template which of course value to the University as a whole.

Conclusion

The template is self-standing and can be used "as is" or may be customized to suit individual requirements. In essence, COL template is a user- friendly tool enabling the OS faculties, as a content developer, to convert their own subject matter expertise into learning materials. Using the template will give them more control over the creative and development process which we hope will lead to higher levels of motivation and satisfaction by the learners. In effect the COL template will collapse the previously separate roles of content specialist, writer and graphic designer into one at the Open School. From the perspective of a template, this preliminary research, at BOU, is important for several reasons. First, the design of SLMs is key to success of the program. Without good course design, students may struggle with the course content. For example, upon initial implementation, it was found some of the SAQs did not completely reflect the course materials provided; therefore, additional materials needed to be added on specific topics. Second, understanding the best practices in adopting COL template can assist those leading a traditional course with faculty mentors, especially during the initial phases of program adoption.

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BLENDED LEARNING IN TEACHING LEARNING PROCESS OF TEACHER EDUCATION

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Introduction

The advent of new technologies has provided opportunities and challenges for education institutions to seek more effective ways of teaching and learning. E-learning is now an established phenomenon in education and institutions are increasing their effort to offer greater flexibility, more personalized learning and greater learner satisfaction. The opportunities of flexibility and convenience are not evident in a classroom environment. However the face-to-face interactions provide the foundation for social communication which can be critical to online learning. Educators who are comfortable with traditional classroom delivery will meet learner's enhanced demands for flexibility through online presence for courses.

Models of Blended Learning

- *Model 1: Face-to-face Driver:* The programs that fit in the face-to-face driver category all retain face-to-face teachers to deliver most of their curricula. The physical teacher deploys online learning on a case-by-case basis to supplement or remediate, often in the back of the classroom or in a technology lab.

- *Model 2: Rotation:* The common feature in the rotation model is that, within a given course, students rotate on a fixed schedule between learning online in a one-to-one, self-paced environment and sitting in a classroom with a traditional face-to-face teacher. It is the model most in between the traditional face-to-face classroom and online learning because it involves a split between the two and in some cases, between remote and onsite. The face-to-face teacher usually oversees the online work.

- *Model 3: Flex :* Programs with a flex model feature an online platform that delivers most of the curricula. Teachers provide on side support on a flexible and adaptive as needed basis through in-person tutoring sessions and small group sessions. Many dropout-recovery and credit-recovery blended programs fit into this model.

- *Model 4: Online Lab:* The online-lab model characterizes programs that rely on an online platform to deliver the entire course but in a brick-and-mortar lab environment. Usually these programs provide online teachers, paraprofessionals supervise, but offer little content expertise. Often students that participate in an online-lab program also take traditional courses and have typical block schedules.

- *Model 5: Self-Blend:* The nearly ubiquitous version of blended learning among American high schools is the self-blend model, which encompasses any time students choose to take one or more courses online to supplement their traditional school's catalogue. All supplemental online schools that offer a la carte courses to individual students facilitate self-blending.

- *Model 6: Online Driver:* The online driver model involves an online platform and teacher that deliver all curricula. Students work remotely for the most part. Face-to-face check-ins are sometimes optional and other times required. Some of these programs offer brick and mortar components as well, such as extracurricular activities.

Role of the Teacher change in the Blended Learning Environment

Through blended learning model the role of the teacher has shifted… as with the role of the learner. Content can be accessed independently; investigation and depth of understanding can be found divergent of the teachers influence. Both teachers and students must begin to understand how they play these new roles in learning prior to it becoming effective in the learning environment. The best way to expedite this transition is the development of process focused learning. To develop the independence and define the new roles of the teacher and student we have developed a instructional process flow chart. This allows the teacher to focus their attention of the micro groupings of students within the classroom to build and refine the skills that will be used throughout the lessons development. As the student gains the skills they can then proceed to the next stage of the lesson development, the investigation. At this point begin to see the new role of the teacher take hold, allowing the students independence in the investigation and ensuring the time and resources to work with those that have not yet gained the level of understanding to move on. The teacher, rather than the giver of knowledge has shifted to become the learner, being taught not only the objective of the lesson but also the meta-congitive component of the individualized learning process the student went through to reach the outcomes that they present. The student has been pushed to the highest order of thinking skills and has developed a true depth of understanding in the learning process, all as the teacher has played the role of educational support - the cheerleader of learning for each individual student.

Developing Blended Learning Pedagogy

Teaching using a blended approach can be challenging for some as it may require the acquisition of different teaching skills, re-designing the curriculum and the inclusion of new teaching and learning opportunities, managing the learning content both online, in-class and beyond the classroom walls, and preparing students to work in blended modes. Most negative feelings towards blended forms of learning tend to be generated by poorly designed approaches.

Adopting a blended learning approach must start with a re-examination of the intended learning outcomes. The teacher needs to design learning activities that support these intended learning outcomes, personalize or differentiate learning and then integrate these activities effectively with the required assessment tools. Teachers should prepare their students for the blended learning style and discuss the new roles and responsibilities. Some students won't be used to working independently or may be unfamiliar with some of the technologies, so support mechanisms will need to be put in place for these students.

Advantages

Proponents of blended learning argue that by incorporating the "asynchronous Internet communication technology" into courses serves to "facilitate a simultaneous independent and collaborative learning experience" and this incorporation is a major contributor to student satisfaction and success in such courses. The use of information and communication technologies have been found to improve access to as well as student attitudes towards learning-By incorporation information technology into class projects, communication between lecturers and part-time students was improved, and students were able to better evaluate their understanding of course material via the use of "computer-based qualitative and quantitative assessment modules" in a study by Alexander and McKenzie (1998).

Disadvantages

Blended learning has a strong dependence on the technical resources with which the blended learning experience is delivered --- these tools need to be reliable, easy to use, and up to date in order for the use of the Internet to have a meaningful impact on the learning experience. Additionally, IT literacy can serve as a significant barrier for students attempting to get access to the course materials, making the availability of high quality technical support paramount. It has been observed that the use of lecture recording technologies can result in students falling behind on the material---in a study performed across four different universities, it was found that only half of the students watched the lecture videos on a regular basis, and nearly 40% of students watched several weeks worth of videos in one sitting.

Conclusion

Blended learning is eclectic in nature combining the best practices in on-line mode learning. Blended learning uses the tools of the provincial learning management system (LMS) to teach and support learning in a face-to-face class. Through blended learning – quality, course materials, course calendars, and assignments during and outside school hours. Students can also take part in face-to-face lessons and communicate with their teacher and classmates using a suite of secure online tools inside the password-protected LMS. These tools help students learn or review key concepts, stay organized, show what they have learned, submit assignments, track their achievement, and communicate with others. This suite of online secure tools includes. Blended learning can look different in different situations. For examples, when blended learning occurs in a school computer lab, students may flexibly access and complete course content online and consult with their teachers on specific projects or topics. When blended learning occurs in classrooms where technology is limited, students may learn mostly through face-to-face lessons, but use computers or other devices to complete group assignments or submit completed work to their teachers.

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A VENTURE TOWARDS EXPLORING THE MAJOR CAUSES OF STUDENT DROPOUT FROM *THE BACHELOR OF SCIENCE PROGRAMME AT NETAJI SUBHAS OPEN UNIVERSITY, INDIA*

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Introduction

Education can be described as the widening of consciousness and the liberation from restrictions in the cognitive and emotional fields. Education, which could be attained through various modes, including the distance-learning mode, is a basic right for every individual. Distance education can play and does play a very important role in the education and training of a country's human resources at various levels. It generally refers to the forms of study that are not under the continuous and immediate supervisors or tutors present in the lecture rooms or on the same premises, but which, nonetheless, benefit from the planning, guidance and teaching of a supporting organisation. Keegan (1990) defines distance education as wall-less education, open learning, open teaching, non-traditional education, distance learning, distance teaching, correspondence education, independent study, home study, distance teaching at a distance, extension study, external study, external learning, flexible education, flexible learning, life-long education, life-long learning, contract learning, experiential learning, directed private study, drop-in learning, independent learning, individualized learning, resource-based learning, self-access learning, self-study, supported self-study or continuing education.

In distance education, performing humanities subjects are more feasible than the science subjects as teaching of science subjects needs a regular intervention of laboratory and onwards application by the learners. In this back-drop Netaji Subhas Open University (NSOU), the leading Open University in Eastern India introduced five laboratory based science subjects *viz.,* Physics, Chemistry, Zoology, Botany and Geography in the Bachelor Degree programme (BDP) from 2000-01 academic sessions. The goal was to increase the mindset of the students scientifically and its simultaneous uses in recent job markets. However, Open Distance Learning (ODL) is now considered as a reputable method of education as evidenced by the establishment of numerous ODL institutions worldwide and increasing enrolment of students in these institutions. In India, currently 22 percent of the total numbers of students enrolled in India's higher education system are enrolled in ODL institutions (Dikshit, 2003). Concomitant with the growth of ODL, there is the problem of high rates of student dropout. Research has shown that ODL student dropout rates are typically higher than student dropout rates in conventional, face-to-face forms of higher education (Kember, 1995; Barefoot, 2004; Wojciechowski & Palmer, 2005). In this context the present paper aims to search the major causes of student dropout from the *Bachelor of Science Programme at Netaji Subhas Open University, India. The ideas generated from the study could shed some light in near future in higher education and thus the dropout rates in laboratory based science subjects could be minimised.*

Objectives of the study

The objectives of the study were to:

- Establish the main factors that led some distance students to drop out from the studies.
- Establish whether communication between the directorate of distance education and students contributed to the dropout rate.
- Establish whether employment interrupted students from studying.
- Establish whether the students would prefer to complete studies exclusively by distance learning.
- Establish that the constraints of laboratory class would be a reason for dropout.

Significance of the study

It was hoped that the study would come up with the reasons that made the students to dropout from their studies, particularly in laboratory based science subjects. Possibly the solutions for slowing the dropout rate would also be outlined as per submissions of the students. Moreover, it was hoped that the study would influence to make a policy by the Government and onward implementation by the academic institutions pertaining to distance learning.

Methodology

The authors used both the quantitative and qualitative procedures for survey. In order to bring out an accurate and adequate account of factors on the subject, survey questionnaires were used. The questionnaire consisted of 10 modules.

All together thirty six students were surveyed in this study. The population consisted of the dropout students from eight different study centres (randomly selected from both the urban and rural areas) of West Bengal, India. During selection of dropout students for survey, we took only the students enrolled within 2000-01 to 2009-10 academic sessions as Netaji Subhas Open University offers five years for completion of bachelor course.

Frequencies and percentages were used to analyze quantitative data, while content analysis was used for qualitative data.

Results

- *Sex and religion of respondents:* Nearly 88.89% of the respondents were male and 11.11% were female. 100% of the respondents were Hindu by their religion. It seems to be a limitation of our survey that we could not reach the study centres covering the minority areas (figure 1).
- *Caste and age of students:* On an average 55.55% of the respondents were general in caste and 44.44% belongs to other castes, *i.e.,* S.C, S.T., OBC etc.100% of the respondents were above 25 years old (figure 1). So, it was interesting to note that there is an intension among the over-aged students to enrol themselves in any distance education institution.
- *Material status of students:* It was interesting to found that 55.55% of the respondents were married and 44.44% were unmarried (figure 1). So, marriage was not a problem for the students for their enrolment in distance education institution.
- *Distance from the study centres:* 22.22% of the respondents lived in rural places and 77.78% of the respondents lived in urban areas of West Bengal, India among the surveyed students. However, 83.33% of students travelled below 15 km distance from their residence to study centres and 16.67% of students travelled more than 15 km distance for their study (figure 1).

- *Monthly income of the family:* **16.67% of respondents were between Rs.5,000 and Rs.10,000 income group and 83.33% of respondents were above Rs. 10,000 income group** (figure 1).

Discussion

From the survey, it comes out that the students may opt for ODL because they think these programme/ courses will be easier as previously advocated by Carnevale (2000). In this context, Fozdar & Kumar (2006) opined that in distance education, students' expectations are shattered when they realized that ODL programme/ courses require the same efforts – if not more – than traditional programme/ courses which became true for the students of Netaji Subhas Open University as found in the survey report. It was reported that more than one-in-five undergraduates are failing to compete the first year of their degree at the worst-performing universities, it emerged, prompting fears that millions of pounds of taxpayers' money is being wasted on unwanted courses (Fozdar & Kumar, 2006). At some universities, an estimated four-in-ten students will fail to finish the course they started after either dropped out, switching to another institution or graduating with a lesser qualification.

Profile of participants

It was noticed that the majority of the students learning by distance were mainly in the ages between 26 and 45. 88.89% were males and 11.11% were females showing gender disparity. 89% of the respondents were in employment and self-sponsored. 88% stated that they never stopped studies at any time although they knew some of their colleagues who had discontinued their studies due to reasons such as:

- Lack of funds as they could not sponsor themselves.
- Being promoted at working place.
- Marital and family problems, especially for female students.
- No permission given to attend the compulsory study centre.

They suggested that in order to minimise the dropout rate, the government should:

- Extend government bursaries scheme to distance students.
- Give loans to be recovered later.
- More usage of information and communication technology for the students.

Interruption of studies by employment

80% of the respondents believed that, in some situations, studies were interrupted by employment, while 20% disagreed. Those who agreed suggested how this problem could be sorted out, such as: study centre should not be compulsory but optional, course materials and assignments should be sent to the students who had failed to attend the classes in study centre, and employers should give study leave to their employees who were studying to enable them to attend the compulsory classes.

Necessity of compulsory study centre for distance students

100% of the respondents agreed that the compulsory annual classes in the study centres was necessary because library facilities as well as practical classes assisted students to research for the assignments made them feel part and parcel of the university and enjoy the academic atmosphere on campus.

Preference to complete studies exclusively by distance learning

98% preferred to complete their studies by distance learning because:

- They would have more time to attend the family commitments.

- Seeking sponsorship from government would not be necessary.
- They would find it easy to source funds for their studies.
- Since they would be working and studying at the same time, they would not miss promotion at their work places.

Respondents suggested other ways that would reduce the dropout rate amongst distance students such as:

- Government sponsorship should be extended to distance students.
- Study materials should be sent to the students early.
- Course materials should be posted through internet.
- Lecturers should set questions in relation to what they taught.
- Examination centers should be further decentralized to districts in order to reduce transport costs.

Conclusion

From the study findings, it is clear that there were various factors (*viz.,* in search of jobs, time *constraints for the students, family economic problem etc.)* that contributed to the dropout rate among distance learning students at the Netaji Subhas Open University. But the interesting feature was that no one dropped out due the practical load and/or due to attending practical classes for the completion of their course curriculum. We are of a belief that such problems should be sorted out in order to slow down the dropout rate.

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ONLINE EDUCATION- A SCENERIO

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Introduction

Institutions with online courses are taking many steps to improve both the instructional and out- of-class experience both for faculty and students. Much effort is spent on adopting and implementing practices that are based on "best practices" developed by local, regional, or national groups.

The focus on Quality

The first themed survey focuses on quality issues in supporting faculty, developing courses, and educating students. While distance educators have long employed many activities in improving online course quality, there has been little effort to quantify these activities.

Qualities Standards for Online Education

The years, there have been several lists of "best practices," "guidelines," or "standards [1]" for distance education. Typically these documents include items such as fit to institutional mission, faculty development, learning objectives, interactivity, assessments, safeguards against cheating, technical support, and student support services to name a few of the general issues that are covered by these guidelines. There was interest in determining the extent to which these standards have been adopted and implemented. In the question, respondents were asked about the most popular options, but were also allowed to provide other resources that they could be using. Those popular options included:

- Quality Matters - which provides benchmarks and rubrics for online course design
- U.S. Regional Accrediting Standards - the Council of Regional Accrediting Commissions worked with WCET to create guidelines to be used in reviewing institutional distance education activities. The guidelines were revised a few years ago without WCET's, assistance
- Sloan-C Quality Scorecard - The Sloan Consortium created the scorecard for the administration of online education programs
- iNACOL National Standards for Quality Online Teaching - While iNACOL focuses on K-12 online learning, some colleges have found their tools useful

Regional Accrediting Standards

The "U.S. Regional Accrediting Standards" are the most popular option (58 percent) followed by "State/Provincial Standards." This outcome is not surprising as the regionally accredited institutions need to respond to these guidelines as part of the accreditation processes. While one might expect a higher rate of adoption for the regional standards, those institutions might address these standards only when responding to their regional agency. In their daily interactions with faculty, they might use other "standards" that they feel give additional or more rigorous guidance For the "state and province" standards, these are often guidelines that are based upon joint research and agreement across institutions working together in a public system and, therefore, have much local buy-in. For institutions that do not use a "standard," they are not benefitting from the "best practices" lessons or they have ceded all quality issues to the faculty who may or may not be up-to-date on quality online teaching methods.

Faculty Development

More than half of institutions (58%) require new online faculty to participate in faculty development prior to teaching their first online courses. This number drops to 25% for experienced faculty being required to participate in development activities to refresh their skills. When professional development is voluntary, not surprisingly, there is a huge gap in faculty participation depending on who pays for it. About two-thirds of respondents said that their faculty participated in development activities paid for by the institution for both new and experienced online instructors.

Course Completion Rate of Online Courses

There is considerable mythology around completion rates for online courses. To obtain real data, respondents were asked to estimate course completion rates at their institutions for both online and on-campus students. While some were able to provide exact data, others relied on estimates. Other than specifying the time period under consideration, the MOE survey did not provide a standard definition of completion rates. Therefore, institutions used local definitions, which could vary. Another reason for gathering completion rate information, is the low retention rates of Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs), which have drawn considerable attention. In an EDUCAUSE Review article in June 2013, the co-founders of Courser reported.

> "...in 2012, the typical Coursera MOOC enrolled between 40,000 to 60,000 students, of whom 50 to 60 percent returned for the first lecture. In those classes with required programming or peer-graded assignments, around 15 to 20 percent of lecture-watchers submitted an assignment for grading. Of this group approximately 45 percent successfully completed the course and earned a Statement of Accomplishment. Thus, in total, roughly 5 percent of students who signed up for a Coursera MOOC earned a credential signifying official completion of the course.

Review of Online Courses

A word of caution, review is only one method for assuring that courses are meeting the quality standards. Quality guru W. Edwards Deming was fond of quoting statistical quality control expert Harold F. Dodge when he said, "You can't inspect quality into a product. [4]" The quality is there or is not by the time you inspect it. so a review process makes more sense in their setting as instructional designers (if any) might work on only part of a course. With a growing number of online courses, the burden to ensure that courses still follow "best practices" a few years after their initial development becomes greater and greater. While about 53 percent of new courses were reviewed, similarly about half of the respondents (48 percent) also have required reviews of their exiting courses. The number of voluntary review processes grew, as did those with no review of existing online courses.

Academic and Student Support Services

It is a common mistake for institutions to heavily focus on the academics (teaching, instructional design, assessment) and technologies necessary for online courses while neglecting the other service required for student success. Ideally students would have access to library services, advising, tutoring, assessment support, and any other services commonly found on campus. The questions in this section were designed to obtain a better understanding of how many institutions are currently offering these services. There has also been a difference of opinion on whether students should participate in an orientation session prior to taking their own online course. The theory is that students might hit roadblocks with

technologies, working remotely from faculty or other students, managing their time, and other factors that differ from the normal face-to-face course. Online students need the same support as on-campus students. For students struggling with a course, tutoring is a helpful safety net to help them succeed. Three out of five provide tutoring and 29 percent provide it "partially." This might mean faculty-based student support to some, but it would be interesting to probe this "partially" response in more depth. Those without tutoring are probably short-changing their students.

Developing Online Content

The vast majority of online courses use content that is developed in-house by faculty and instructional designers. About 60 percent of institutions use open content, but it is used only in a small number of courses. Those in online education have many options for developing and adapting content for their courses. Note that more than one type of content can be used in a course and there may be great differences in content mix in courses across each institution. There are still great reliance on content that is created by faculty and instructional designers. Such content is used in the vast majority of courses across responding campuses. Given the adaptation of traditional course models into the online environment, this also could be predictable. Although given the growing number of options, it is a bit surprising that there has not been more movement.

Quality Assurance Activities

- **On Faculty Development...** "They offer individualized on-campus support sessions for the two weeks prior to the start of the online learning semester. These are extremely popular with online learning instructors and it gives them a chance to fine tune their course or skill." "They have full time faculty who are paid a stipend to be online lead faculty. They have the responsibility of making sure faculty (full and part) in their content area is meeting the minimum faculty responsibilities for teaching online courses."

- **On Student Support...** "They do not have any student support. There is only a support desk for login issues. They have a webpage of reference and tutorial materials for students. The faculty member is considered student support, just like in a regular course." "They use an early alert system at week 2 for students who haven't yet started their courses and at week 6 for faculty to report students who need more help." "They check student attendance and faculty engagement in online course weekly." "Students are to have online Skype or visual discussion with the faculty at some point in the program." "They have in place communication guidelines to ensure students are receiving answers to all questions in a timely manner."

- **On Organizational Issues...** "They have a shared governance committee that works on policy/procedure and best practice development to be shared with the college for review and approval." "They have a college-wide e-courses committee led by faculty that develops a strategic plan, works in cooperation with our Center for Teaching and Learning to provide training for those faculties who want to teach online." "Divisions have set their own standards for assessment and quality we have offered a standardized format for LMS usage from the TTC but there is a strong spirit of independence among the faculty that prevails in this area." "They try to do this internally, with no advice. Our online delivery is not benchmarked or evaluated for effectiveness".

Central to Success in Online Learning

Starting with a quality rubric so that all are clear on the expectations. Developing faculty before they teach their first course on successful online teaching practices. Using a "team" approach in developing and offering the course. Developing courses with extensive student engagement. Encouraging on-going faculty sharing of their experiences. Providing extensive student services to meet student needs and to relieve faculty of having to provide support beyond their academic role.

Conclusion

"Student services for online learners are essential to success. Providing students the support they need when they need it keeps them connected to the college and positively impacts persistence." "We answer all student issues in the DL office within 4 hours during the week. Constant student contact is vital both from this office and the faculty." "By front-loading our detection and support services, we help build student self confidence. Experience has shown that by the end of the second term, the low self confidence students start to rally, and the likelihood of successful completion." "Our success in online learning is dependent on the level of interaction the faculty and advisors have with our online students. We require and suggest the professors incorporate a variety of ways for the students to be involved in the course."

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PROVIDING LEARNING OPPORTUNITY THROUGH OPEN AND DISTANCE LEARNING: UNDERSTANDING BARRIERS, AND DELIVERING IMPROVED STUDENT SERVICES

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Introduction

Open and distance learning (ODL) is a flexible way for human-centred development. The flexibility has been increased with advancement and use of Information and Communications technologies (Dodds, 2001). Compared to conventional learning, open and distance learning is not the first choice among students. The popular notion today is that distance learning is chosen by those who cannot access conventional colleges. However, this is not completely true. Open and distance learning is an alternative platform of learning for people who really want to learn. This is especially true in the case of working professionals and armed forces personnel who wish to learn while on their jobs. Studies carried by Galusha (1997), and Carr (2000) mentioned excessive drop-out rates in distance learning due to certain barriers in ODL system. In this paper an attempt has been made to understand the barriers to impart improved support services to ODL learners.

Understanding Barriers

Learners discontinue their study in Open and Distance Learning (ODL) system due to presence of following barriers:

1. ***Non-availability of self learning group:*** In ODL system, learner is of any age and learner is also employed. It has been observed that due to less interaction among learners, the possibility of self learning group is rare. While in conventional system of education, regular interaction gives an opportunity to form self learning group. The group may have two or more than two learners. Learners interact and discuss the problems with each other. It has been seen that n many situation group interact with other group and motivates other learners. Such an opportunity is missing in ODL system.

2. ***Negligible Interaction with resource persons:*** In conventional system, prescribed regular class room teaching provides ample opportunity to learners for having interaction with resource person/subject experts. Continuous interactions with resource persons help learners to get his/her doubt clear. In most of the cases learner gets influenced by the teacher and starts following teacher. Teacher acts as resource person, counsellor, future career guide, etc and provides latest updates. In ODL system, face to face counselling is limited to a certain percentage and is not compulsory. Negligible interaction acts as significant barrier and de-motivates the learner from pursuing his/her course of study. There are some exceptions where some learners scored good mark even when they did not attend a single class.

3. ***Lack of time management:*** The basic assumption in ODL system is that learner will make self study after his/her family, social, and office commitment. In conventional education system, learners get regular feedback from resource persons and his/her group. The level of commitment towards family and office is also very low, poor time

management does not put hurdles in the study of learner (Mkuchu, 2008). On the other hand, in ODL, learners get de-railed due lack of proper time management.

4. ***Geographical position of learner:*** In ODL system, attempt is made to reach near to the learner by providing study centre/learning centre close to learner. But it has been observed due to transfer/change in job, learner finds difficult to continue or maintain his/her pace of learning. Geographical position inhibits the motivated learner to pursue his/her study. From the feed-back from learners, geographical position does not play a significant role of barrier due to modern communication and transport systems.

5. ***Social/Family/Office commitment:*** It is an important and significant factor which influences the study of learner. In ODL system the learners of 25-45 age group join the programme for growth in their career. These learners are employed and are in the growth stage of their career. It is observed that young learners get de-motivated due to pressure from his/her office. Such learner can bear social and family pressure.

6. ***Pre-requisite knowledge:*** Pre-requisite knowledge is required by learners to understand the present courses. In ODL system, every effort is made to develop self learning material as learner friendly. The course material is based on some basic concept which a learner needs to know. In ODL system, admission in most of the programmes is on the basis of first cum first basis after fulfilling minimum eligibility criteria. Engineering diploma students get admission in B.Tech. programme and are poor in mathematics. Such students will find the mathematics based courses difficult to understand. In conventional system, they may clear their doubt. But in ODL, they lack such opportunity and get de-motivated.

7. ***Lack of proper student support services:*** In ODL system, student support service includes
   - Pre-admission counselling
   - Guidance during the study
   - Assignment related support
   - Study material related support
   - Examination related support
   - Result related support
   - Guidance for duplicate I-card
   - Guidance for change in address
   - Guidance for correction in name
   - Support for exam centres
   - Support for date-sheet and hall ticket

Above support services if available to the learner, learner feels motivated and will continue his/her study. Apart from availability of time and ability to pay for the cost of study, students said sometimes they lack study materials and there are few possibilities of having contacts with lecturers (Galusha, 1997).

Result and Analysis

It has been observed that timely and proper availability of SLM helps learners in ODL system in the continuation of their study. A quite good number of learner (40%) gets de-motivated as their communication address never get corrected and they never get timely communication from the University. Approximately 60% of learners need proper counselling support in their courses for timely completion of their programmes.

An important and compulsory component in ODL is assignment. Learners need proper support to solve assignment problems. Sometimes learners do not understand the question. An explanation by the counsellor will help learner to understand and solve the problem. In most of the cases learner does not how much is required to write in the assignment. Grading system needs to be explained to the learner.

Conclusion

Open and distance learning system in developing countries faces challenges in its implementation. Globalisation further increases pressure on the literate to upgrade their knowledge and to earn professional knowledge in most possible in their working environment. The paper addresses an understanding about the barriers in the study of learners in ODL system.

Use of ICT will help in overcoming these barriers. It is also required to understand the back ground of the learners for designing the course so that he/she may not get de-motivated during the course of study. Proper support services play an important and significant role in ODL system. Absence of proper support services act as barrier in ODL system and discourage learners to continue his/her study.

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MOOCs – A NEW DEVELOPMENT IN ODL

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Introduction

Distance learning, also called e-learning or online education, is a formalized teaching and learning system specifically designed to be carried out remotely by using electronic communication. Because distance learning is less expensive to support and is not constrained by geographic considerations, it offers opportunities in situations where traditional education has difficulty operating. Students with scheduling or distance problems can benefit, as can employees, because distance education can be more flexible in terms of time and can be delivered virtually anywhere. When an individual is interested in a topic but don't have the time or money to take a college course, it's time to consider MOOCs – massive open online courses. MOOCs are available to the general public regardless of geographic location, education level, or previous schooling. The result is a meeting of the minds with serious benefits, including everything from college credit to an enhanced resume. In this article, the brief knowledge of the MOOC's are studied.

Massive Open Online Course-MOOC

A **MOOC** is a **M**assive **O**pen **O**nline **C**ourse. It is a gathering of participants, of people willing to jointly exchange knowledge and experiences for each of them to build upon. As such it is within the hands of the participants and organizers of a MOOC to change it to their needs. This allows them to use the information and to construct their own ideas or projects.

A MOOC is by itself a non-defined pedagogical format to organize learning/teaching/training on a specific topic in a more informal collaborative way. This guide is meant to be a useful template that can be molded, and build upon as our joint knowledge on MOOC's and new pedagogies grow.

It's true that online education has come a long way in recent years; it has a way to go before it's considered a viable replacement for traditional college. A massive open online course (MOOC) is a free Web-based distance learning program that is designed for the participation of large numbers of geographically dispersed students. A MOOC may be patterned on a college or university course or may be less structured. Although MOOCs don't always offer academic credits, they provide education that may enable certification, employment or further studies.

Pedagogy of MOOCS

Different MOOCs as in any other form of educational delivery or organization employ different pedagogies. In this section there are three generations of distance education pedagogy and the way in which MOOCs achieve scalability by substituting student-content interaction and to a lesser degree student-student interaction for student-teacher interaction .

There are three generations article that this form of cognitive-behaviorist teaching is dominant at many levels of education – including the universities. It also has a long tradition in distance education with its paper-based and broadcast modalities and remains cornerstone of training activities in commercial and military domains.

In order to achieve scalability,

- **MOOCs digitize teachers** on video and use machine scoring of quizzes, thus morphing lectures, discussions, tutorials and feedback from classroom student-teacher interaction into student-content interaction.
- **MOOCs induce students** to take more active roles in their learning and to construct, share and distribute and comment upon artifacts of their learning experience. Thus, they are gaining scalability by substituting student-teacher interaction by scaling student-student interaction.
- **In the interaction equivalency theory** which argues that high levels of learning can and do occur when any of these three modes of interaction (student-student, student-content, student-teacher) are at a high level. The other two may be reduced or even eliminated. However, additional forms of interaction may enhance teacher and student interaction, but these come at a cost of time and/or money.

Benefits of MOOC

A MOOC is a new knowledge and networking method and as new things get tested, they will always have their evangelists and bashers. Here are some of the pros and cons of MOOC's:

- You can organize a MOOC in any setting that has connectivity (which can include the Web, but also local connections via Wi-Fi e.g.)
- You can organize it in any language you like (taking into account the main language of your target audience)
- You can use any online tools that are relevant to your target region or that are already being used by the participants
- You can move beyond time zones and physical boundaries
- It can be organized as quickly as you can inform the participants (which makes it a powerful format for priority learning in e.g. aid relief)
- Contextualized content can be shared by all
- Learning happens in a more informal setting, at a place of your convenience and often around your own schedule.
- Learning can also happen incidentally thanks to the unknown knowledge that pops up as the course participants start to exchange notes on the course's study
- You can connect across disciplines and corporate/institutional walls
- You don't need a degree to follow the course, only the willingness to learn (at high speed)
- You add to your own personal learning environment and/or network by participating in a MOOC
- You will improve your lifelong learning skills, for participating in a MOOC forces you to think about your own learning and knowledge absorption

Possible Challenges of a MOOC

- It feels chaotic as participants create their own content
- It demands digital literacy
- It demands time and effort from the participants
- It is organic, which means the course will take on its own trajectory (you have got to let go).
- As a participant you need to be able to self-regulate your learning and possibly give yourself a learning goal to achieve.

MOOCs Versus Distance Learning

MOOCs are different from long distance learning (LDL) courses. LDL courses are offered through a specific institution and culminate in college credits when combined with other online offline courses, they can result in a formal degree.

MOOCs are

- free of cost.
- Requires little or no interaction with the instructor.
- Requires watching a video series on own time.
- Does not require registration.
- Many students can participate together.
- Requires low or no educational requirements to join.

Long distance learning (LDL)

- Requires registration.
- Requires educational qualification for enrolment.
- Tuition fees need to be paid.
- Student-teacher interaction.
- Each student needs to follow set curriculum and timeline.
- Can be used as college degree.

Overall to pursue a degree, one needs to enroll in the distance learning courses, if in the case of the knowledge gain about the subject, MOOCs is the best choice.

Advantages of MOOCs

The advantages of MOOCs are

- Offers specific benefits unseen in traditional college courses
- Free or very low cost
- Work long distance with the help of internet connection
- Have few or no registration requirements
- Low barrier for student entry
- Helps gain exposure to new topics
- Helps to prepare you for the demands you are likely to face.

Implications of MOOCs in Open and Distance Learning

The implications of the MOOCs are as follows,

- MOOCs are especially those developed by for-profit companies can be perceived as more welcomed competition to distance education institutions.
- They are resources by which institutions can test the delivery models and pedagogies of competitors and themselves.
- They develop new teaching and learning models, and force the learners to more serious examination of the models and methods of accreditation.
- MOOCs may also be useful for professional development of faculty and graduate students in their capacity to open the customarily closed doors of the classroom.
- It allows teachers to experience alternative ways to teach and to learn.
- MOOCs developed by other institutions and companies can also be used as supplemental or remedial open educational resources for students with special needs or interests.
- MOOCs can also be used as "movie trailers" that invite and expose potential learners to more traditional and accredited distance education programming.

- MOOC's represent the traditional services in which higher education institutions both distance and campus has been engaged.
- MOOCs are of lower cost, more accessible to every individual irrespective of the geographical area.

    If universities and governments take up these opportunities there could be a golden age ahead.

Conclusion

MOOCs are still in their infancy, so it's hard to know how they will impact the overall educational climate. If there is an expectation in the education and round the resume, take and complete MOOCs can be a great way to achieve your goals and reduce the cost of a college education. But these courses are not alternative to the university degrees, the more popular MOOCs become the more successful they will be at driving down college cost. Each of individual is responsible as open and distance educators, is compelled to examine the affordability and challenges of MOOC development and delivery methods, critically examine their effect on public education and perhaps most importantly assure that our own educational systems are making the most effective use of these very disruptive technologies.

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ICT SKILLS AMONG THE DISTANCE TEACHER TRAINEES

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Introduction

The impact of ICT has brought so many changes in the education system. Teaching and learning activities are more interesting and more meaningful as ICT provides the element of interactivity that was never thought of before. With the advent of Internet, students no longer need to rely solely on the teacher as knowledge provider, as this technology allows them to access the information at anytime and from anywhere. In addition, with Web 2.0 technology that introduces all sorts of social network sites, students can always communicate, interact and socialize with others without much difficulty[1]. The majority of the teachers or students belong to the group that has been called 'the Net Generation', 'digital natives', or 'millennium students'. Although these labels do not always refer to the same group of people and disagreement exists as to the exact meaning of these concepts (Jones, Ramanau, Cross, & Healing, 2010), it is clear that these youngsters frequently and intensely work with computers, mobile devices, and the Internet. They are also assumed to have experience with a broad range of software tools and applications- in popular terminology often called 'apps' on mobile devices. Referring to research from the USA, the UK, and South Africa, Jones et al. (2010) noted that digital natives may have very different levels of command of ICT (Information and communication technology) instruments and programs. They frequently stick to word processing or browsing the Internet, not uncommonly with a focus on SNS (Social Networking Services), but they are not particularly skilled when it comes to less popular ICT skills, instruments, or programs. Similar observations have been made in our own research projects among university fresher's, conducted in 2004, 2005, and 2009.We also observed that students with more ICT experience did not show increased levels of expertise with all types of ICT skills. Although computers and the Internet were already frequently used before 2004, the importance of ICT has grown explosively since then. There has been a tremendous growth in the popularity of SNS (Bruneel, De Wit, Verhoeven, & Elen, 2013), the use of virtual learning environments at universities has surged, university libraries have made searchable databases available to students and researchers, notebooks and tablets have been introduced, etc. These changes have brought ICT closer to students than ever before. Although these evolutions were expected to make large fractions of students increasingly familiar with ICT[3].

Need and Significance of the Study

Lederman and Neiss (2000) report that technology courses which are part of teacher preparation programmes often emphasis pre-service teachers learning about technology rather than the integration of technology into classroom teaching. A large body of literature supports the idea that technology training is the major factor that could help teachers develop positive attitudes toward technology and integrating technology into curriculum (U.S department of Education, 2005; Reynolds & Morgan, 2001; Yildirim & Kiraz; 1999; Yildrim, 2000). Technology training that simply focuses on teaching basic skills is unlikely to ensure the successful infusion of technology into the classroom. To effectively infuse technology

into the curriculum, teachers need to acquire ICT Skills.   There is a profound gap between the knowledge and skills most teachers have and what is required in today's world. The policies and recommendations at national and international level formed the strong base for the need of an ICT infused teacher education curriculum, defines the ICT components that needs to be infused in the teacher education curriculum and also describes the guidelines to be followed while preparing the teacher Trainees through Regular as well as Distance modes. Such a Professional Development in Teacher Education is also enhanced by public or private partnerships such as the Intel Teach into the Future Programme, Microsoft Shikshsa. Unless teacher educators model effective use of technology in their own classes, it will not be possible to prepare a new generation of teachers who will effectively use the new tools for learning. Recently in England, National Curriculum for ICT in initial teacher training detailed over 50 ICT Skills and   Understandings which trainees were expected to demonstrate before becoming a qualified teacher. But, in India, a study to find out the extent of ICT Skills among the Teacher Trainees especially in a State like TamilNadu is most needed and very significant to ensure a Quality Teacher Education.

Research Question

1. In this study, four primary research questions were addressed: What are the distance student teachers' levels of i) basic ICT Skills, ii) advanced ICT Skills iii)Internet application for information access, and (iv) Internet application for communication purposes?
2. What are the issues and barriers in ICT use among distance student teachers?
3. Is there any significant difference between male and female distance student teachers in terms of their ICT skills?
4. Is there any significant difference between urban and rural distance student teachers in terms of their ICT skills?

Research Methodology

Descriptive Research Method with Survey Technique has been used for the present study.This survey involves a cluster group of distance student teachers from Madurai Kamaraj University, Tamilnadu. A questionnaire was developed and administered to gauge their skills, practices and attitude towards ICT as well as the barriers in ICT usages. Cluster Sampling Technique has been used for the selection of 100 distance student teachers.

Research findings

Demographic data indicates that 94 respondents (58.7%) are female student teachers while 66 respondents (41.3%) are male student teachers. In addition, 66 respondents (41.3%) come from a family whose monthly income is less than Rs.3,000; 65 respondents (40.6%) from a family that earns between Rs.3,000-Rs.6,500; another 19 respondents (19%) with family monthly income of between Rs. 6,500 – Rs.8,000 and 10 respondents (6.25%) whose family income is between Rs.8,000-Rs.25,000. In terms of years of experience using computer, the findings vary. A total of 90 respondents (56.2%) have between 1-4 years of computer experience, 50 respondents (31.3%) with between 5-9 years of experience, while 20 respondents (12.5%) had more than 10 years of experience.

The survey also tries to investigate the place or location where the students teachers learn and use ICT most. It was found that they learned and used ICT mostly at home (99 respondents or 61.9 %), cybercafé (34 respondents or 21.3%), friends' house (14 respondents or 8.8%), school (11 respondents or 6.9%) and others (2 respondents or 1.3%). They were further asked to identify from whom they have learned the ICT skills, and it was found that

they learned ICT mostly on their own, followed by from their friends, schools, and finally from their family. The respondents were also asked whether they own any Internet application accounts. A majority of the respondents (140 or 87.5%) has Facebook account, while 122 of them (76.3%) have email account. Interestingly, 26 of these respondents (16.3%) have their own blog, and 21 of them (13.3%) have personal web pages. In terms of computer ownership, a total of 124 respondents (77.5%) own a personal computer/laptop at home, and out of this 124 research participants, 89.5% or 111 of them claimed that their home computers are connected to the Internet, with almost all (except two respondents) are allowed to access the Internet at home. Meanwhile, from the aspect of computer usage at home, majority of them (47 respondents or 37.9%) use computers between 2-5 hours per week. Next, 28 respondents (23.4%) use computers for more than 10 hours per week, 25 respondents (20.2%) with less than two hours of computer usage, and 23 respondents (18.5%) use computers between 5-10 hours per week.

Generally, the tasks listed in the questionnaire can be divided into four ICT practices: (i) basic ICT skills, (ii) advanced ICT skills, (iii) Internet application for information access, and (iv) Internet application for communication. Table 1 highlights the use of ICT in schools as declared by the respondents:

Table 1: ICT use by the distance student teacher respondents

ICT used for learning	Yes	No
(i) Basic ICT skills	**n (%)**	**n (%)**
Writing essay and report using word processor (e.g.: MS Word)	58 (36.3)	102(63.8)
Developing portfolio	86 (53.8)	74 (46.3)
Searching info from CD-ROM	37 (23.1)	123 (76.9)
Creating slide presentation	51 (31.9)	109 (68.1)
Creating electronic spreadsheet	82 (51.3)	78 (48.8)
Creating bulletin / newsletter	37 (23.1)	123 (76.9)
(ii) Advanced ICT skills		
Producing graphics and animation	33 (20.6)	127 (79.4)
Producing multimedia using authoring tools eg. Flash, Authorware)	26 (16.3)	134 (83.8)
(iii) Internet application for information access		
Searching info from the web	117(73.1)	43 (26.9)
Recording and uploading document on web (eg: Youtube)	52 (32.5)	108 (67.5)
Using search engine (eg: Google)	100(62.5)	60 (37.5)
(iv) Internet application for communication		
Using web camera for communication	27 (16.9)	133 (83.1)
Using social network sites (e.g.: Facebook)	87 (54.4)	73 (45.6)
Sending and receiving emails	58 (36.3)	102 (63.8)
Using chat rooms	41(25.6)	119 (74.4)
Conducting tele-conference (e.g. Skype)	16 (10.0)	144 (90.0)

Based on Table 1, it was obvious that majority of the respondents uses the Internet application for information access as the most frequent practices, with 117 respondents (73.1%) search information from the web, and use search engines for such activity (100 respondents or 62.5%). The next highest usage is using social network for communication purposes (87 respondents or 54.4%), and followed by two basic ICT skills, namely creating portfolio using computer (86 respondents or 53.8%) and creating slide presentation (82 respondents or 51.3%). The respondents hardly use ICT to create graphics and animation (33

respondents or 20.6%), produce multimedia using any authoring tools (26 respondents or 16.3%), use web camera (27 respondents or 16.9) or participate in teleconferencing (16 respondents or 10.0%).

Then, the student teachers' levels in each of the four ICT skills were measured. It was found that (i) for basic ICT skills, the respondents indicate a moderate level (mean: 2.76, S.D.:0.95), (ii) for advanced ICT skills, they indicate a low level (mean: 2.17, S.D.:0.94), (iii) for Internet application for accessing information, a moderate skill level was shown (mean: 3.12, S.D.: 1.1), and (iv) for Internet application for communication purposes, a high skill level was declared by them (mean: 3.64, S.D.:1.15). It is important to note that a score of 4.5-5.0 indicates a very high level of ICT skills, a score of 3.5-4.4 reflects a high skill level, 2.5-3.4 suggests a moderate level, a score of 1.5-2.4 signifies a low skill level, and a score of less than 1.4 indicates almost no ICT skill.

In terms of the differences in ICT skills between the male student teachers and female student teachers, the ANOVA result shows no significant difference in all four ICT skills between the male and female student teacher. In specific, there is no significant difference between gender in terms of (i) basic ICT skills (mean for male: 2.75; female mean score: 2.77, p: 0.875), (ii) advanced ICT skills (male : 2.18; female: 2.16; p:0.843), (iii) Internet for information access (mean for male: 3.13; female: 3.11; p:0.875), and (iv) Internet for communication (mean for male: 3.62; mean for female: 3.66; p:0.830). These findings indicate that gender is no longer an issue in using ICT as perceived by these groups of participants.

This study also aimed to investigate whether there are any significant differences in terms of the four ICT skills between the rural and urban student teachers. The findings indicate significant differences in (i) basic ICT skills (t-value: 7.47, p<.05), (ii) advanced ICT skills (t-value: 4.32, p<.05), (iii) Internet application for information access (t-value: 4.88, p<.05), and (iv) Internet application for communication purposes (t-value: 4.86, p<.05),, between the urban and the rural Student teachers, with the former group scored significantly higher than the latter group in all four categories. These results clearly show that there is still a significant gap between the urban student teachers and those from rural areas in terms of ICT skills and use.

The respondents were also asked to identify the barriers or issues that impede the use of ICT in their respective working places. The items were divided into three main aspects, namely administrative issues (7 items), facilities (5 items), and their attitudes (2 items). In the administrative aspect, the three barriers that top the list are (i) time limit for the student teachers to use ICT facilities in working schools (140 respondents or 87.5%), (ii) the students are not allowed to use ICT facilities without their teachers monitoring the session (124 respondents or 77.5%), and (iii) ICT rooms and labs are always locked (110 respondents or 68.8%). Meanwhile, in the aspect of ICT facility, 115 respondents (71.9%) claimed that computers in their working place are often malfunctioning. Also, the computers available in working place are claimed to be outdated and using slow processor (105 respondents or 65.6%), and the programs or software available are different than the ones they are using at home (also 105 respondents or 65.6%). Nevertheless, in terms of attitude, the respondents disagree that computers in school are not user-friendly (89 respondents or 55.6%). They also disagree that they do not know and do not like using computer (14 respondents or 91.3%).

The findings of this study reveal that majority of the respondents are skillful in the Internet application for communication purposes. With the popularity of social networking sites such as Facebook and chat rooms such as Yahoo Messenger, it is not a surprise to observe this finding among the teenage respondents. It was also found that they are moderately skilled in basic ICT skills and Internet application for information access. These

student teachers have learned ICT literacy course (as part of their secondary school curriculum) in Grade 7 and Grade 8 in which the basic ICT skills were introduced. Thus, they do not have much problem in word processing, spreadsheet and slide presentation skills. However, they still lack some skills in the advanced ICT levels such as in producing graphics and animations as well as multimedia creation; and this is an expected finding as they did not receive any formal learning session in such skills. In general, the respondents in this study are at the moderate level in terms of ICT skills. This overall finding on ICT skills is consistent with previous research which indicates that their respondents' ICT skills are at the moderate level (example: Nor Izah, Norazah & Zalizan, 2008).

The results also indicate that, as compared to the rural student teachers, their urban colleagues show significantly better skills in all four ICT levels: basic ICT, advanced ICT, Internet application for information access and Internet application for communication purposes. This finding suggests that urban student teachers are better exposed to ICT facilities and applications, and that those facilities (either at home or in their working environments) are probably of better quality. In other words, the digital divide between the rural and urban student teacher still exists, and the government as well as the society needs to consider the necessary actions to overcome this issue.

Conclusion

As future leaders and workforce of any nation, student teachers needs to be well trained in ICT. Issues such as gender differences in using ICT are no longer seen as a problem. However, the digital divide is still the main issue that needs to be addressed by the education policymakers. Therefore, the government needs to provide the best possible ICT service, programs and trainings, especially to the student teachers from rural areas. It is also hoped that the barriers impeding the use of ICT in working places be reduced. Student teachers will be able to use ICT skills at the optimum level and master these skills accordingly.

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BIOLOGY OF LEARNING THROUGH NEUROCOGNITION: A RECENT APPROACH IN EDUCATIONAL PROCESS

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Introduction

In the modern era educational system is still struggling to apply the brain researches to human learning in the classroom. Hence first to understand how the human brain learns, what are the results of brain researches on learning, which are the learning principles derived from brain researches and what are the strategies to implement these brain researches in the class room. The human learning process in the brain is a network of many nerve cells. These cells carry information from external environment to internal organ to recognize the concept and storage in the brain.

Neurocognition

The process of cognition associated to one or more specific areas of the brain is referred Neurocognition. It involves complex neural pathway in human (Sasikumar *et al.,* 2013). The process of cognition associated to one or more specific areas of the brain is referred as Neurocognition. It involves complex neural pathway in human. The basic anatomy and function of brain and learning process are the two important aspects in Neurocognition. Neurocognitive functions are cognitive functions closely linked to the function of particular areas, neuronal pathways, or cortical networks.

- Brain substrate layers of neurological matrix at the cellular molecular level.
- Therefore, their understanding is closely linked to the practice of neuropsychology and cognitive neuroscience.
- Two disciplines that broadly seek to understand how the structure and function of the brain.
- Relates to perception defragmentation of concepts, memory embed, association and recall both in the thought process and behaviour.
- Discussion of general abilities is presented as a background and is followed by analysis of functioning in specific cognitive domains.
- Overall intellectual deficits are indicated by results from both general intelligence tests and composite test battery scores.

Structure and Functions of Nerve Cell

The nerve cell is the basic unit of nervous system. The brain, spinal cord and nerves are composed of special type of tissue called nervous tissue and are mainly composed of building block of many cells called nerve cells. Nervous tissue is made of neurons that receive and conduct impulses. The two most important functions every neuron plays in the body are (i) to monitor and relay information or messages from one neuron to another using a combination of what are called nervous impulses and neurotransmitters; and (ii) to 'learn', as it were, by forming sophisticated networks of neuronal patterns with other cells of its type as though they were simple mini-brains.

Main parts of nerve cell

- *Dendrite*-branched part of the cell body which receives information from the external surroundings.
- *Cell body*-otherwise called Cyton which bears dendrite and possess central nucleus (the brain/controller of the cell).
- *Axon*-the elongated part of the nerve cell which receives information from Cyton and passes to nerve ending.
- *Nerve ending*-the terminal part of the nerve cell and consist of knob like structure.

Basic building blocks of human brain (Pandia Vadivu, P., 2014)

Nerve cells are the structural and functional unit of nervous system and also the basic building blocks of human brain. Since human brain is made up of network of nerve cells. The coding and encoding processes are very unique in human beings.

The chemical building blocks of the human brain

Our brain is composed of a multitude of simple chemical building blocks. If our eyes could look at, say, the very atoms and molecules composing our brains, we would see how the most abundant chemical substance in the human brain is water. The second most abundant chemical substance is protein, then comes the inorganic salts (a chemical mixture of metals and non-metals), lipids (mainly fats), carbohydrates (molecules having only carbon, hydrogen and oxygen in their chemical structure and which act as a source of energy for the brain), and nucleic acids. These chemical substances come together to form the fundamental biological building blocks in the human brain called *neurons* or *nerve cells*.

Neurons are categorized into three main types

1. *Sensory neurons* convey to other neurons information about the external environment i.e. they produce the sensation of sight, sound, smell, taste and touch;
2. *Motor neurons* utilize information from other neurons to activate muscle cells and biochemical reactions; and
3. *Integrative neurons* transmit information from sensory neurons to motor neurons or other integrative neurons.

Nervous impulses are merely the flow of charged ions moving through the nerve cell. A charged ion is simply a chemical molecule that has lost an atom or two from its structure (usually temporarily), causing the molecule to develop a strong electrical charge. Neurotransmitters, on the other hand, are uncharged chemical molecules sent out by one nerve cell to the next to help with the transfer of information.

Role of nerve cells in Learning through Neurocognition

Rich sensory inputs enriched environment cause the nerve cells to get fired due to which they discharge electrical impulses and certain chemicals by creating and bridging synaptic connections: these cause dendrites to grow and create the capacity for new learning.

Discussion

The brain related processes such as coding, encoding, attention, cognition process, consolidation etc. are involved in biology of learning process of human through various aspects of Neurocognitive processes. Each process is interlinked to store the information in the human brain. The Futurological aspects on the application of biology of learning through neurocognition mentioned below:

- Neurocognitive strategy stimulates long term memory

- It is Mainly involved in the easy way of learning the content
- Information can be easily retrieved by the brain.
- It develops creative and higher order thinking skills.

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MOVING BEYOND OPEN AND DISTANCE EDUCATION: A DESIGN TOWARDS A SPIRALLING   APPROACH TO REACH OUT TO THE   SOCIETY

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In a democratic society, social equity and justice can at best be ensured only through educational systems of varied nature and modes. To reach out to all the stakeholders of higher education, it is firmly believed that artificial barriers in the form of compartmentalized educational systems have to be done away with. In a way, to meet the challenging needs of the stakeholders of a growing society, Open and Distance Learning (ODL) system was envisaged as an alternative /supplementary/complementary system of education.

The University Grants Commission (UGC) allowed the universities to offer courses patterned after the regular courses offered by the regular university systems. The universities were expected to design self-instructional materials after a detailed needs analysis survey to cater to the needs of learners belonging to different levels of attainments. A course team approach was envisaged with a chief editor, a number of course writers, a language editor, and an editor to format the materials in the self-instructional materials (SIM) mode. The lessons/materials will state educational and instructional objectives in terms of learners' behavioural objectives, inputs in the form of contents, check your progress section at the end of each unit, model answers, over-all questions at the end of each lesson, glossary, assignments to seek feedback etcetera. In addition to this , face-to-face sessions, responses in the form of tutor comments, counseling/mentoring in the study-centres, audio-video materials, computer-assisted learning modules wherever possible and required are also provided for. But, unfortunately, the universities made use of distance education directorates to make quick money. Students were admitted in large numbers. Efforts were hardly undertaken to design specially the self-instructional materials. Face-to-face contact sessions were turned optional..The tutors could hardly give useful feedback in the form of tutor comments .Though the distance educator is expected to be trained in the delivery of distance education programmes, by undergoing the Diploma in Distance Education and Master of Arts in Distance Education programmes ,(both offered by IGNOU)), hardly any serious effort has been made by any university..Meanwhile, millions of students got enrolled to these distance education programmes and obtained degrees .Simultaneously, these universities allowed private players who neither are qualified nor committed to quality delivery systems to open tea-shops in the name of study-centres. Obviously, the casualty turns out to be quality. The guardians who should ensure quality in higher education had winked at the whole system. The deemed-to-be universities which do not have a mandate to run distance education programmes were allowed to run distance education programmes unfortunately, these educational partners neither have the social responsibility nor educational commitment nor expertise to run the distance education programmes. Universities which offered the distance education programmes found only another avenue to pool resources to fill their coffers .Thus, wrong practices have crept in to leave the whole world of ODL in total disarray. The very credibility of the courses offered through open and distance education is at stake. Serious educational practitioners and policy makers have turned skeptical about the whole business of open and distance education.

When the Industrial Training Institutes (ITI) were established immediately after independence, the government planned to take care of the drop-outs who could not go to higher classes beyond Standard VIII and train them for an Industrial Certificate course in some chosen trades, such as training the learner to become a turner , a fitter, a machine operator or a tool designer etcetera..Similarly, the students who could not prove academically sound beyond STD X or (SSLC) were sent to polytechnics to earn a Diploma in chosen fields of civil, mechanical, electrical , electronics and communication engineering disciplines. Only those who proved academically sound to pursue courses beyond Std. XII were allowed to pursue courses leading to the award of degrees in colleges and universities in the disciplines of arts, sciences, commerce, engineering, law, agriculture and medicine.

Though there was a clear demarcation amongst the domains of each of these levels, it was very clearly envisaged originally to allow the learners who reach a level of mastery at a particular level to graduate into the next level by accumulating and transferring credits to seek vertical mobility and horizontal mobility. There have been some success stories wherein some ITI technicians have turned to become technocrats or scientists in very well- known industries, both, public and private. Though these have been isolated cases of successes, such as a soldier or a sailor or an airman growing into becoming a commissioned officer, it is very much welcome and a right step in the right direction towards the self-actualization process of individual learners. However, there is no prescribed framework in place to motivate young learners .

Educational systems should seek to meet the needs of the learners who either cannot or will not pursue their education in traditional systems but may benefit out of out-reach programmes of regular institutions. Housego (1999) states "the term "outreach " applies to community outreach and community outreach counselling and refers generally to efforts to increase the availability and utilization of services especially through direct intervention and interaction with the target population.(Housego, Bellie 1997:86)

The curricula should envisage a spiral progression where learning of skills, values, knowledge and attitudes increase in both breadth and depth. Learning should not take us somewhere; it should allow us to go further more easily (Bruner.J:1977).

Thus it becomes mandatory to create a framework to calculate credits, credit weights, credit levels and credit hours for various courses, credit equivalence and seek credits transfers for vertical mobility and horizontal mobility. The Government of India has come out with a policy on National Skills Qualification Framework. With the skills and levels of knowledge identified, it is possible to create a logical and progressive blue-print for our learners to learn and work at all levels. Strict compartmentalization or straightjacket systems will hardly take us anywhere. Instead, a spiral approach to the entire processes encompassing various educational systems and concepts, conventional education systems, open and distance education programmes, online learning, outreach programmes triple helix, community learning corporate education, etcetera is suggested. A judicious mix of any of these modes can be adopted to achieve particular goal or objective of higher education, thus shifting the focus on the objective rather than the system of education.

It is also envisaged to seek to enlarge the Institute-Institute Interface, Institute-Industry Interface, Institute-Community Interface and Institute-Society Interface, design courses which are appropriate to meet the needs and requirements of specific areas of disciplines and at levels expected of the learners for performing specific tasks at specified levels and prove that the courses prove relevant to all the stakeholders of the society at large. Such an approach allowing freedom to the stakeholders to choose a course from an array of courses will turn out be a boon to all the stakeholders

Once the skills and levels of the learners are identified, it is possible to examine the learners' goals and objectives for the courses he/she pursues and accordingly place him/her at the appropriate level to enable him/her to seek higher goals in the areas of his/her specialization…It is like seeking the application of the principles of teleology. Iit is a goal-oriented or purpose-oriented effort.

Consequently, the inputs pertaining to the entry level of the learners, the learning path to be pursued the knowledge component that has to be acquired, the skills that are to be inculcated, the attitudes that are to be developed, etcetera., can be fine-tuned and the learners can be allowed to pursue their goals with the assistance of the counselor / mentor. There need not be strict rigidities of following a single mode of learning transaction. For instance, in a typical university system when the educational administrators wanted to introduce a course "Technical Communication Skills", to the first year B.Tech. degree students, one of the authors of this paper developed self-instructional learning modules with provision for face-to-face contact sessions over week-ends. The learners worked on the tutor-mediated assignment-response sheets during the semester. Assignment-feedback thus received in the form of scores/grades formed the means of formative assessment and the feedback in the form of tutor comments proved a valuable input for the learners to have their learning experiences reinforced.

On another occasion, several certificate courses were designed on Teacher Development and offered during the course of the eight semester study. Certificate courses in curriculum development, teaching-learning transaction, educational psychology, educational communication, educational methods and media and testing and evaluation were offered through modular pattern with self- instructional materials being the prime medium of instruction with provision for face-to-face interaction every fortnight for six semesters. At the end of the sixth semester learners were encouraged to work on a project related the area of their specialization and develop methods to the facilitation of knowledge transaction in the classroom. With practice teaching during summer vacation for a duration of six weeks at the end of the course of study or on a mutually convenient time made the course complete. A learner who completes three certificate courses and micro-skills teaching practice for two weeks shall earn a Certificate Technical Education (Cert,Tech.Ed.) A learner who completes four certificate courses and completes micro-skills teaching practice for two weeks and macro-skills teaching practice shall earn a Diploma in Technical Education (Dip.Tech.Ed.) A learner who completes six certificate courses and practice teaching for four weeks (both micro-teaching and macro- teaching) and submits the project report shall earn a Bachelor's degree in Technical Education, (B.Tech.Ed.) Thus the learners, at the end of an eight semester study can earn a B.Tech. degree and a B.Tech.Ed. degree

When the engineering colleges run short of qualified faculty members, it is ideal to seek this type of intervention. In effect, it must be brought to the notice that this type of spiral approach aims at a definite advantage and courses can be designed according to the needs of the learners and entry and exit levels through various types of interventions can be planned and implemented… But excellence should be the watchword. And sky can be the limit.

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A ROADMAP TO EFFECTIVE INDUSTRY–INSTITUTE COLLABORATION

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Introduction

In the wake of quantum jump in technologies with global connectivity, the engineering Institutions have responsibility to provide not only the required skills and knowledge to their students, but also practical industrial experience. There is a consensual feeling that what is taught in the institute has no bearing upon what is practiced in the industry; that there is a high disconnect between academic study and industrial practice. Though this may be true to a certain extent, the fact is that because of the recent liberalization, privatization and globalization of the Indian economy the industries are being increasingly exposed to direct competition in a global market place and to become more competitive in this environment, they should improve and increase their quality and efficiency. In this situation, the industry has to respond by a two pronged strategy of updating their technology as well as updating their human resources, by providing new experiences and competencies. The engineering institutions on the other hand in order to catch up with the new technology, have to involve industry in their various activities. This situation has created a symbiotic relationship between the engineering institutions and industry.

Need for Industry–Institute Collaboration

The educational reform of linking engineering education with the industry has been amongst the important educational innovations undertaken in this country. When it is realized that the engineering institutions and industry are so inter-dependent on each other, with the university engaged in educating engineers and the industry providing employment for these engineers, it becomes necessary to explore avenues for improved collaboration between these partners in national development. Additionally, there can be no doubt that we cannot have an active innovative technology without the continuous stimulation provided by research, whether basic or applied. Since the universities are traditionally the place for most research, and industry necessarily the place for most technology, what is called for is enhanced collaboration between the institute and industry.

Grouping of Parameters to Evaluate the Effectiveness of Industry–Institute Collaboration

As Industry–Institute Collaboration involves a diverse set of activities and result in a variety of outputs, no single measure is able to capture the full range of such collaborations, and hence the success Industry–Institute Collaboration depends on the various parameters like participation of industrial personnel in seminar, involvement in curriculum design, summer training of students in industry, industrial problems as projects, consultancy to industry, involvement in teaching process, etc. This creates a lot of scope in increasing Industry–Institute Collaboration and thus the divide between theory and practice can be narrowed. This has led to a positive shift in the thinking towards increased interaction with

industries, however the Industry–Institute Collaboration Cell is needed to create a brand value and hence to increase the marketability of the students. The measurable parameters that decide on the degree of effectiveness of Industry–Institute Collaboration and these parameters are used for evaluating the effectiveness of IIC of any particular stream of Higher Engineering Educational Institutions (HEEI).

These parameters according to their intrinsic characteristics are grouped in six broad categories for various types of Industry–Institute Collaboration are listed in Table 1.

Category 1   General Collaboration represents personal informal collaboration which helps to buildup deeper levels of participation from industry.

Category 2   Academic Level Collaboration involves a more specific collaboration of industry with higher level of participation than General Collaboration in HEEI.

Category 3   Institutional Support Type Collaboration helps to overcome resource constraints of HEEI.

Category 4   Service Type Collaboration helps the HEEI to generate financial resources by providing the services needed by industries.

Category 5   Cooperative Type Collaboration involves formal research agreement under which original research is conducted in Industry–Institute Collaboration.

Category 6   Student Level Collaboration helps the students to identify the industrial problems, to understand the best practices and needs of industries, and to generate funds for co-curricular activities.

Table 1. Grouping of Parameters in Six Categories of Collaboration

Type of Industry–Institute Collaboration	Parameters
Category 1 General Collaboration	1. Participation of industrial personnel in workshops 2. Participation of industrial personnel in conferences 3. Participation of industrial personnel in seminars 4. Participation of industrial personnel in guest lectures 5. Participation of industrial personnel in committees
Category 2 Academic Level Collaboration	6. Participation of industrial personnel in teaching process 7. Conduction of continuing education for industries 8. Involvement of industrial personnel in curriculum design 9. Joint publication of papers with the industries 10. Representation of industrial experts as external examiners for students

Category 3 Institutional Support Type Collaboration	11. Participation of industries in research fellowships 12. Contribution of funds to attend workshops by the industries 13. Donation of instructional resource materials by the industries 14. Donation of laboratory equipments by the industries 15. Contribution for infrastructure development by the industries
Category 4 Service Type Collaboration	16. Utilization of specialized laboratory equipments of the institute by the industries 17. Conduction of training programmes for the industries 18. Participation in consultancy assignment of the industries
Category 5 Cooperative Type Collaboration	19. Participation in joint project with the industries 20. Participation in joint research with the industries 21. Participation in joint patent with the industries
Category 6 Student Level Collaboration	22. Participation in industrial visits 23. Participation in industrial project works 24. Participation in summer trainings 25. Participation in internships 26. Sponsor of medals and rewards 27. Contribution of funds for co-curricular activities

Recommendations

Industry–Institute Collaboration is a planned activity for the benefit of institute, industry, and government and recommendations are presented in three sections according to the level of intervention required, viz. (1) UGC (2) HEEI (3) industries.

Recommendations to University Grants Commission

- Develop policy to encourage different modes of Industry–Institute Collaboration at national level
- Encourage public-private partnership to create consortia and partnership research institutions
- Facilitate provision of tax exemption for the industries collaborating with HEEI
- Encourage and fund the setting up of technology park at institution's campus
- Develop policy to support the institutions to accept donations from the industries for strengthening the infrastructure
- Setup more efficient funding mechanism for basic and applied research
- Allocate more funds for establishing Institute–Industry collaborating units
- Publish profile of top engineering institutions for Industry–Institute Collaboration at national level
- Recognize the institution and faculty members having strongest industry collaborations by way of citation, trophy, certificate and cash awards
- Include Industry–Institute Collaboration as one of the main criterion when appraising institutions.

Recommendations to Higher Engineering Educational Institutions

- Develop an institution-specific model for Industry–Institute Collaboration using the model developed in this study as a basis
- Encourage design of research plans, field study, students internships, curriculum development, visiting faculty and other academic activities in collaboration with the industry
- Establish industrial liaison unit to facilitate the coordination of industrial liaison activities
- Encourage sabbatical for faculty members at industries for a period of 3 to 4 weeks per academic year with full pay
- Encourage the faculty members to engage in consultancy work, joint research, joint patent and other R&D works along with the industries
- Establish an exclusive patent office to coordinate and help the faculty members in R&D
- Develop clear policies and guidelines for various type of Industry–Institute Collaboration at institutional level
- Prepare a consolidate database of facilities and expertise available in all the departments
- Strengthen the alumni association
- Develop an exclusive centralized reprographics centre for industrial related activities
- Encourage signing of MOUs with industries to ensure sustainability of the collaboration
- Ensure transparency in all operations
- Implement a system of reward and recognition for high performers.

Recommendations to Industries

- Adopt selected HEEI for implementation of Industry–Institute Collaboration activities
- Establish institutional liaison units to facilitate the coordination of institutional liaison activities
- Encourage their executives to serve in advisory boards and various committees of the institutions
- Encourage internships to the students
- Provide opportunities for industrial training for faculty members and students
- Encourage and promote joint research, joint publication, consultancy and joint filing of patents with the institutions
- Contribute fund towards joint testing centers, laboratory and centre of excellence
- Facilitate mutual sharing of resources
- Industrial associations to develop and to publish database of interested collaborating industries with their area of interest for such collaboration.

Conclusion

From the above study, we can conclude that for an effective Industry–Institute Collaboration, the following attributes are very important.

1. Resource persons
2. Inclination of resource persons in collaborations

3. Conducive environment
4. Infrastructure for minimum requirements of industries
5. Clear policies and guidelines

In general, faculty members should be encouraged to engage in appropriate outside relationships with the industries. Such outside activities can provide the individual faculty member with experience and knowledge valuable to teaching and research and also help students gain richer educational opportunities and experiences. It is the responsibility of the Institutional administrators to establish appropriate norms and to assure the existence of an open environment for free exchange of ideas. A minimum infrastructure for the requirements of industries should be established for the effective institutional participation in tests and investigations which lead to the extension of knowledge or to increase effectiveness in teaching. As the Industry–Institute Collaboration involve a diverse set of activities, it is necessary that guidelines, which constitute institutional policy, should be developed for continuing and productive relationships between the institute and the industry.

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REGIONAL CLUSTERS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION

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Introduction

The Government wishes to develop a coherent and sustainable system of higher education to meet the economic and social needs of the country. Its aim is to underpin this ambition with a higher education system that can equip our students with the knowledge and skills necessary to live fulfilled and rewarding lives and to meet the social and economic challenges of our country.

Objectives

The objectives for the higher education system are given below
1. Increased participation, equality of access and lifelong learning in higher education.
2. Excellent teaching and learning quality of the student experience and opportunities.
3. High quality, internationally competitive research and innovation.
4. Enhanced engagement with enterprise and the community and embedded knowledge exchange.
   The reform of higher education occurs in a global context relating to the delivery of education, creation and diffusion of knowledge.
   The application of the following principles will help to create a system of higher education institutions with diverse missions to form a coherent and comprehensive group of providers.
   1. Quality 2. Opportunity 3. Comprehensiveness 4. Coherence 5. Autonomy and Accountability 6. Cost. Effectiveness 7. Sustainability 8. Responsiveness

Regional Clusters

The Universities, Colleges and institutes in a region may have an effective inter-institutional collaboration in the form of regional clusters.

The ultimate vision for regional clusters is that they will function to create dynamic and innovative "Regions of Knowledge" causable of increasing regional capacity, capability and global competitiveness in order to contribute significantly to social, cultural and economic development. They will do this by exploiting the strategies of individual institutions within the cluster and by maximizing their collective capacity which will be greater than the sum of their individual strengths.

These clusters will bring together higher education institutions to engage activity with enterprises, community organizations and regional authorities to provide education and research programmers and to engage in knowledge exchange. Clusters will offer a high quality and better integrated set of services to students, businesses and communities. They will play a key leadership role in a region's economic social and cultural vibrancy. Developing areas of research and teaching excellence in fields that are directly related to a region's sustainability and will further enhance the integration of universities and institutes with local communities.

Priority Objectives for Regional Clusters
1. Shared, Coordinated academic planning
2. Regionally co-ordinate approach to transfer and progression pathway.
3. Coordinated regional approach to enterprise and the community and to regional development.
4. Shared services and facilities including harmonization of systems and processes.
5. Shared and coordinated approach to the presentation and promotion of the region internationally.

Clusters: a simple and clear structure

The structure of clusters should be simple and clear and should be based on the commitment of the participants to work together. Effective clusters are more likely to emerge. When the independent constituent institutions have governance and management structures that facilitate them working together to achieve agreed common objectives. The institutions within each cluster will put in place governance agreements that provide for effective operation, with clear accountability to the governing bodies of the member institutions in a manner that minimizes any additional burden on institutions, Such agreements could cover arbitration to resolve any disagreements that might arise for example on matter such as unnecessary programme duplication and prior agreement to be bound by the arbitration's findings. The objectives of the clusters should be an integral part of those of the participating institutions and they will form part of the formal compacts between the Government and the institutions.

An important aspect of ensuring the success of clusters is that members agree with the Government on what they will do as a cluster and what they will deliver independently of the cluster. Institutional funding will be based on this combination of deliverables and institutions will be accountable for delivering on both.

It is also expected that alliances will continue to form across regions where there is a potential to achieve positive outcomes. Participation in one cluster of institutions does not mean that an institution cannot also enter into agreement or from an alliance with any other institution that supports its objectives.

Educational scenario in Tamil Nadu

Tamil Nadu is one of best states of India with a larger educational network for more than a century.

No of Universities	-	42
No of Medical Colleges	-	35
No of Engineering Colleges	-	483
No of Arts & Science Colleges	-	549
No of B.Ed. Colleges	-	689
No of Agricultural Colleges	-	20
Total	**=**	**1788**

In Teacher students are new tuned by Tamil Nadu Teachers Education University (TNTEU). All the upcoming teachers are highly knowledgeable skilled person with new methodology through 689 B.Ed., college students. Importance of the teacher's Quality should be as a major role of TNTEU ideas/impact. All these institutions are situated in 31 districts of Tamil Nadu. These institutions may be grouped into 10 Regional clusters to achieve sustainability in the Higher Education System.

Conclusion

The Planning and operation of the system of higher education will be improved by

- The introduction of regional clusters
- Introduction of strategic dialogue and performance management embedded within overarching framework of national objectives like "Make in India"
- High quality, internationally competitive research and innovation
- Excellent teaching and learning and quality of the student experience and opportunities.

The primary objective of establishing a regional cluster is to bring together higher education institutions in a region in such a way that the contribution of higher education to the region can be identified and provided in a coordinated way, in partnership with other education providers and with business interests and with wider community. The revised higher education system will equip our students with the knowledge and skills necessary to meet the social and economic challenges of 21st century.

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ICT IN OPEN AND DISTANCE EDUCATION: AN APPRAISAL

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Introduction

ICT is a major factor in shaping the new global economy and producing rapid changes in society. Within the past decade, the new ICT tools have fundamentally changed the way people communicate and do business. They have produced significant transformations in industry, agriculture, medicine, business, engineering and other fields. They also have the potential to transform the nature of education where and how learning takes place, and the roles of students and teachers in the learning process. Embedding ICT in teaching-learning process is a major initiative in all branches of education; ICT has a particularly important role to play in developing provision for bilingual learners. This is concerned with exploring new ways of working with bilingual learners as well as facilitating more established techniques. The increased use of ICT to deliver and enhance aspects of educational provision is now an emerging practice for all learners belonging to rural and geographically remote and mainly monolingual areas thus having advantages in overcoming geographical barriers. For example video conferencing facilities developed to enable isolated learners to share learning with others in remote areas can also be used to reduce linguistic isolation by allowing same first language learners to discuss and communicate remotely.

Learners Support Services are an important part of Distance Educational system. Since the learners in ODL system are not directly involved in the regular classroom teaching-learning process having direct interaction with the teachers regularly, they are provided with adequate Learners Support Services. Such support services include the pre-admission counselling, admission process, provision of study materials both in print media and audio visual forms, subject specific academic counselling, audio visual viewing facilities, participation in teleconferencing, ICT facilities for e-learning, library services, laboratory support facilities, academic career guidance, information services related to rules, regulations, procedures, schedules, etc. The role of ICT to speed up the delivery of the support services has now become inevitable for the distant learners. It also considers the shift from mass produced generic resources to tailored, personalised support and communications and sets this in the context of globalisation of the economy and the changing expectations of students as 'consumers.'

Modern Electronic ICTs used in Open and Distance Learning

The explosion of electronic ICTs in the recent years offers to use some of them as tools for delivering materials for electronic learning (e-learning). e-Learning is an innovative approach for delivering electronically mediated, well-designed, learner-centered, and interactive learning environments to anyone, anyplace, anytime by utilizing the Internet and digital technologies in concern with instructional design. Applications and processes of e-learning include web-based learning, computer-based learning, virtual classrooms, and digital collaboration, where contents are delivered *via* the Internet, intranet/extranet, audio and/or video tapes, TV and radio broadcasts, CD-ROM etc. The issue of e-learning has been received an increasing level of interest in recent years for the promotion of open and distance

learning (ODL), and it is now a multi-billion dollar activity worldwide. Some important ICTs related to e-learning are briefly discussed below.

- **CBT (computer based training) –** Generally CBT and e-learning are synonymous, but CBT is the older term, dating from the 1980s. CBT is a general term that relates to all training that is delivered with the assistance of a computer. Deliver of CBT can be via CD, the Internet, or shared files on a network.
- **Internet –** The Internet, or simply the Net, is the publicly accessible worldwide system of interconnected computer networks that transmit data by packet switching using a standardized Internet Protocol (IP). It is made up of thousands of smaller commercial, academic, domestic, and government networks. It carries various information and services, such as electronic mail, online chat, and the interlinked Web pages and other documents of the World Wide Web. Contrary to some common usage, the Internet and the World Wide Web are not synonymous: the Internet is a collection of interconnected computer networks, linked by copper wires, fiber-optic cables etc.; the Web is a collection of interconnected documents, linked by hyperlinks and uniform resource locators (URLs), and is accessible using the Internet.
- **WWW** (World Wide Web) **–** Through keyword-driven Internet research using search engines like Google, millions worldwide have easy, instant access to a vast and diverse amount of online information. Compared to encyclopaedias and traditional libraries, the World Wide Web has enabled a sudden and extreme decentralization of information and data.
- **Videobook –** A book performed in video format, or a video structured similarly to a book used chiefly in teaching.
- **VoIP –** VoIP stands for Voice over IP, where IP refers to the Internet Protocol that underlies all Internet communication. This phenomenon began as an optional two-way voice extension to some of the Instant Messaging systems that took off around the turn of the millennium.
- **WBT** (Web-based Training) **–** Training that is delivered with the assistance of the Internet.
- **LMS** (Learning Management System) – A system for management and tracking of the involvement of participants with specific content, usually with the assistance of database. Typically the system tracks who is scheduled to participate in specific training programs, who has begun the program, who has completed the trainings, and what were the participants' test scores.
- **LCMS** (Learning Content Management System) **–** A system for collaborative devolvement of e-learing content with inbuilt resources sharing and project management processes.
- **Content –** What is taught in a course, class, or lesson. The training objectives are often a list of the content of a course.
- **Electronic bulletin board –** A method of communication where topics or questions are posted to a website and participants can respond.
- **Blog –** Web log. Similar to an electronic bulletin board, except that only one individual or group can create the initial post and participants can only respond to the post.
- **ASP (Application service provider) –** Some LCMS products are available in a format that is Internet-based or network-based. This means that there is little or no software to install on the local computer to deliver and track the training. The information is

tracked totally at the remote or server location. Service is generally subscription-based, and password protected.

- *NLT* (Notional Learning Time, or Seat time) **–** It is the time taken for completing an e-learning course. This is an approximation of the amount of time @80-90 percentile of the target audience will take to complete the course.
- *PDAs (Personal digital assistants)* **–** PDAs are handheld devices that were originally designed as personal organizers, but became much more versatile over the years. PDA is popularly known as walking computer. A basic PDA usually includes date book, address book, task list, memo pad, clock, and calculator software. Newer PDAs also have both colour screens and audio capabilities, enabling them to be used as mobile phones, web browsers or media players. Many PDAs can access the Internet, intranets or extranets via Wi-Fi, or Wireless Wide-Area Networks (WWANs).

Mobile Learning

Mobile learning or m-learning is a development from e-learning which for its part originates from learning (distance learning). The rapid growth of information and communication technologies (ICTs) makes it possible to develop new forms of this education. Today's students knowledge of mobile devices makes the entrance of mobile learning (m-learning) possible. m-Learning is the term given to the delivery of training by means of mobile devices such as PDAs, mobile phone and digital audio players. m-Learners are seeking "just in time, just for me" lessons in small, manageable formats that they can undertake when it suits them. m-Learning also provides teaching opportunities to the instructor .They can utilize current software to test students and receive immediate feedback, help student prepare for the workplace, personalize learning experiences and take advantage of just-in-time" learning. Who would have thought that the simple birth of a calculator in 1974 would turn into a device that would imitate a computer but fit in the palm of your hand? While it is amazing to think the future of technology is unimagined and in many ways unimaginable, students and teachers will be doing as new technology continues to revolutionize the way people learn.

Conclusion

Education is the elementary right of human being for the development of a person both professionally and personally. With the emergence of technology especially in the field of open and distance education have open a new horizon for distance learners. Application of technology in education is not the ultimate goal; instead, we should use it to pursue quality. Information and communication technologies (ICT) are potentially powerful enabling tools for educational change and reform. Rapid advances in information and communication technology pose new opportunities as well as challenges for every society. In the education sector, ICT has enormous potential o help countries address issues of access to learning, quality of the   teaching-learning process and management of education systems. In order to ensure the quality of education, the distance education institutions must be careful about the use of proper technologies and media. We have to think the uses of media and technology in regard to appropriateness and acceptability in the society as well as on the ability of the institution offering the program. The socio-economic and cultural background of a person influences their ability to learn from different media technology. It is true that ICT is playing a vital role in open distance education but at same time there are many issues and challenges that are to be addressed for smooth functioning of various online services that are to be implemented for its participants and other public. In this paper, the required ICT infrastructure and various issues and challenges in usage and setting up of ICT infrastructure

in open distance education are addressed. The institution that is providing education in ODL mode should look at all the addressed issues and challenges and take necessary precautions with a proper action plan along with timeframe.

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CHANGING LEARNING ENVIRONMENT THROUGH TECHNOLOGY

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Introduction

Learning is changing and so are methods of training and learning environment. Computers and computing skills have been instrumental in accelerating the change in the learning environment. The use of Internet is growing at a rapid pace and with growing technology the dial up access is being replaced by the Broadband, which is not uncommon today. Technology is changing by the minute, especially in the field of communication and information technology. By the time one understands the facts and figures of a particular system and before you could conclude whether you require the system or not – it has already become outdated. To keep pace with this rapidly changing technology – Training methods and learning environment needs to change almost at the same pace. Most of the words we hear these days has a prefix 'e' like ecommerce, e-learning, e-business, etc and the commonly used training terms 'Anytime, Anywhere, Anyone', 'Just in time', 'Performance Support system' etc are increasingly becoming part of anyone's training directory.

The widespread use of IT&C technologies in education has already become a phenomenon with a large development in the first decade of the 3rd millennium. Based on E-learning concept are described all the learning and teachings methods assisted by It&C systems in order to transfer knowledge and skills acquisition. Due to continuous development, and as a result of accelerated evolution in the software applications designed for educational domain, definitions are constantly changing and new concepts are emerging (some of the new emerging concepts are synonymous with E-learning: CBT (Computer Based Training), IBT (Internet Based Training) or WBT (Web based Training). The involvement of many big companies on the e-learning technology market has had a major impact and contributed significantly to the development. According to the UE Commission reports, since 2000, the global turnover on the market of software applications designed for educational domain was estimated around 48 millions dollars.

Nowadays the advantages of using IT technologies in teaching and learning are widely appreciated especially for: Flexibility of study which is not restricted by a fixed schedule and allows widely access considering that the use of virtual learning platforms no longer requires expensive technology. Broad access for students / pupils to information and the opportunity to be trained by the best teachers, without any geographical or temporal barriers. The development of skills in a modern, collaborative environment which provides simultaneous assimilation of knowledge needed in the field of information technology and communications.

The Learning Process

Learning involves acquisition of knowledge to greater or lesser degree depending on what is to be learned. Knowledge by itself is not enough unless the learners understand how to use it. Without thinking about what we are learning, and understanding it, much of the knowledge we have memorized is of little use and is most likely to be forgotten quite quickly. We tend to focus our efforts on learning new skills to be able to perform an activity within an occupation or a given function successfully –thus developing our competence. Competency can be described as a combination of knowledge based, skill based and attitudinal aspects as it can be observed during human performance during task situations.

The changing learning environment:

The traditional source of learning has been colleges and universities. Most of these icons of learning provided knowledge in a typical class room environment, with little or no focus on imparting skills and behavioral attitude. The idea behind this environment was that skills and attitudes needs to be gained and cannot be imparted. The colleges and universities provided the content, the subject matter expertise, the instructors/ lecturers, the library resources, assessment and certification processes.

Impact of E-Learning on Learning Methods

Using Internet technology within learning has the effect of improving literacy, improving access to information and training, reducing the cost of education. Hybrid models of education are very popular and are growing rapidly in response to a higher demand for making learning process more effective. Studying the ways of learning in terms of technologies used, in the field of eLearning education will fit all situations in which significant use of ICT resources exists. In a narrow sense, eLearning is a type of distance education, as a planned teaching-learning experience organized by an institution that provides the material environment in a sequential and logical order to be assimilated by students in their own manner. Long Life Learning concept involves continuous training that includes initial training, professional training and continuing education. assume that long-term learning (Long Life Learning) implies planning by participants for their own manner of learning, depending on personal availability, which leads to their stimulation to learn. "Lifelong learning is no longer just one aspect of education and training; it must become the guiding principle for participation and provision across the full continuum of learning contexts". Long-term learning strategy should also include the years of school.

Elearning technology provides flexibility for the development of learning support throughout the entire life, regardless of the period and manner of preparation and availability of the trainee. Lifelong learning can be planned depending on the preparation stage of training of each individual student, through various methods, including the face to face training and distance learning method. Being directly connected with the use of ICTs in education, distance learning is a part of the Long-Term Learning. Distance learning refers to learning situation which implies that the trainer and the student are not in the same physical location or may be located in the same location but not at the same time. Unlike e-learning, traditional face to face training provides a direct social environment for the students.

The Standardization Process in e-Learning

A　　comprehensive approach to the trends within dedicated e-learning technologies could not ignore the initiatives concerning the development of standards for e-learning systems.Although e-learning technology domain is relatively young, like any dynamic segment of IT& Ctechnologies has quickly required the need standardization. The main objectives of standardization in the field of e-learning aim to ensure the reuse ofeducational resources and the compatibility between educational platforms. There are four categories of standards, according to Horton - E-Learning Tools andTechnologies

Conclusion

Learning environment is changing rapidly and so are the learners today. There is a need to cater to the present crop of learners who are inquisitive, have a great thirst for knowledge and are on the move all the time. Knowledge is to be delivered to them at their own place in their own time instead of them seeking it from traditional temples ofChanging the global perspective regarding the manner of learning and the widespread use of virtual

environments have inevitably led to new directions in educational research, some of them aiming to improve the assessment of knowledge through new technologies.Modern systems, especially designed for e-assessment, provide tools for scheduled test of knowledge able to discover and correct weak points or lacunas in students training. Not at last, the flexibility of e-learning systems provides support for developing long life learning programs, independent of the availability or the type of training of each person, contributing to the development of new concepts which provide effectiveness to learning processes. One of these concepts is known as Blended Learning and suppose a mix of "face to face" classical learning with on-line learning sessions.

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EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN THROUGH DISTANCE EDUCATION
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Importance of Women's Education

Education of women is an area which has evoked great interest throughout the world not only to compensate for their suppression through the ages but also to empower them in order to ensure optimum social development. It can open up ample opportunities for women and girls to enter the arenas of productive work, decision making processes , to participate in development and to change their lives. It is the key to gender equality and women's empowerment. It determines the women's access to paid employment, control over her earnings , her overall health, her fertility ,family size and standard of living. It actually opens up wider horizons, creates new opportunities and empowers women with choice.

Education equips girls to make more informed life decisions and improves their health, creating spillover effects for their families and throughout society. True progress and advancement for any society is impossible if girls are excluded. The social and economic goals of the future depend heavily on the condition of girls today. Girls' education yields some of the highest returns of all investment in development benefitting individuals, families and society as a whole. Girls have the ability to bring unprecedented social and economic change to their families and communities. Education is essential for women not to conform and set in the circumstances and move on with life, but to confront social oppression, to stand up and stand out and to shape what one wants to do in life.

Frank Method (UNESCO, 2005) has rightly stated that "Increasing and improving educational opportunities for girls and women is critical to the achievement of the goals of EFA. We need focused, innovative and sustained efforts to address gender factors in access to education and to overcome social resistance and disincentives with increased investments as necessary."

The health of future generations is directly linked to the current physical condition of girls and women. Infant mortality decreases by 8% for each year a woman stays in schools

- **Smaller families:** Improvements in the status of girls and women leads to women having fewer children.
- **Increased Immunization:** Multi country data indicates that educated mothers are about 50 % more like to immunize their children than uneducated mothers.
- **Lower infant mortality:** Their exist is a strong correlation between under – 5 mortality rates and educational attainment of mothers as the above statistics shows.
- **Lower risk of violence:** Women with higher levels of schooling faced a lower risk of physical or sexual violence at the hands of a partner (UNICEF 2005; WHO, 2005).

Girls' Education - Global Scenario

The United Nations Girls' Education Initiative (UNGEI) was launched at the World Education Forum on Education for All (EFA) in Dakar, Senegal

(April 2000). UNGEI's aim is to raise awareness of the importance of educating girls and to generate support nationally, regionally and internationally for this crucial task. Part of this effort involves advocating for increased investment in girls' education, and informing policy-makers about what impedes the full participation of girls in school and society and which practical efforts are most effective in redressing this situation.

At the turn of the millennium, the international community promised that by 2005, there would be as many girls as boys in school. Later this year, when leaders from around the world come together to take stock of the Millennium Development Goals, there will be no escaping the fact that they have collectively failed to keep this promise. Despite much progress, a child without education is still much more likely to be a girl than a boy.

Progress of girl's education has been hampered by a number of factors: lack of international political leadership, global funding gap for education, lack of plans and capacity within national education systems to improve the access to and quality of schooling for girls, and locally many poor families who simply cannot send their children to school.

Women's Empowerment

The Programme of Action (POA 1992) for implementation of NPE (1986) spells out the meaning of women's empowerment. Woman becomes empowered through collective reflections and decision making. The parameters of empowerment are:

- Building a positive self image and self confidence.
- Developing ability to think critically.
- Building up group cohesion and fostering decision making and action.
- Ensuring equal participation in the process of bringing about social change.
- Encouraging group action in order to bring about change in the society.
- Providing the wherewithal for economic independence.

It is seen world over that women's access to education is limited by many factors like social, economic, cultural and geographical factors. Culture, customs and traditions come in the way of access to education for women in many under developed and developing countries. Even today in the villages and in some orthodox families people strongly assert a women's place is only at home. Social taboos like safety for girls, abuse , violence, etc., prevent girls/women from education. The boy or male is given preference over the girl as far as education is concerned. Poverty is also one of the factors for illiteracy. Increasing cost of education during admission to school and colleges prevent parents from sending girls to college as they will also have to spend for the girl's marriage. Those living in remote villages and hilly areas do not have proper access to schools and colleges. As girls were not allowed to travel in those areas, they were not given education.

Impact of Distance Education on Women

Many studies were conducted to find out the factors that limit women's access to education (Christine Von Prummer,1994, Punithambal 2000, /Ragini 2007, Vijayalakshmi Pandit 1997). Ragini G.P (2007) in her attempt to find out the reasons for joining distance education among women has reported that the following five factors have emerged as the top most:

- Flexibility of the system
- Earn While you Learn

- Early Marriage
- Better Marriage Prospects
- Low Free Structure

The study also analysed the impact of distance education on women and reported the following five factors that were rated as top five factors.

- Improved social status
- Enhanced Self Image
- Gained self confidence
- Earn while you learn
- Promotion in jobs

Status of Women in Higher Education

There is a wide disparity in the GER of higher education across states and the Gross Attendance Ratio (GAR) in urban and rural areas. Total enrolment of students in regular mode in Higher Education Institutes in India is around 241.8 lakhs, with 15.87 million boys(55.7%) and 12.69 million girls(44.2%) of total enrolment (Source: All India survey, 2013)n terms of gender, enrolment is skewed as 55.7% comprises males, while only 44.3% of the enrolment is females, indicating significant gender disparity. The GER for males (20.8) is higher than GER for females (17.9)With a GER of 19.4 percent, India is below the world average of 27% ,especially with that of other emerging countries such as China(26%) and Brazil (36%) etc. India's target is to achieve 30% by 2020.Skill based ,job oriented courses can be offered through ODL to increase the enrolment of women in Higher education thereby achieving the target of 30% GER.

Role of Rashtriya Uchchatar Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA) in Higher Education System in India

Rashtriya Uchchatar Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA) a tool to improve quality of higher education is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS), launched in 2013. RUSA aims at providing strategic funding to eligible state higher educational institutions., One of the key objectives of RUSA is to address the issues of equity, access and excellence in higher education

Special Schemes for Women Under 12th FYP

- Schemes for capacity building for women administrators, Post-doctoral Fellowships for women, women hostels, facilities and infrastructure for women, scheme for single girl child should be expanded and strengthened during the 12th FYP.
- In order to attract more girl students from the states, where the rural or urban GER for girls in higher education is more than 5 per cent lower than the male GER, a new scheme of Women's Higher Education Stipend (Mahila Uchha Shiksha Britti) may be introduced. This stipend may be awarded to girl students from rural and/or urban areas, as the case may be, who score higher than a certain grade in earlier public examination and having family income less than a certain specified level. The stipend should be in addition to the tuition fee waiver.

Suggestions

Education is regarded as the key factor in overcoming the barriers that women face and the basic tool for Empowerment of women and bring them into the main stream of development. Women due to various social, cultural and economic factors are unable to

pursue higher education through the formal system of Education. The formal system has failed to meet the demands of different categories of people, especially the disadvantaged groups like - women who are in need of a system of education that comes to their doorstep by catering to the individual needs. Distance education is considered as a boon to women. Skill development; Need based skill development programmes could be offered through ODL which will get employment opportunity and increase the income of women economic Independence

Woman always depends on somebody for her livelihoods hence, independence in economical aspects are imperative for women's development. Economic independence will free the women from the slavery position and boost the self confidence. Economic independence of women also helps in the national economic development. Empowerment-Empowering women with the help of education and employment will make the society to accept women as an equal gender. Like male, female also has all the potential and empowering women will help to use her full capability and mitigate the economic dependency of women. Empowerment is only effective answer to oppression, exploitation, injustice, and other melodies of society. The idea of empowerment contains exciting possibilities.

Conclusion

The Social factors such as illiteracy, oppression, exploitation and injustice the economic factors such as low wage, unemployment, under employment and political factors such as low participation of women in elections and other elected bodies are also equally responsible for gender inequality in the country. So there is every need to bring about changes in social, economic and political structure to reduce gender inequality in India and empower women in its true term. Education is the basic instrument of social change. If we educate women, they will deliver all the potentials skills and knowledge to develop the family, the nation and the whole world

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OPEN AND DISTANCE LEARNING – A POSITIVE STRATEGY FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

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Introduction

As a successful teacher in the society, we think that we have drawn all the Learning Community to the other bank of the river, but if we turn back, we see that there is a community called disables who do not know the ways and means to cross the river. If we are to be called a successful teacher we have to help these children to cross the river. These Children if taught, the correct way to swim they can cross by themselves just with the guidance of the teacher. Similarly a child with learning disability can come up in life if the field in which he is interested is being found out and trained in that particular field.

Distance Education and Disability

Distance Education as an emerging concept of modern education. It is proving to be an effective alternative to formal education. Distance Education has been found to be a viable alternative to meet the growing number of education seekers; a boon for those deprived of the benefits of education. Distance Education has always held special appeal for people with Learning difficulties because of the freedom it offers in choosing when, where and how to study. Open Distance Learning Universities are considered to be an excellent institution for meeting the requirement of Children with Learning Disabilities. The phrases' Learning difficulties' and 'Learning disabilities' somehow differ because the term 'disability' carries a negative and pessimistic connotation; whereas 'difficulty' implies a problem with solutions. When a Learning difficulty becomes as severe as to interfere with the child's learning process, it is better to call it as "Learning disability". Children with Learning Disabilities and difficulties are found nearly in every class room. A person with Learning Difficulties is someone whom society identifies as having an impairment in cognitive functioning, but whose needs and interests are not well catered for by societal structures or by the interactions of other people; he or she is a survivor of struggle to overcome this disadvantage and may need help to continue to do so. Children with disabilities are less likely to be in school, disable adult are more likely to be unemployed, and families with a disable member are often worse off than average. With better education and more access to jobs, people with Learning Disabilities can become an integral part of society, as well as help to generate Higher Economic growth that will benefit the country as a whole. In this paper we discuss about how the Open Distance Learning is increasing the enrolment percentage of differently able students and their sustainability in Higher Education, and also some Techniques and methods of Open Learning which are needed by people with Learning Disabilities for better integration in to society by overcoming stigma.

Role of Distance Education in Special Education:

Open Distance Learning Universities are considered as Excellent Institutions for meeting the requirements of differently able students. Thus Open Universities can play a vital role by solving the needs of differently able students. Students with special needs such as physical disabilities, developmental disorders, and challenges with learning are likely to

benefit from additional educational services like the use of Technology, resource room and different approaches to teaching and learning through distance education (Vijaya Rani & Senthilnathan, 2011).

Today distance education course makes use of Email, the web and video conferencing over broad band network connections for both wired physical location and wireless mobile learning which has the greater scope for special education. As the number of special teacher educators are less, compared with the regular course, it is significant that special education through distance education is a viable option for the special students to continue their studies measures to increase the enrolment percentage of differently able students in Higher Education

ODL and Learning Disability:

Open Distance Learning Universities can plan and execute many programmes such as Vocational Training Life Skill Training, Social skill training etc., for the disable, so that more number of differently able students can be enrolled in Higher Educational Institutions. Fee exemption should be given to differently able learners which enable them to pursue Higher Education. Career guidance centre can be opened particularly for the disable by collaborating with National Institutes for disable. Open Distance Learning Universities should develop special learning packages and special equipment's or devices to help differently able students to enroll in ODL Universities. Reservations and employment share of disable candidates should be implemented strictly. In all Higher Educational Institutions performance records of differently able students should be maintained and campus placement should be done to encourage the differently able students. In addition to this a special placement cell should be open in all Open Learning Universities. The share of the disable against the total strength in actual terms is barely 0.44% as against their estimated population of 5-6%. In the private sector, the scenario is even worse. In a survey conducted by National Centre for Promotion of Employment for the Disable People (NCPEDP) in India in top 100 companies in 1999, the rate of employment of the disable was 0.28%. The figure of Multinational companies was a dismal 0.05% reservation for disable must be extended to the private sector. Educational Institutions should frame balanced curriculum and Instructional material to differently able students which can meet the need of all different kind of disable students. The entire disable may not require same kind of teaching so separate classes should be organized

Suggested Technologies and Methods for Disabled Students:

The following are some of the technology oriented methods which can be used to teach differently able learners at Higher Education level through distance education mode. Special educations teacher can identify the suitable method and implement it in the teaching learning process.

- *You tube demonstration:* It is a popular demonstration method to present text with video and audio. There are plenty of websites with free you tube demonstrations in many subjects. The special education teacher can identify the suitable demonstration and use it in the teaching learning process.
- *Blog:* A blog or web blog is a form of on line journal, periodically updated and structured chronologically. It can be created according to their need and interest. Blogs related to special education courses can be created and utilized.
- *JAWAS:* Job Access with Speech is software exclusively designed for mobiles and smart phones. It converts the screen texts into a clear voice that enables the blind to operate their phones without difficulty. They can make call, receive calls, read emails;

text messages and even access the internet with the help of text to speech technology, by this software thousands of disable are benefited.

- *Learning Tools:* Now a day's several tools are available in the market that aid learning. These readers are useful for dyslexia where one can listen to audio version of text books while the text will be highlighted in the large LCD screen. Victor Reader Machine should be provided to Visually Impaired students for the purpose of easy reading of the normal text and more powerful Braille machine should be provided to the V.I students for taking notes.
- *FM System-Hearing aids:* Electronic hearing aids are used for picking up sound, magnifying its energy and delivering this louder sound to the user's ear and brain. The Frequency Modulated System is a wireless, portable, battery operated device that uses radio transmission to send auditory signals.

Parents Participation towards Distance Education

Parent education includes training the parents in specific procedures to work directly with their children, to teach them specific skills, reduce problem behaviors, pivotal response training, improve non-verbal communication skills, verbal communication skills and increase appropriate play skills. A part of this programme also includes teaching parents to advocate for their children and to provide information and support to other parents (Gupta and Singhal 2005). Parent education can be beneficial not only for the children but also for the parents. For example, parents can learn techniques to work with their children with autism, to help them overcome their socially avoidant behaviors.

The Objectives of the Parents-cum- Teacher Training to guide the Disability Children through ODL Method

- To develop an understanding about disability and an attitude of sensitivity and empathy towards persons with disabilities; -
- To develop awareness about the importance of prevention and early detection of disabilities; - To develop the conviction that the child with disability can learn and benefit from early stimulation and education;
- To learn about strategies and methods for early stimulation, training and education of the child with disability, so as to foster the child's optimal development in all areas – including the development of physical, motor, mental (cognitive), social and communication abilities.
- To develop awareness about how the person with disability may be helped to acquire basic self help skills with respect to activities of daily living.
- To develop an understanding about how to manage difficult behaviors in the person; -
- To know about the various educational options available in the country for education of children with disabilities.
- To facilitate inclusion of the child in the preschool and the primary school.
- To develop awareness about adaptations needed in teaching-learning strategies, methodologies, materials and curriculum, that would benefit the child with disability.
- To develop awareness about viable avenues for economic rehabilitation and some strategies for training the person for a suitable vocation. While the course material adopts a lifespan perspective, its focus is on the childhood years. The transaction of the ODL method with the parents and family members is based on a combination of print material-based learning and face-to-face contact sessions. The print material is self-instructional in nature, in order to enable the learners to understand the text.

The Recent Relaxations given by the Government to the disable learners by ODL Method

- The visually impaired or differently-able or spastic learners shall have the facility of having an additional one-hour for each of the subject.
- A visually impaired or differently able or spastic learner alone will be provided services of amanuensis free of charge. Other learners will have to meet the fee of the amanuensis.
- Learners with poor hand function but having speech disorders will have scribes who can understand the sign language (other than the subject teacher, parents or siblings).
- Learners who have minimum hand function but having speech disorders will be allowed to use the computer for the examinations. Wheel chair bound learners will be given facility to write the examination in the ground floor, especially where there are no lift facilities.
- Learners with special needs registered under the SAIED AIs will have the same Centre with disable friendly infrastructure and professionals who can help them in case of need. During examination the invigilators deputed by NIOS will monitor the examination proceedings
- Provisions created for disable children in the field of ODL.

Roll of NIOS in Shaping the Disable Children

NIOS helps children to pursue interest in two ways: one, by studying the subjects of their Economics, History, Accounts and Psychology. Secondly, by allowing them to study at their own pace, therefore the children are able to pursue interests that were non-academic but equally important to them.

Normal schooling would not have allowed differently able children to pursue this self-directed experiment in education. And it is for this reason that NIOS plays a very important role in education and society. It gives us children leverage over our lives.

On one hand, NIOS has helped young prodigies to work towards their pursuits without missing out on formal academic education. On the other hand it has helped learners with difficulties in reaching their academic goals. But in between the ends of this spectrum there are so many children who do not wish to stay in the school system not because they cannot cope with it, but because they do not want to. They believe and aspire for an education outside the four walls of authority and convention. There are so many people who do not thrive in the conventional system, but do not know that they have another option.

Conclusion

Imparting teaching and learning for disable children through distance mode of learning has numerous advantages such as inclusive education, improving quality of education, enhancing the lifelong learning process, availability of quality information, ability of the web environment to stimulate the interest of the students, the promotion of engagement and communication between students and the tutor, the recognition of value of web-learning and e-learning etc., Technology enhanced distance education offers a plethora of opportunities and advantages for those in Special Education both teachers and learners with increasing effort for bridging the 'digital divide'. It is important that the teachers or learners should be made to adopt technology in the teaching and learning styles to provide pedagogical and educational gains to the learners. Empowering teachers and learners with ICT skills opens up a world of learning unavailable in the past and is crucial to achieving success in today's Global Knowledge economy. "Technology is a great Social leveler. It puts two unequal human beings or two unequal societies on an equal footing".

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WOMEN EMPOWERMENT THROUGH OPEN AND DISTANCE LEARNING

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Introduction

At the outset, let me begin with a great saying by Nelson Mandela. He said: "Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world." Education is a fundamental right. Every citizen on this country is rightful of proper education. Gender discrimination, child marriages, lack of proper educational facilities in remote rural areas, child labour and surprisingly lack of proper sanitation facilities in schools are contributing to high rate of school dropouts. The erstwhile Andhra Pradesh and the reorganized two states of Telangana and Andhra Pradesh are no exception.

Surveys, statistics and the general observation indicates that five out of every 10 children enrolled into schools are dropping out by seventh standard. Painfully, seven out of ten girl students are dropping out of schools even before entering High Schools. Another alarming factor is six out of 10 girls are ending up child brides and four out of ten girls are having their first child before 18. Gender disparity is also continuing to plague the society. According to 2011 census, the female literacy rate is 65.46 % as against the male literacy rate of 82.14 %.

Education seems to be a dream and everyday struggle for girl child. Mamidipudi Venkatarangayya Foundation, a Hyderabad-based NGO, as recently as February, conducted a survey in 11 government junior colleges, five private colleges and four residential colleges situated in eight of the ten districts of Telangana (leaving out Hyderabad and suburban Rangareddy districts). The results were shocking.

- As high as 62.7 percent girls are skipping college at least two days a week to work as casual labourers.
- Almost 30 percent of them revealed that they go to colleges with an empty stomach at least four days a week.
- An astonishing 98 percent of the Dalit and tribal respondents said that they face caste discrimination from teachers.
- Another alarming factor is that almost 20 percent of them faced sexual harassment either in the neighbourhood or on way to educational institutions and in schools.
- Almost all the respondents said that they had been experiencing sociological and financial hardships. They felt the need for more residential colleges to pursue their education.
- About 74 percent of the respondents said that they could pursue their education due to the support of mother as there is no support whatsoever from father.

Telangana Board of Intermediate Commissioner Ms Sailaja Ramayyar while disclosing the survey findings observed that the figures reflect the ground reality. Sorry state of affairs indeed and this is where the role of open and distance learning becomes all the more crucial. There is an urgent need for the open and distance learning institutions to evolve a strategy to reach out to such hapless girls and motivate them to utilize the services being provided by open universities.

As if challenging the statistics, there is another picture that I would like to paint. On the sprawling and beautiful campus of India's first Open University, Dr BR Ambedkar Open University, Hyderabad, Telangana, everyday, I find young women with children in their

arms, lining up for various academic activities. Travelling great distances, leaving their hardships behind, they attend classes, write exams and pass out with flying colours. On several convocations, I have noticed pride on their brightly lit faces for resuming their studies and finishing the task with great determination and zeal.

Almost all of them have a story within them. The story of hope of education nipped at the budding stage or of being forced to take up family responsibilities or a child marriage. But all their stories have a new beginning in education. They rise like phoenix and show the world that they can achieve. If given an opportunity, age does not matter.

Role of education in one's life is very crucial. But, providing right opportunities to the deprived lot is the need of the hour. Exploring newer avenues to take education to the doorstep of women, who by compulsion had to douse the flame, is an urgent necessity. Distance education is revolution of its kind in the field of education. Breaking the conventional norms and reaching out to the masses for who higher education is a mirage. The distance mode of learning, usually referred as "Open University Education" has indeed brought in a perceptible change in the lives of millions of students across the globe. It started as a small trickle in London a few decades ago, a completely novel and learner friendly concept that took over the world in no time. Education, which was limited to only a few sections of society, now reached the doorsteps of those who could not access it for various reasons.

Keeping in tune with the changes around the globe in open distance education learning, Andhra Pradesh was the first in India to introduce distance learning through Andhra Pradesh Open University. Subsequently, the university was named after Dr BR Ambedkar. Then Indira Gandhi National Open University came into existence. The 33 year long journey of Dr BRAOU has many firsts to its credit. Like in any other part of the country, the literacy rate is low and also the school dropout rate is high in rural parts of both Telangana and Andhra Pradesh states. Hardly 50 percent of those who enroll in schools complete their school education. The case is worse with higher education. Usually, the reason for the low literacy rate of women and high school dropout rate among girl students is early marriage, gender discrimination and parents not willing to take the risk of sending their daughters to nearby towns for college education. As a result, thousands of women just spend the prime years of their lives in kitchens and in parenting. This is where Dr BRAOU or institutes of distance learning play a key role and help rural women to rekindle their hopes of learning.

What motivated me to write this paper is a case close to my heart. The inspiration came from the story of a successful housewife turned academician and my colleague at the university. Coming from an economically poor family, Chandrakala was married off at a young age. Early marriage, family responsibility and parenting kept this young and bright woman away from conventional education. On coming to know about Dr BRAOU, she dusted her old books and began a new chapter in her life. Now, she is an Assistant Professor in the same university which helped her in reviving her long cherished dream of becoming a teacher and prefixed 'Doctor' to her name.

Every time I come across Chandrakala on the university campus, I feel motivated to tell her story to all those who resign themselves to fate and stop studying. Kala is a motivating factor for lakhs of housewives who suffer in silence with work to be done in their kitchens. Chandrakala is a tribal girl from the backward Mahaboobnagar district in Telangana. A bright student, Chandrakala was married when she had just completed her tenth standard. With great difficulty she pursued her Intermediate or 12th standard but had to stop as she was expecting a child. A few years just zoomed past in parenting. But, the bright student in Chandrakala did not stop pushing her to study. That is when Dr BRAOU came to her rescue. Kala struggled to balance her household responsibilities and studies. After long

hours of household chores, he returned to her books. Setting aside early hours of the day for study, she taught herself how to prepare for examinations. The dream of becoming a teacher led her to move on her course in teacher education. She had to face criticism and sharp remarks but the support of her mother and family helped her to surpass the obstacles that came. The challenge of taking up the teaching profession was a goal she pursued with undaunted zeal. She is now an Assistant Professor and a serious but humble academician; a role model for all girl students.

Another classic example is that of Sabitha, who resumed her education through Dr BRAOU. She did her post-graduation in Mathematics and then completed her post-graduate diploma course in Environmental Sciences. She crossed the seas and did her doctorate from South Florida University with a scholarship. Without any hesitation Sabitha gives the credit to Dr BRAOU. The list of successful women is unending and growing by the year.

But, the real success story is that of Jajula Gowri, a Dalit girl. She was a farm labourer earning a paltry sum of Rs.5 per day. On the suggestion of a teacher, she enrolled herself as a student of the university. Now, Gowri is a prominent writer, poet and speaker.

Taking a cue from the success stories, the girl students of Dr BRAOU are faring better than their male counterparts. More than 50 percent of female students, who are enrolling in undergraduate courses, are completing their degree programme as against 35 per cent of male students. This trend has been consistent since beginning. Last academic year, the percentage crossed 60 for female students. The university and distance learning have done a lot for the cause. But a lot more needs to be done. No doubt thousands of women obtain graduation and post-graduation certificates year after year. Thousands join this mode of study every year. But, the institution of open distance learning should take up massive campaigns to motivate those who are still indoors. New courses that help in providing employment and new initiatives should be introduced to attract more women students.

Now, I would like to draw your attention to a paper presented by Dr. D. Janaki of Mother Teresa Women's University. In the paper she observed that "development is a process of structural change in the economic, political, social and cultural domains. It starts with people as they are the primary and ultimate focus of all development. It empowers women through Distance Learning in India, historically explores the causes and reasons for long denial of formal education to women. In recent times, Distance Education has emerged as a boon to women of all ages to equip themselves intellectually through acquisition of knowledge, leading them to new radical methods of thinking, and alternative, lateral perspectives on existing information thus rendering them more autonomous and liberated. She outlined the advantages of distance education for women learners. They are:

- Improve career opportunities
- To inculcate self-confidence.
- To help attain multiple degrees.
- To update their skills
- A Second chance of learning
- Acquisition of knowledge
- Change in socialization pattern
- Inculcate Better decision making capacity
- To earn Respect in family and community
- Networking and communication opportunities
- Broadened scope and vision
- Flexibility in time and locality
- Learning freedom and doorstep education
- Assists in facing the challenges of life

- Increases the literacy rate of the country
- Empowers women culturally, educationally and socially.

Conclusion

"Education at your doorstep"… a slogan which was uttered in hush over three decades ago has become a social movement in Andhra Pradesh. For the rural youth who could not afford higher education, for housewives who find it difficult to strike a balance between education and running the family and for middle aged persons who could not pursue their education for various reasons, "Education at your doorstep" has provided a ray of hope at the end of the tunnel. Yet there are issues to be answered.

The institutes of distance learning should adopt issue-centric approach while drafting the curriculum instead of merely clubbing chapters from here and there. Most important and urgent reform needed in education is to transform it, to endeavor, to relate it to the life, needs and aspirations of people thereby making it a powerful instrument of social, economic and developed cultural transformation. For this purpose, education should be so as to increase productivity, achieve social and national integration, accelerate the process of modernization and cultivate moral and social values. This applies to all forms of education, be it conventional or distance mode. Twenty-nine years ago no one would have imagined that one can get a degree even without attending a regular college. But now it is possible. No one might have imagined that a housewife could complete her post-graduation and secure a scholarship abroad without even going to the college. But a lot more has to be done. A lot of research and thinking should go into making open distance learning much more learner-friendly so that education becomes affordable to more number of unreached.

SOCIAL MEDIA STRATEGY IN OPEN AND DISTANCE LEARNING

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Introduction

The purpose of this qualitative study was to describe, analyze, and interpret the uses of "Social media strategy in open and distance learning". The best way to define social media is to break it down. Media is an instrument on communication, like a newspaper or a radio, so social media would be a social instrument of communication. Few studies have explored the use of social media for research dissemination. There is no one definition of open and distance learning. Rather, there are many approaches to defining the term. This type of learning is distinct from learning through your own effort without the official recognition of a learning institution.

Distance education is any educational process in which all or most of the teaching is conducted by someone removed in space and/or time from the learner, with the effect that all or most of the communication between teachers and learners is through an artificial medium, either electronic or print. By definition, in distance education the normal or principal means of communication is through technology. Obviously teachers in conventional classrooms may use technology as a supplement to their teaching, but since it is not their principal means of communication the classroom is not considered to be distance education. Another way of discriminating between distance and other forms of education is to ask where the principal educational decisions are made.

Use and Integration of Media in Open and Distance Learning

Open learning is primarily a goal or an educational policy. It implies provision of learning in a flexible manner, built around the geographical, social, and time constraints of individual learners rather than those of an educational institution. Distance education is a means of providing both open and more restricted learning. Distance education is one way in which learners can study flexibly. Open and distance learning is a term that combines the two, and emphasizes learning rather than teaching.

Need for 'Integrated' Media

When media are integrated into a course, they cease being supplementary elements, and become an integral part of the learner's experience, over which that learner has as much control as he or she has with print. Integrated materials:

- combine the 'symbolic' strengths of the media involved with the 'control' benefits of print;
- offer the course designer a coherent and integrated teaching system; and
- provide the learner a rich, varied, and coherent combination of learning stimuli

Integrating a variety of media into a course offers learners the opportunity to use media most appropriate to individual learning styles and preferences:

- For those who learn best by watching and then doing, a video component can be invaluable, for example.
- Others may learn better by listening than by reading, in which case audio is of central importance.

- Yet others may learn most effectively by reading and then writing, especially when the material is densely packed with conceptual terms and requires a great deal of thought and reflection; computer-mediated communication becomes a valuable tool in such cases.

Use and Integration of Media in Open And Distance Learning

However, it is also important not to make too many demands on learners in moving from one medium to another. Too rapid switching can undermine the coherence of a course; and over-stretch the patience of the learner. In the end, learners will decide for themselves how they use the materials. Examples: Some institutions are intent on integrating media into their programming as completely as possible; see the case studies for Deakin University, Murdoch University, and the Open Access College.

Internet and Web-Based Education

The emergence of the Internet and related networks such as the World Wide Web has had and will increasingly have radical effect on the transformation of education and training in all sectors. The impact is already significant in all developed countries, and the great majority of developing countries are despite difficulties and fears seeking to take part in the emerging global educational community.

The Web offers a worldwide forum in which to teach courses that can be dynamically updated in ways never before possible. Each student has an enormous range of resources available, free from limitations of time and space. There remains considerable work to be done concerning searching and sifting techniques within these resources for learners and teachers alike.

These resources are reconfiguring the ways in which students learn, and new approaches to networked learning are evolving. The trans-cultural nature of the Web also creates problems of legislative and public control, with fears that local culture can be threatened by the international culture of developed countries. While the use of the Internet and the World Wide Web in open and distance learning is predominantly represented within higher education, it is also beginning to be used in schools.

Global Changes, and Challenges to Education

Education has to be considered in its relation to global economic, social and cultural development. There is now little doubt that major changes are occurring in the world economy, mainly due to the expansion of new information bearing technologies. In what has already become known as a knowledgebase society, economic advantage will accrue to countries in which the population acquires competence in processing information into knowledge and applying it in work and everyday life. The importance of knowledge as an essential component of the economy has influenced the increasing interest of governments in human knowledge resource development. The tendency has been evident in developing as well as developed countries, although the circumstances, priorities and challenges are different. In developing countries, human knowledge resource development through initial and continuing education is not only seen as crucial for economic growth and competitiveness, but also has far-reaching social impact, for example in influencing the birth rate, increasing the independence of women, and improving standards of health and the rural environment.

The Role of Open and Distance Learning in Educational Innovation

Open and distance learning has a major impact on thinking and practice throughout the whole educational system, regarding such critical matters as how students learn, how they can best be taught, and how educational resources might more efficiently be organized to deliver the instruction that is needed. Open and distance learning is closely linked to innovation in information and communication technologies, to the identification of new learning needs and new ideas about how information may be accessed and applied in the information society. In particular open and distance learning has the potential to enhance a more student-centred and consumer-oriented approach to education, leading in turn to more extensive contact between educational institutions on the one hand and community-based organizations, business and industry on the other.

Conclusion

In the past most studies comparing the costs of distance and conventional approaches assumed that the quality of the educational experience and the quality of the graduates produced are the same. Recently distance educators have come to recognize that there are very considerable differences in the nature and hence in the quality of the experience provided by interactive e-education systems, compared with earlier forms of distance education. On the whole the qualitative benefits of open and distance learning are a contentious area of debate. On the plus side, distance education students may have access to the bestir teaching materials, and the greatest lecturers ñ including international gurus. Student support services can also be designed to provide high quality advice and support. On the minus side, the learning materials can be seen to be pre-selected and over packaged, and so fail to give students the chance of browsing through a library

Today, however, technology is creating a new educational platform and is reconfiguring the way a student learns. Networked learning ñ accessing libraries, scholars, networks, and information worldwide ñ is evolving. In the light of this, one important question needs to be considered ñ what is the mission of higher education? It can be said that education is a discovery process, open and distance learning trends, policy and strategy considerations and its mission is to provide the widest repertoire of possibilities for a student entering a learning situation. Technology can realize this ambition, and because of it a student is educational experience can be immeasurably richer.

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RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT- STAFF DEVELOPMENT PRACTICES

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Introduction

Effective approaches to teacher development mirror what we know about learning; they are continuous, build on learners' current knowledge and skills, and include sufficient intensity and practice that new learnings can become part of teachers' ongoing practice.

Characteristics of Staff Development

An analysis of research and experience in staff development (Loucks-Horsley et al. 1987) suggests that programs that effectively support teacher growth have the following characteristics:

Content that is either based on research or has demonstrated its effectiveness in schools and classrooms;

- Opportunities for teachers to work together as they learn, plan to use, and implement their new knowledge and practices;
- Opportunities for teachers to participate in decisions about what they will learn, how they will learn, and how they will use what they learn;
- Norms that support experimentation and risk taking;
- Time for teachers to participate fully in the learning experience, to practice, to master new behaviors, and to incorporate new practices into their teaching routines;
- Integration of staff development into other initiatives of the school or district, with a connection between individual, school, and district goals;
- Leadership that provides direction and clear expectations, coupled with ongoing support for teachers to learn and to use what they learn;
- Appropriate and sufficient incentives and rewards; and
- Designs based on knowledge about learning and the process of change.

All of these characteristics are critical to the success of staff development. Yet the last is of particular interest here, since it is closely connected to our perspective of science learning. Although the implications of current cognitive research for adult learning strategies are not entirely clear, the constructivist perspective suggests some ways in which teacher learning mirrors the learning of students. It follows, then, that staff development should have much in common with what we described earlier as good science teaching. Among the characteristics they share are:

- Active leading techniques;
- Attention to what teachers already know (i.e., their current conceptions of science, of teaching, and of learning);
- Sufficient time to consider new ideas and 'try them on' for fit; and Multiple opportunities to observe and then apply new knowledge in practice.
- Thus, effective staff development can be an excellent model for good teaching.

Staff Development Approaches

1. *Attention should be paid to prior teacher knowledge.* Teachers at all levels of preparation come to teaching with their own experiences and observations of what

works with children, what should be taught, and what instructional strategies work best. Pre-service teachers, for example, may assume that engaging students with a good dose of creativity and enthusiasm is in and of itself enough fuel to ignite the learning fire. Experienced teachers may accept that engagement is essential to good learning but might also believe that reading about science qualifies as a stand-in for the exploration stage of the learning model. How can we begin to help teachers actively reconstruct their views about teaching and learning science if we don't attempt to pinpoint the prior knowledge teachers bring with them?

2. ***Concepts should be developed and introduced over sufficient periods of time.*** Just reading or hearing about new concepts is rarely enough to advance authentic learning. Teachers need to participate in multiple, interactive, collaborative experiences. For example, rather than learn about the topic of pond life via a one-time, facts-to-be-learned presentation, teachers can work in small groups to share what they know and then, visiting an actual pond, work together to reconstruct their views. This type of learning will allow them to develop their understanding of such concepts as diversity and systems over time.

3. ***Theory should be tied to experience by using learning activities that make abstract concepts personal.*** Such experiences are the catalysts that help teachers learn. Follow this with activities that give teachers time to reflect on their experiences. Then introduce new information that prompts teachers to focus on the formation of abstract concepts and generations. To continue with our pond life example, teachers can design aquariums for their classrooms so they (and their students) can observe and answer questions that relate to pond life. They can also divide readings, relate the readings to what they observe, and share their findings with each other. Concept development continues in this phase as teachers digest new information. The instructor slowly adds fuel as discussions turn to formal theories such as food webs, interdependency of pond organisms, ecosystem factors that enable pond life, and so on. Learners can personally experience concepts when the methods of experiential engagement and exploration, along with theory conceptualization and the pedagogical techniques of small working groups, are employed. Here theory ties closely to experience.

4. ***In the final step, teachers should have opportunities to try out developing concepts by making multiple applications in their classrooms.*** Teachers need the chance to experiment with new concepts and techniques with their students. At meetings held after their trials, teachers can compare successes and strategies about back-to-the-drawing-board activities.

5. ***As a follow-up, a long-term plan should be instituted for supporting novices.*** Give teachers a voice in how this process wins work. They may elect to form support or check-in groups, designate those who are most expert as mentors, or continue to refine applications with their original work group.

Teacher Development Approach (Course, Institute, or Workshop)
1. ***Extend over a long period of time,*** encouraging developing teachers to incorporate into their knowledge bases an expanding picture of how children develop and learn. They are continually involved in constructing a more elaborate understanding of children, how they most effectively learn science, and, subsequently, what instructional strategies are most appropriate to use and how and when they could be used best.

2. ***Provide teachers with knowledge about the complete range of theories and research on children's learning,*** including developmental findings from research on social learning, behaviorism, and more recent work in cognitive learning theory. Constructivism has had and will continue to have an important impact on elementary school science and how it is taught. Teachers need to understand the theory behind constructivism and see the implications it has for curriculum, instruction, and assessment.

3. ***Be simultaneously rich in theory and research and experientially based.*** Coursework in how children learn must allow preservice teachers to work directly with children during science learning to see how to apply the theoretical principles they are learning. Constructivism provides a model of how such a course might be framed. Early in the course, for example, participants might visit classrooms to observe how children learn science. They share observations and discuss in teams which of the instructional strategies and techniques worked and which did not, as well as why and how they worked. At this point teachers are ready to learn some new information, perhaps something about developmental learning theory, that will enhance their developing concept of how children learn.

4. ***Not confine learning about learning to courses devoted solely to theories of learning.*** For instance, in some buildings teachers may form collegial teams to share their insights into how children learn science and to invite expert guests to share with them aspects of how children learn. Teachers could examine curriculum materials and see how the instructional format reflects one or more learning theories. The format for the Elementary Science Study units is quite different from the materials for Science: A Process Approach. A major determinate of those differences lies in the different theories of learning that the

5. ***Observation and assessment.*** This approach involves careful observation of teaching with attention to certain behaviors and an open discussion of the results. The model is labeled in various ways, primarily as forms of supervision and coaching. Teachers agree on a focus for the observations, with the observer recording behaviors as they occur. A conference follows, in which the observations are discussed, strengths and weaknesses assessed, and goals set for the future. Both the observed teacher and the observer can gain insight into effective pedagogy and how to incorporate it into daily teaching practice.

6. ***Inquiry.*** This approach incorporates such practices as action research and reflective inquiry. Teachers, alone or collaboratively, decide what problem or situation they are interested in examining, gather and analyze data, and interpret the results in light of changes they might make in their classrooms or in school practice.

7. ***Individually guided staff development.*** In this approach, teachers, individually or in collegial teams, identify their interests and concerns; establish a goal; and seek input by way of coursework, workshops, library research, field trips, and other forms of self-study to reach the goal.

Local Roles of Staff Development Practices

1. ***Examine current staff development offerings*** to determine whether they have the characteristics described in this chapter. Consider adding components to increase learning.

2. ***Consider alternative approaches to in-service workshops*** that either replace or complement the workshops. Peer coaching, a teacher-as-researcher program,

individually guided staff development-all can extend and reinforce important learnings.

3. ***Make better use of internal expertise.*** Identify exemplary science teachers to test new programs and become trainers for their peers. Have high school science teachers teach science content to elementary teachers. Prepare teachers to be good staff developers by helping them use a constructivist perspective to design and deliver their instruction. Things to do for the future: (i) Work with local universities to change the nature of their science and education coursework. Develop collaborative programs using exemplary science teachers, school settings, and different approaches to teacher preparation. (ii) Develop closer links with the community to bring teachers real-world experiences from which to learn. Contact local businesses and industries, and work with science professionals to plan in-service offerings and placement opportunities.

State Roles of Staff Development Practices

- Promote good staff development by making school and district in-service coordinators and science leaders aware of the characteristics of good staff development programs and alternatives to in-service workshops. Give examples of how to change current practice.
- Model good staff development practices in state-sponsored events, institutes, and teacher enhancement programs. Incorporate alternative approaches such as coaching and teacher inquiry.
- Target grant monies to schools and districts that incorporate characteristics of good staff development into their program plans.
- Identify exemplary staff development programs and practices, and put them 'on the road.' Maintain an up-to date listing of staff development offerings in districts in the state, and develop networks for sharing expertise.
- Work with universities to improve the quality of course teaching.Provide opportunities to learn about exemplary practices, share expertise, and design alternative strategies.
- Begin a statewide Alliance for Science Education within your state. Contact university scientists, science educators, and professional scientists employed by businesses about building a program that improves learning opportunities for teachers.

Conclusion

Most the staff development, this approach can result in demonstrable changes in teacher behavior and, subsequently, in the behaviors of children. The model includes development of the theory and rationale behind the new behaviors to be learned, demonstration or modeling, practice in training settings, and guided practice or peer coaching in the classroom with supportive feedback from a colleague. The process of peer coaching is particularly important in helping teachers change their teaching practices, in providing them with opportunities to discuss their changing ideas about teaching, and in giving them the psychological support they need to persist in learning (Joyce and Showers 1988).

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LEARNER OPTIONS AND PERSPECTIVES

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Introduction

Perspective provides thousands of enrichment learning resources to help teachers and students improve their performance. All of our supplemental resources are aligned to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) or your specific state standards, to ensure your students are learning the material they need to be college and career read. Educators can use Perspective's simple navigation to create assignments, build tests, and learn how to improve student scores. And the powerful Learning Locator tool allows families and teachers to personalize learning for their students based on their individual state tests scores.

Perspective Transformation

It is curious that the most distinctively adult domain of learning, that involving emancipator action, is probably least familiar to adult educators. However, some readers will recognize the concept of emancipator action as synonymous with 'perspective transformation'. This mode of learning was inductively derived from a national study of women participating in college re-entry programs. Through extensive interviews, it became apparent that movement through the existential challenges of adulthood involves a process of negotiating an irregular succession of transformations in 'meaning perspective'. This term refers to the structure of psychocultural assumptions within which new experience is assimilated and transformed by one's past experience. For many women studied, such psycho cultural assumptions involved the traditional stereotypic view of the 'proper' roles of women and the often strong feelings internalized in defence of these role expectations by women themselves.

Perspective transformation is the emancipatory process of becoming critically aware of how and why the structure of psycho-cultural assumptions has come to constrain the way we see ourselves and our relationships, reconstituting this structure to permit a more inclusive and discriminating integration of experience and acting upon these new understandings. It is the learning process by which adults come to recognize their culturally induced dependency roles and relationships and the reasons for them and take action to overcome them.

There are certain anomalies or disorienting dilemmas common to normal development in adulthood which may be best resolved only by becoming critically conscious of how and why our habits of perception, thought and action have distorted the way we have defined the problem and ourselves in relationship to it. The process involves what Freire (1970) calls 'problem posing', making problematic our taken-for-granted social roles and expectations and the habitual ways we act and feel in carrying them out. The resulting transformation in perspective or personal paradigm is what Freire refers to as 'conscientization' and Habermas as emancipatory action. In asserting its claim as a major domain of adult learning, perspective transformation at the same time asserts its claim as a central function for adult education.

Our natural tendency to move toward new perspective's which appear to us more inclusive, discriminating and integrative of experience in attempting to resolve our disorienting dilemmas may be explained as a quest for meaning by which to better understand ourselves and to anticipate events. Carl Rogers has hypnotized a formative directional tendency in the universe which can be traced and observed in stellar space, in crystals, in microorganisms, in organic life, in human beings. This is an evolutionary tendency toward greater order, greater interrelatedness, greater complexity (Rogers, 1978). As we will see,

there are both cultural and psychological contingencies which can restrain our natural movement to learn through perspective transformation.

From our research on re-entry women, the dynamics of perspective transformation appeared to include the following elements: (1) a disorienting dilemma; (2) self examination; (3) a critical assessment of personally internalized role assumptions and a sense of alienation from traditional social expectations; (4) relating one's discontent to similar experiences of other sorts to public issues - recognizing that one's problem is shared and not exclusively a private matter; (5) exploring options for new ways of acting; (6) building competence and self-confidence in new roles; (7) planning a course of action; (8) acquiring knowledge and skills for implementing one's plans; (9) provisional efforts to try new roles and to assess feedback; and (10) a reintegration into society on the basis of conditions dictated by the new perspective.

The traumatic severity of the disorienting dilemma is clearly a factor in establishing the probability of a transformation. Under pressing external circumstances, such as death of a mate, a divorce or a family breadwinner becoming incapacitated, a perspective transformation is more likely to occur.

There appear to be two paths to perspective transformation: one is a sudden insight into the very structure of cultural and psychological assumptions which has limited or distorted one understands of self and one's relationships. The other is movement in the same direction that occurs by a series of transactions which permit one to revise specific assumptions about oneself and others until the very structure of assumptions becomes transformed. This is perhaps a more common pattern of development. The role transitions themselves are only opportunities for the kind of self-reflection essential for a transformation. In such cases the anomalous situation creating a disorienting dilemma may be the result of a more evolutionary personal history in which circumstances make a woman increasingly receptive to changing social norms regarding women's roles or internalized rigidity's constraining her from becoming autonomous. There may be more women - and men too - familiar with Betty Friedan's problem without a name' than they are with many more easily labelled existential dilemmas of adulthood.

Paulo Freire has introduced adult educators to 'conscientization' as the process by which false consciousness becomes transcended in traditional Scotties through adult education. The learning process in conscientization is seen in a different social context in women's consciousness raising groups and in college re-entry programs. From our study of this same process in re-entry women, it became apparent that Freire does not give sufficient cognizance to or make explicit the stumbling blocks which intervene to make this transformation in perspective itself highly problematic.

Although one does not return to an old perspective once a transformation occurs this passage involves a difficult negotiation and compromise, stalling, backsliding, self-deception and failure are exceedingly common. Habermas has clearly recognized this fact:

We are never in a position to know with absolute certainty that critical enlightenment has been effective - that it has liberated us from the ideological frozen constraints of the past, and initiated genuine self-reflection. The complexity, strength and deviousness of the forms of resistance; the inadequacy of mere 'intellectual understanding' to effect a radical transformation; the fact that any claim of enlightened understanding may itself be a deeper and subtle form of self- deception - these obstacles can never be completely discounted in our evaluation of the success of failure of critique.

We encountered women who simply transferred their identification from one reference group to another with the same absence of critical self-consciousness which characterised their traditional roles and relationships. However, our experience does not

support the contention of Berger and Luckmann (1966) that perspective transformations, which they refer to as 'alterations', involve uncritical identification with and emotional dependency upon a new group of significant others who represent the new and more attractive perspective, and a degree of identification with and emotional dependency upon a new group of significant others. While these writers correctly emphasise the importance of significant others who represent the new and more attractive perspective, and a degree of identification is probably inevitable in the process of taking their perspective, the crucial difference between this process and that of a primary socialisation is that adults are capable of being consciously critical or critically reflective in effecting these relationships. Children are critically unselfconscious and usually unaware of how circumstances have contrived to dictate their relationships and commitments to parents or mentors charged with their socialisation.

Many cases of perspective transformation new commitments become mediated by a new critical sense of 'agency' and personal responsibility. Rather than a simple transfer of identification to a new reference group, a new set of criteria come to govern one's relationships and to represent conditions governing commitments as well. Rather than simple identification, the process may be more accurately described as one of contractual solidarity. Commitments are made with implicit mutual agreement among equals (in the sense of agency) concerning conditions of the relationship, including periodic review and renegotiation with the option of terminating the relationship. Such insistence upon reciprocity and equality often represents positive movement toward greater autonomy and self determination. A superior perspective is not only that is a more inclusive or discriminating experience of integrating but also one that is sufficiently permeable to allow one access to other perspectives. This makes possible movement to still more inclusive and discriminating perspectives.

Goals of learning by Design Environment

Many goals can be identified for an environment driven by Learning by Design. These goals may vary with the learner, content, task, and the instructor. However, there are some common trends permeating most environments that follow the principles of Learning by Design. The following reflects the common goals of Learning by Design that are not, however, exclusive to this type of constructivist learning.

- ❖ Extracting essential concepts and skills from examples and experiences
- ❖ Engaging learners in learning
- ❖ Encouraging question posing
- ❖ Confronting conceptions and misconceptions

Components of Learning by Design

There are many perspectives on what constitutes Learning by Design. As this field evolves, the list will become more fluid. The following components allow for a rich learning environment that provides the learner with opportunities to interact with the content in a meaningful way. These elements also add to the value of effectively designing and reflecting on process and product to make the learning experience worthwhile. The following are the components most readily identified in a LBD environment.

- ❖ Authenticity: tasks based on real-world applications
- ❖ Multiple contexts for design activities
- ❖ A balance of constrained, scaffold challenges with open-ended design tasks
- ❖ Rich, varied feedback for designers
- ❖ Discussion and collaboration

❖ Experimentation and exploration

❖ Reflection

Learning by Design strongly suggests that tasks should be based on hands-on experience in real-world contexts. The designers/participants should be given the option of multiple contexts so that they can devise multiple strategies when they use the problem-solving process. Because the learning process is open and varied according to the student learning preferences, skills, and knowledge, it is important that there be a balance among guided tasks, challenges, discussions and reflections that follow. Collaborative work allows the earners to obtain feedback from both peers and the instructor, who primarily plays the role of facilitator.

Conclusion

Thus, this paper reveals some information about learner options, perspectives, perspective transformation, Goals of Learning and components of learning.

EVALUATION OF ON-CAMPUS ACTIVITIES IN OPEN DISTANCE LEARNING

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Introduction

It has been witnessed in the recent past phenomenal changes that took place in the field of Higher Education System. There has been a gradual shift from conventional mode to Open Distance Learning (ODL) due to its increasing acceptability among all sections of the society. ODLis now come to stay and considered as effective as the conventional system in terms of Quality of materials, in structural methodologies and standards. (DebnarayanModak& Other 2013).Though in principle the system believes in physical separation of students from the teacher, it did not completely rule out the 'contact between the student and teacher' altogether and alternate 'on campus activity' has been evolved by course-wise requirement planning criteria. Institutional 'on campus services' makes the ODL learners more comfortable.Apart from off-campus learners support services,every ODL institutionnow offers a wide range of 'on campus activities' for the benefit of distance learners.

The present study is a quick assessment, focuses on some of the important 'on campus' activities and students were quickly surveyed on their perceptions of the 'usefulness and importance' of such activities. Necessary primary data had been collected from randomly chosen 200 students of two study centers of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Open University. These students wereenrolled in faculties of Arts, Commerce, Education, Sciences and Library and Information Sciences. The objective of the present paper is to evaluate the on-campus programme from the point of view of distance learners. The study examines further the perception of the students and their experiences relating to the on campus activities. In the overall sense however the study presents 'major trends' of how students make use of the 'on campus activity' (which in most cases optional except for Science& Education Courses) and how does an ODL institution can respond to their demands.The following are some of the important 'on-campus activities' offered for the studentsperusing various courses.

Personal Contact Programme (PCP)

Face to face contact between learners and counselors is mainly to clarify the doubts and answer academic queries of the learning. This is also known as academic counseling, is one of the crucial components of the student support services provided by any distance education activities system. Its importance lies in the fact that the problems arising out ofself instructionalmaterial and other non-print-media are solved through human contact during the counseling session which facilitates the process of study of the learners. The human element introduced through the counseling sessions would enable the learners to overcome the barriers related to study skill. It would orient the learners to the system of distance education, familiarize them with subject matter and resolve their academic problems. These counseling sessions are very useful to the learners to share their views on the subject with counselors and fellow learners to comprehend some of the complex ideas/concepts or difficult issues being discussed in the materials. (K.T. Margaratt 1999)

Lab Services

The laboratory training offered by the University should be equivalent to the training offered by conventional University. No relaxation in theeligibility criteria is given to any student in this regard and attendance is considered compulsory. For Science subjects. I.e.,

Physics, Chemistry, Zoology, Botany and Geology, the number of counsel cum counseling(CCC) classes are 24 for IInd year & 24 for IIIrd year at the rate of 2 hours per each session for a total of 48 hours per year.For each Science subject i.e, physics, Chemistry, Zoology, Botony& Zoology the number of practical training hours is 72 for both IInd year &IIIrd Year. Face to face content classes are optional, while 70% of practical training for each student is compulsory to appear for practical examinations.

Summer School

Thus on campus activity is compulsory for BEd and MEd students, the activity also involves practical's and assignments. For BEd/MEd students the summer school is emerged in two spells (two summers) 12 days each with 6 hours a day contact programme.

Library Services:

The main campus of the University and the study centers haveattachedlibrary services to serve the needs of the widely scattered student population.The major objectives of the library services include: To help self learning, process of distance learning;To provide reading, lending, references, information and documentary services to the staff, researchers and students;Lending services: The library has a unique feature of lending books to the learners of certain courses at P.G level such as M.B.A, MSC, Med, B.Ed, courses.; Reference Services: The library has also a reference section and contains several texts, encyclopedias,Dictionaries, Yearbooks, CDs, A/Vcassettes etc., which the learners can make use of by visiting the library whenever they get free time.

The study reveals the students perception of the 'usefulness'of on campus contact programmes as indicated by the percentages of student rating activitiesrelating as 'very useful, not very useful/useless or not applicable' to their courses of study.Apart from the above, there are other 'on campus' activities like field work, student meets, facilitators-student interaction etc. It has been noticed significantly that the more the number of activities, the greater the chance of frequent interaction with the institution. Table: 1 indicates the select courses and contact hours

Courses with on-campus contact hours

Sl. NO	Programme	No of contact Counseling Classes	No of Courses	No of hours per course	Total Hours
01.	U.G. 1stYr (B.A : B.Com/B.sc	24 Sunday	4	2 hours every subject	192 hours
02.	B.A/B.sc/B.Com 2nd and 3rd year	24 (each Sunday)	6	2 hours every subject	288 hours
03.	B.sc 2nd& 3rd Science Practice	24 days	II/III Year 1 to 4	72 hours	72 to 216 hours
04.	P.G, Arts, 1st year & 2nd year	16 Sundays	5	1$^{1/2}$ hours each subject	24 hours
05.	P.G, Diplama M.Com/M.sc Maths	16 Sunday	5	2 hours	32 hours
06.	P.G. Science Courses Botany Zoology	20 Sunday	4	2 hours	144 hours
07.	MLISC, BLISC	16 Sunday	8	2 hours	160 hours
08.	M.Ed	24 Sunday	5	1$^{1/2}$ hour	150 hours

| 09. | B.Ed | 24Vocational | 4 | $1^{1/2}$ hour | 144 hours |

Table 1 indicates PCP is arranged to distance learners being admitted in different courses from a minimum of 24 hours to 288 hours. It includes Sunday PCP to summers schools. Atleast two thirds of all students rated interactions both formal and informal with academics or fellow students in the 'useful' category. About two thirds of the students found the opportunity to use the library 'helpful'. The availability of facilities such as the 'students meets' were rated as 'useful' by only one third of students. Other categories with a 'low rating of usefulness' such as 'field work' are not applicable to many courses. Such activities, however, were highly rated by library science students.

It could be argued that although large number of students did not find particular activities'useful or very useful', this was not because they were not important to the students but because of other factors such as 'poor organization or content' as influenced them to think so.However student responses to questions about the greater or lesser importance of PCP were very similar to those about the 'usefulness' of the activities.

The important question raised by these results is why did significant number of students (25% to 50% of all respondents) not find all campus based experiences useful and important? These students should have considered the requirement for on campus activities in their chosen course of study before they enrolled. Although some 88% students surveyed had not missed the on campus services in the last two years, the major reasons given by the 12% students for 'non-attendance' were work commitment followed by family commitments. For those who did attend, timely release from job, financial freedom etc., were the major supporting factors associated with their use of on campus activity.

Although they may have found attendance expensive and inconvenient they havefelt that all the time they spent on campus is 'important and useful' to their progress. Perhaps the time release problems and financials problems interfered with students concentration on their studies. Students choose distance learning 'solely' because they are too remote from the institutions of their choice or they are already in full time employment and need to fit their learning experiences into their free time.

The challenge for distance educators in this regard especially from the point of view of learners is two-fold: to justify the needs for on-campus activities in their particular disciplines; and to plan those activities so that they are enriching, challenging, motivating and achieve the educational objectives of their learners. Students often complain that the day they attend any on campus activity is too rushed and that they have a very stressful workload. This workload does not allow the students time to generate links to have higher interaction with fellow learners. But definitely help them to look at critically and systemizing to fill the gap between old ideas and new knowledge. These links are vital to the generation of new understanding and hence some of these should be made available to help students understand their nature and appropriateness.

Almost half the students provided a response to alternatives to summer school. Ninety-one percent students suggested more use of PCPs at local study centersthan more hours of summer schools.However a continuous stay for more number of days is always a problem for many. However they liked that both summer schools and PCPs would help them learn more than other methods of learning experiences.

Other benefits students gave for attending summer schools included increased motivation, face-to-face contact with lecturers, tutorial assistance, discussions with fellow students and a sense of belonging to a university.

Student who wish to study in those disciplines in which on campus activities are important have to make an even greater personal commitment to study than do other distance education students. Many of the comments from the open ended responses had the common theme of financial disadvantages. Students felt that the costs associated with summer school attendance had been transferred to the students but it should have been the responsibility of the institution.

Some potential students may be excluded because they are unable to attend on-campus activities because of time release or financial problems. Therefore providers of such courses must take up the challenge, as evidenced by the findings of this study, of ensuring that students are engaged in meaningful learning activities when they do come on-campus.

The experience of learners is highly fascinating in this regard as many of them choose the distance education mode because it suits their life style and learning style. They prefer the self-pacing and open approach to study. For these students attendance on-campus may be a necessary evil which they have to endure to fill the gaps that exists in teaching-learning: (K. Murali Manohar, 2006). The findings of the study provide a suitable framework for providing a convergence model of 'on campus and open and distance learning' and helps build up a learner oriented ODL system.

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AN OUTLOOK ON USE OF WHATSAPP FOR OPEN AND DISTANCE LEARNING

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Introduction

Whatsapp messenger is a smart phone messenger available for android and the smart phones. Whatsapp uses your 3G or Wi-Fi (when available) to message with friends and family. Switch from SMS to Whatsapp to send and receive message, pictures, audio notes and video messages. Whatsapp is on a path to connect one billion people. The services that reach that milestone are all incredibly valuable, FB- CEO Mark Zuckberg said in a statement.

There are following special features in Whatsapp:
- No hidden cost
- Multimedia
- Group chat
- No international charges
- Say no to pins and user names
- No need to login/out
- No need to add buddies (contacts automatically connect)
- Offline messages
- And much more : share location, exchange contacts, custom wall paper, landscape mode, email chat history, broadcast messages and MMS to many contacts at once and much more.

Significance of the Study

The most attractive user group next to Facebook is Whatsapp. The reach it extends everyday is millions and millions of people into its gamut of activities. Right now it is free of cost. The students are using it for sending audio, video and image files to friends and relatives. The application makes it possible to send any text, image, video and audio within a few minutes to others in the opposite end. The investigators thought that this wonderful application can be used for Open and Distance Learning (ODL). Hence, the investigators made an attempt to find out the opinion of students in distance mode of TNOU to use it for their various learning purposes and connectivity to the TNOU centre. The mobile which is having android application is very much useful in Open and Distance Learning (ODL). The learners can easily gather the information through Whatsapp.

Objectives of the Study
1. To find out the use of Whatsapp among distance learners
2. To find out the view of distance learners towards use of Whatsapp for open distance learning
3. To find out the use of Whatsapp for Distance Learning in terms of Broadcasting

Hypotheses
1. The use of Whatsapp among distance learners is average

2. There is no view among distance learners towards use of Whatsapp for open distance learning
3. There is no view regarding use of Whatsapp for Distance Learning in terms of Broadcasting

Operational Definitions
- Whatsapp - Whatsapp messenger is a smart phone messenger available for android and the smart phones. Whatsapp uses your 3G or Wi-Fi (when available) to message with friends and family.
- Distance Learners - refers to Diploma, UG and PG students of Tamil Nadu Open University.

Methodology

The researcher studied the concept of usage of Whatsapp in detail and decided the following 3 items which require 3G / Wi-Fi usage.
1. Use of Whatsapp among distance learners
2. Purpose of using Whatsapp by distance learners
3. Use of Whatsapp for Distance Learning in terms of Broadcasting

The investigator has followed simple random sampling method for the Present study. There were 305 distance learners taken for the study. The investigator used percentage analysis for the study.

Analysis and Interpretation of Data

Hypothesis **1**

The use of Whatsapp among distance learners is average. The details regarding usage of Google for various purposes by high school students are presented in Table 1.

Table-1.Percentage analysis of use of Whatsapp by Distance Learners

S.No	Criteria	YES	%	NO	%	TOTAL
1.	Having smart phone	255	83	50	16	305
2.	Presence of Whatsapp in their smart phone	232	76.06	73	23.93	305
3.	Usages of Whatsapp	232	76.06	73	23.93	305

It is evident from the Table 1 that 83% of distance learners are having smart phones. 76.06 % of distance learners are having Whatsapp application in their mobile phones. It is also evident from the above table that 76.06 % of distance learners use Whatsapp for various purposes. Hence, the hypothesis stated as the use of Whatsapp among distance learners is average is rejected.

It may be concluded from the above findings that Whatsapp is being used by 76 % of distance learners.

Hypothesis **2**

There is no view among distance learners towards use of Whatsapp for open distance learning. The details regarding the view among distance learners towards use of Whatsapp for open distance learning are given in the following table 2.

Table 2: Percentage Analysis of views of Distance Learners towards use of Whatsapp for Open Distance Learning

S.NO	CRITERIA	YES	%	NO	%	TOTAL
1.	Whatsapp can be used for open distance learning programme	228	74.75	77	25.24	305

It is evident from the Table 2 that 74.75% of distance learners are in favour of use of Whatsapp for open and distance learning while 25.24% of distance learners are against use of Whatsapp for open distance learning. Hence, the hypothesis stated as there is no view among distance learners towards use of Whatsapp for open distance learning is rejected.

It may be concluded from the above findings that the majority of distance learners are in favour of use of Whatsapp for open distance learning.

Hypothesis **3**

There is no view regarding use of Whatsapp for Distance Learning in terms of Broadcasting. The details regarding use of Whatsapp for distance learning in terms of broadcasting are given in Table 3.

Table-3: Percentage Analysis of the views of Distance Learners on Whatsapp for Distance Learning in terms of Broadcasting

S.NO	BROADCASTING	NO OF PERSONS	PERCENTAGE
1	Image: Admission Card / Identity Card/ Letter Communication/ Hall Ticket/ Results/ Subject material/ Question paper model/ Previous Year questions.	228	74.75%
2	Audio: Subject Material/ Interaction with Learners / Clarifications	228	74.75%
3	Video: Subject Material/ Interaction with Learners/Demonstrations	228	74.75%

It is evident from the Table 3 that 74.755 % of distance learners are in favour of using Whatsapp broadcasting for Image, Audio and Video. Hence, the hypothesis stated as there is no view regarding use of Whatsapp for Distance Learning in terms of Broadcasting is rejected.

It may be concluded from the above findings that the majority of distance learners are in favour of Whatsapp for broadcasting in terms of Image, Audio and Video.

Findings of the Study

The following are the findings of the study:

1. The study reveals that 83% of distance learners are having smart phones. 76.06 % of distance learners are having Whatsapp application in their mobile phones. It is also

evident from the above table that 76.06 % of distance learners use for Whatsapp for various purposes.

2. It is clear that 74.75% of distance learners are in favour of use of Whatsapp for open and distance learning while 25.24% of distance learners are against use of Whatsapp for open distance learning.
3. It has been reported that 74.755 % of distance learners are in favour of using Whatsapp broadcasting for Image, Audio and Video.

Conclusion

It is concluded from the above findings that the study reveals that 83% of distance learners are having smart phones. 76.06 % of distance learners are having Whatsapp application in their mobile phones. It is also evident from the above table that 76.06 % of distance learners use for Whatsapp for various purposes. It is clear that 74.75% of distance learners are in favour of use of Whatsapp for open and distance learning while 25.24% of distance learners are against use of Whatsapp for open distance learning. It has been reported that 74.755 % of distance learners are in favour of using Whatsapp broadcasting for Image, Audio and Video.

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PROFILE AND PERCEPTIONS OF UNDERGRADUATE WOMEN LEARNERS ON THE QUALITY OF DISTANCE EDUCATION - A STUDY

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Introduction

Women play a key role in development, both in the context of the family and in the society at large, including its economy and social system. Women are in a strategic position in human resource development as they are the ones who are primarily involved in the upbringing of the young and manage households. No country or society can achieve its potential without adequately investing in developing the capabilities of women and encouraging the empowerment of women. And yet, in most developing countries, women have much less access to education.

Importance of education to women

The importance of female education is widely recognized. Mahatma Gandhi said, educate one woman and you are educating the whole world. He believed in the fact that educating a single woman is equal to educating the entire family. The education of girls and women brings particular benefits to society in a number of ways. Educated mothers tend to ensure that their children in turn are educated and become effective members of society. They safeguard children's health and nutrition. They also tend to be better household managers and more informed producers, consumers and traders. A year's increase in mother's education is associated with a 9 percent decrease in the mortality rate of children under five years of age. Education encourages women to take part in community development activities, which often provide increased income earning opportunities.

Need of Distance Education for Women

Women are the majority of the world's illiterate. It cannot be denied that the basic element of empowering women is education. Higher education for women, in India has not been given that serious attention as it deserved. While there is substantial increase in women's enrollment at primary level it remains low at secondary and higher level when compared with those of boys. Various causes for lack of higher education in women are by now well known: parental attitudes, gender differentiation, expectations for future income, female labour and house hold responsibilities, an absence of visible role models at home and in school, explicit and implicit discouragement for pursuing particular courses of study, parent's level of education, family, religious and moral precepts and more. In this situation what is, therefore, required is an approach which simultaneously helps women's full access to higher education in a socially more acceptable way and also aiming to raise and promote awareness of the rights of women as human rights. Here distance education has very significant role to play. The distance education system is particularly suitable for women in view of their high presence in flexible time scheme and works in which they are presently engaged. Therefore, distance education system has been expanding rapidly and also shouldering the responsibilities in the field of higher education entrusted to it in general and women in particular.

Methodology and Data Collection

One of the study centers of School of Distance Learning and Continuing Learning of Kakatiya University, located within the urban limits of Warangal Dist. of Telangana State is selected for the purpose of present study. 50 undergraduate women learners are selected as sample of the present study on basis of simple random technique. The researcher used formal structured questionnaire method in order to collect the desired information. The opinions expressed by the learners are presented in this paper.

Objectives of the paper:

Following are the objectives of present study:

1. To know social status of women learners.
2. To know occupational status of women learners.
3. To know the opinion of women learners on the syllabus, teaching and services.
4. To know the opinion of the women learners on the usefulness of the distance education.
5. To provide suggestion for improving quality of the distance education.

Considerable care has been taken to ensure that the information collected for the study is as objective as possible. The collected information is properly interpreted; conclusions are drawn and produced here under:

Profile and Perceptions of Women Learners:

Table 1: Educational Profile:

Level of Study	B.A	B.Com	Total
II Year	14 (28%)	13 (26%)	27(54%)
III Year	12 (24%)	11 (22%)	23(46%)
Total	26 (52%)	24 (48 %)	50 (100%)

It is observed from the information of the above table 1 that undergraduate arts students are more with 52 % including II Year and III Year comparatively. Undergraduate commerce students are 48 % that includes II year 26 % and all III Year 22 % respectively.

Table 2: Community Profile

community	OCs	BCs	SCs	STs	Total
	8(16%)	32(64%)	6(12%)	4(8%)	50(100%)

It is observed from the table 2 that the backward community woman learners are more with 64 percent compared to the other castes - 8 percent scheduled castes, 12 percent scheduled tribes and other castes with 8 percent receptively.

Age, Marital and Employment Status

It is observed from the data that 86 percent women learners are in the age group of 25 to 35 years and remaining 14 percent are in the age group of 18 to 25. This reveals that majority of young (middle age) women learners are showing interest towards higher education through distance mode. The marital status of women learners as per the information collected is 79 percent are married and remaining 21 percent are unmarried. This information indicates that married women are showing more interest in the distance higher education. The reason for this can be interpreted with the fact that the employability increases

with certification and the requirement for a job is more prominent in family due to financial conditions. When the employment status of the women learner is observed, the data reveals that 72 percent of women learners are employees in various organizations and remaining 28 percent are housewives. It is evident that the employability among the learners increased with their distance course. The data reveals that most of the employed are also coming forward to continue their higher education.

Perceptions of Women Learners on the Quality of Teaching Syllabi and Services

The information reveals that 76 percent of women learners rated the quality of teaching, syllabi and services provided by the distance education study centers as *good* and remaining 24 percent rated as *average,* no learner has the negative opinion on the quality of teaching syllabi and services of the distance education. Also, they expressed their expectations for improvement in few areas of distance education like online payment of exam fees, video lectures, placement support etc.

Most of the employed women are pursuing distance education expecting an appraisal with hike in salaries and promotions. For an unemployed learner, distance education mode provides employment options.

Suggestions from learners

When the learners were asked to furnish their suggestions for bringing changes in the present system of Distance education they suggested the following

1. Introduction of computer based courses in all study centers.
2. Courses in Communication Skills, soft skills like personality development behaviour grooming etc.
3. Introduction of job oriented and vocational courses such as certificate course in fashion and design technology, fine arts and interior decoration, multimedia , animation, and pre-primary education etc. with these courses extended to all study centers.
4. Timely scheduling of examinations and declaring of results.
5. Material handed over to candidates must be in the same medium of instruction they chose.

Conclusion

1. From the above mentioned information it can be concluded that younger, married, employed, backward class community are coming forward to improve their higher educational qualifications through distance mode.
2. The quality of syllabi, teaching and services provided by the distance education institutions are good. But there is a need to introduce more job oriented, computer based and vocational oriented courses in distance mode.

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ICT ENABLED TEACHING LEARNING PROCESS

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Introduction

All over the global, there is a trend to use ICT in the teaching learning process. The teacher and learner must access to technology for improving learning outcomes, Educational reforms include successful designing and implementation of ICT in teaching process .The world of huge technical change presently the world is inhabited by very large number of scientists and technologists and they are more than the scientist and technologist that they have lived on it during the history of mankind. All development mainly on the economic growth of the nation are based on updated knowledge and information into economic activity has resulted in a profound structural and qualitative change.

Change of scenario

ICT defines learning as neutral, social, active, linear or non linear, integrative, and contextualized, based on ability and strength. Use of ICT in teaching learning environment can bring a rapid change in society. It has the potential to transform the nature of education i.e., where and how learning takes place and role of learners and teacher in the process of learning. It is essential that teacher must have basic ICT skills and competencies. The teacher to determine how ICT can best be used in the context of culture, needs and economic conditions.

ICT in Teaching and Learning

- Teaching Literacy Basic digital literacy skills to use technology, ability to select and use appropriate software available including internet in computer laboratories or with limited classroom facilities to complement standard curriculum objectives, assessment approaches, lesson plans and didactic teaching methods, able to use ICT to manage classroom data support their own professional development.
- Knowledge Deepening Ability to manage information, structure problem tasks, integrate open-ended software tools and subject specific application with student centered teaching methods and collaborative methods and collaborative project in support of students deep understanding of key concepts and their application to solve complex world real problems, use network resources to help students collaborative, access information, communicate with experts to analyze and solve their selected problems and us ICT to create and monitor individual group plans.
- Knowledge Creation ICT-based learning resources and environment use to support the development of knowledge creation and critical thinking skills of students, support student's continuous reflective learning, and create knowledge communities for students and colleagues.
- The new ICT enable self-paced learning through various tools such as assignments, computer etc. as a result of this the teaching learning enterprise has become more productive and meaningful.
- ICT helps facilitate the transaction between producers and users by keeping the students updated and enhancing teacher's capacity and ability fostering a live contact between the teacher and the student through e-mail, chat session etc.

- This promotes active learning. Sharing of ideas, discussion and also provides immediate feedback. This activates paced learning and allows effective mapping of learning path ways.
- This requires high quality meaningful digital content to be made available to teacher and student. Teachers particularly should possess updated knowledge skills to use the new digital tools and resources to help student achieve high academic standards.
- The need a vision to equip our students to meet the emerging trends. The present high tech and competitive society will society will sustain only through the knowledge of ICT.
- ICT has the capacity to store, retrieve and process e-content both fast as well as accurate. ICT represents one of the current applications of technology towards teaching-learning processes.
- According to UNESCO: ICT is a scientific technological and engineering discipline and management technique used in handing information in application and association with social, economic and cultural aspects.
- Various agencies like NCTE, SCERT, and IASES are being equipped with necessary hardware NCTE is in the process of developing ICT based instruction packages for teacher educators. It would use ICT enabled learning which bring in several innovation in teacher education.
- The new environment of interactive learner-cantered approach of ICT has completely meta-morphosised the process of education i.e. delivery and dissemination. The technological creativity learner will help generate sharing of knowledge to perform tasks in a better way and do develop their capacity and skills to keep pace with the rapid changes but the pace of change is so fast that what was avant-garde few year ago is ago is just a thing of past.
- One of the major advantage of using ICT in the class room has been to prepare, the present and new generation of students for a workplace where ICT particularly computers internet and other related technologies are becoming more and more important.
- These computer savvy and technologically literate students process the desired competencies to use ICT effectively. These knowledgeable person possess the competitive edge in an increasingly uncertain globalizing job market. Alone with the technology literacy development of specificity skills are also required. For well paying jobs specifically of skill is of the primary importance.
- ICT which includes radio and television as well as other high technology newer digital devices such as computers and Internet been treated as generally powerful enabling tools for educational change and reform.

Teaching and Learning Process in ICT

The field education has been affected by ICT which have undoubtedly affected teaching. Learning and research. ICT have potential to accelerate, and deepen skills, to motivate and engage students, to help relate school experience to work practices, create economic viability for tomorrow's viability for tomorrow's workers, as well as strengthening teaching and helping school change.

The integration of information and communication technologies can help revitalize teachers and students. This can help to improve and develop the quality of education by providing curricular support in difficult subject areas.

When confident teachers are willing to explore new opportunities for changing classroom practice by using ICT

Conclusion

Teachers in India need to be prepared to face the challenges of 21 century for imparting new age education. Efforts must be made by the educationist to change the process of teaching-learning in order to prepare the students to adjust themselves to the society; this could definitely create a new learning environment and information rich society. The information to communication technology has ushered a new era in our civilization in which digitalization has almost become a better alternative, because it has generally of sporadic nature in the education program.

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NEED FOR CO-ORDINATION AND NETWORKING AMONG DISTANCE EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS AT STATE LEVEL

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Introduction

Education is life long process. It does not stop at any particular age. This is interpreted as continuing or continuous education. Rapid industrialization and growth of Science and Technology have resulted in explosion of knowledge and information. The conventional system of education proved inadequate to accommodate the growing needs of the Indian Society. Therefore the system of education has emerged as an effective alternative to the conventional system of education. The main objective of this paper is to focus the need for Co-ordination among the Distance Education institutions to provide quality of education, and good support services to the distance learners. It helps to reduce the dropout rate of distance learners.

The National Open University (IGNOU), many other State Open Universities and state conventional universities are offering different distance mode courses and running study centres in the same place/ town without any co-operation. It results unhealthy competition among study centres. Further it leads to decline the standard and image of distance education. There are many common issues like, supply of poor quality of study material, delay in dispatch of study material, not providing good academic counselors, abnormal delay in publication of results, poor library and Laboratory facilities etc. All these issues are leads to dropout the distance learners from the system. It shows, most of the universities are failed in providing good support services, to the distance learners due to lack of co-operation among the institutions. Undoubtedly we can say that in the 21st century Distance Education mode dominates the conventional systems. Hence to meet the demands of Distance Education in the coming Millennium there is need to strengthen the existing structure and re-organising its system and procedures. The present paper is an attempts to focus its attention on the need for co-ordination among the Distance Education Institutions (D.E.Is) to solve the major issues being faced by them and to provide better services to the distance to arners within time.

Common issues identified in D.E.Is of convention universities and distance learners.

1. D.E.Is have proved to be gold mines to the universities. Many D.E.Is don't enjoy functional autonomy.
2. The working conditions of faculty in D.E.Is are not satisfactory. The U.G.C. guidelines in this regard are neglected.
3. There is no trained course team for preparation of self instructional material.
4. There is heavy drop out of rate of students in this system due to various reasons.
5. The counselors of regular department giving step mother treatment to the distance mode students in counseling and also in valuation of examination scripts.
6. Inadequate and poor infrastructure facilities in the study centres. They are to be confirmed to the respective university areas to avoid duplication.
7. No separate BOS or representation to D.E.Is in BOS. Hence the curriculum, syllabus and examination pattern framed by BOS of the particular branch by

bringing frequent changes becoming difficulty in getting the study material printed in time.

8. Research in D.E.Is completely neglected aspect hence the system failed in identifying the administrative and student problems.

9. The many state Govt. are not taken any policy for utilizing the distance mode of education for educational development of the state.

Strengthening and coordinating of the Distance Education System

1. Autonomy should be given to the Directors of D.E.Is within the framework of their administrative, academic and financial aspects.

2. Co-ordination is needed to prepare common study material for all D.E.Is in the states at least at U.G. level in view of common core syllabus. This will minimise the cost of study material and high quality of study material also will be supplied.

3. Co-ordination is needed in strengthening student support services with establishment of well equipped libraries, multimedia lab and exchange of audio/video material.

4. Steps to be taken in bringing change in the administrative structure of D.E.Is in view of coordinating the activities among the institutions.

5. To constitute an Advisory Committee for every D.E.Is for its development. The committee should consist of experts in Distance Education, other Directors of D.E.Is in the state and senior faculty of respective institutions. It will be useful to achieve co-ordination and policy initiation of various issues such as framing syllabus, common fee structure, preparation of study material etc.

6. Co-ordination is needed to improve the status of Distance Education faculty in the state. The faculty working in D.E.Is are not getting benefits of promotions on par with the regular department faculty. The guidelines stipulated by the UGC should be strictly followed.

7. Co-ordination is required in conducting research studies on different issues of D.E.Is. Distance Education is one of the thrust and vast areas to do research.

8. A state level body should be constituted to co-ordinate the efforts of different D.E.Is under the respective state open universities.

Hence, it is need to strengthen the Distance Mode courses of various universities to maintain the quality of education. It is required mutual co-operation in sharing of infrastructural and instructional facilities available at their centres. To achieve the co-ordination among the state universities, A state level organization should be constituted to co-ordinate the efforts of different Distance Education institutions. The respective state open university should come forward to achieve this task. It helps to provide good quality of study material with low cost and wastage can be reduced in many aspects. Hence, it is urgent need to achieve the co-ordination among the Distance Education institutions at least in state level to reach its fruits to the unreached.

Conclusion

To sum up I appeal to the Council of Higher Education of A.P. and other states to organise a special meeting of Vice-chancellors along with the Directorate of Distance Education Institutions in their state, by inviting experts of Distance Education to discuss the working conditions of the Distance Education Institutions ad their problems. It will largely helpful to co-ordinate activities of Distance Education programmes among the Institutions in the respective states.

CHOICE BASED CREDIT SYSTEM IN INDIAN HIGHER EDUCATION SCENARIO

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Introduction

Indian higher education system is the second largest in the world with about 636 degree granting higher educational institutions and 33,023 numbers of colleges (Higher Education in India at a glance, February 2012, UGC). Out of this figure 297 are state Universities, 43 Central Universities, 100 are Private Universities, 65 are Deemed Universities. The education system in India has a proven history of excellence. Dr. Sukheo Thorat, Chairman UGC has recently said on "Important constituent for improvement of quality in Higher Education is the initiative for academic and administrative reform in the university and college education system. The 11th plan recognized the need to introduce the academic reform in the university and college education system. The academic reform necessarily includes changes in admission procedures in various courses, modification in assessment and examination methods, switch over from annual to semester system, acceptance of grade and credit system, CBCS, teachers" assessment, and other related reforms." Keeping in view the challenges of the changed times and make the higher education in Indian Universities compatible with the universities in developed nations, the UGC (11th plan, March 2009) and later on the Association of Indian Universities (AIU) stressed on the following recommendations: (1) Semester System (2) Choice Based Credit System (3) Curriculum Development (4) Examination Reforms (5) Administrative Reforms Choice-based credit system (CBCS) has several unique features: Enhanced learning opportunities, ability to match students' scholastic needs and aspirations, inter-institution transferability of students (following the completion of a semester), part-completion of an academic programme in the institution of enrolment and part-completion in a specialized (and recognized) institution, improvement in educational quality and excellence, flexibility for working students to complete the programme over an extended period of time, standardization and comparability of educational programmes across the country, etc.

While explanations of the several terms related to the development of a Choice-Based Credit System, it is important to know that CBCS essentially implies a redefining of the curriculum into smaller measurable entities or modules" with the hours required for studying/learning these – not teaching" - being at the primary focus and the development of a mechanism whereby theses modules can be combined in different ways so as to qualify for a Certificate, Diploma or Degree. In a sense, therefore, the completion of a single Module of learning can pave the way for learning other modules either in the same institution or elsewhere and a combination of modules in keeping with the needs and interests of the learners illustrates the much talked about cafeteria approach" to learning with the Learner at the centre stage of all academic transactions. Choice based credit system (CBCS) or a cafeteria like system is the solution for this type of transformation from the traditional teacher oriented education to a student-centered education.

Operational Definitions

1. ***Choice-Based Credit System (CBCS):*** CBCS is a flexible system of learning that permits students to, learn at their own pace, Choose electives from a wide range of elective courses offered by the University departments, Adopt an inter-disciplinary approach in learning, and Make best use of the expertise of available faculty.

2. **Program:** 'Programme' means a set of the required number of semesters leading to the award of a UG or PG degree / diploma

3. **Semester:** 'Semester' means a term consisting of a minimum of 450 contact hours distributed over 90 working days spread over 18 weeks of five-day duration each and five contact hours per day.(18 X 5 X 5= 450). In case of 15 week semester, there will be six working days. (15X 6 X 5= 450). Depending upon its duration, each academic year will be divided into two semesters. Semesters will be known as either Odd Semester or Even semester. The Semester from July to November will be Semesters I, III, V or VII depending upon the programme duration and similarly the semester from December to April will be Semesters II, IV, VI and VIII.

4. **Academic Week:** 'Academic Week' is a unit of five or six working days during which distribution of work is organized from six to five contact hours of one hour duration on each day.

5. **Credits:** Credit is a kind of weightage given to the contact hours to teach the prescribed syllabus, which is in a modular form. Normally one credit is allocated to 15 contact hours.

   1. In each of the courses, credits will be assigned on the basis of the number of lectures / tutorials / laboratory work and other forms of learning required for completing the course contents in maximum 18 week schedule.

   2. The instructional days as worked out by the UGC for one academic year are 180 working days i.e. 90 days per semester.

   3. UG Programmes have minimum five courses PG programmes shall have minimum four papers in each semester. It means a UG student has to complete 20 credits in each semester session and a PG student is required to complete 16 credits in each semester.

   4. Mechanics of Credit Calculation: As per GNU standard, 1Credit = 15 hours of lectures.

   5. Contact hours will include all the modes of teaching and it includes forms like lectures / tutorials / laboratory work / fieldwork or other forms. In determining the number of hours of instruction required for a course involving laboratory / field-work, 2 hours of laboratory / field work is generally considered equivalent to 1 hour of lecture.

1. **Semester Grade Point Average (SGPA):** Semester Grade Point Average (SGPA) is the value obtained by dividing the sum of credit points (P) earned by a student in various courses taken in a semester by the total number of credits earned by the student in that semester. SGPA shall be rounded off to two decimal places.

2. **Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA):** 'Cumulative Grade Point Average' (CGPA) is the value obtained by dividing the sum of credit points in all the courses earned by a student for the entire programme, by the total number of credits. CGPA shall be rounded off to two decimal places. CGPA indicates the comprehensive academic performance of a student in a programme.

   a. An overall letter grade (Cumulative Grade) for the entire programme shall be awarded to a student depending on his/her CGPA.

3. **Programme Structure**

   a. *Course:* A Course is a component (a paper) of a programme. A course may be designed to involve lectures / tutorials / laboratory work / seminar / project work/ practical training / report writing / Viva voce, etc or a combination of these, to meet effectively the teaching and learning needs and the credits may be assigned suitably.

b. *Course Code:* Each course shall have an alphanumeric code, which includes the semester number (I to VIII) in which the course is offered, the type of the course (A or B) and the serial number of the course (01, 02…) and a three letter code representing the nature of the course, excepting common course.

c. A programme will consists of (A) Core courses & Complementary courses; and (B) Common courses & Open Courses. Core and Complementary courses will carry 85 % credit weightage. Common and Open courses will carry 15 % credit weightage. However the Dean of the concerned Faculty subject to the approval of the Director of the University shall have power to consider 5% variation in the weightage.

d. *Core Course:* Core courses are those, knowledge of which is deemed essential for students registered for a particular Programme. A student Shall have to choose the required courses from the list of core courses identified by the concerned Faculty. Core courses shall be spread over all the semesters.

e. *Common/Open Courses:* Courses in this category aim at enhancing the professional competency of students and increasing their employment prospects. This category includes courses in (i) Communication Skills (ii) Spoken English (iii) Knowledge of an additional Foreign Language and (iv) Personality Development.

f. *Extra Credits:* Extra credits may be awarded to a student for achievements in co-curricular activities carried out outside the regular class hours, as decided by the University. These credits shall not be counted while considering the minimum credits for completing the programme. The University shall frame detailed guidelines for the award of co-curricular credits and grades.

4. Evaluation – marks and grading system

Evaluation will be done on a continuous basis. End semester practical examinations shall normally be held before the theory examinations. The Student's performance in a course will be evaluated by assigning a letter grade on the few point scale.

a. For each course, the internal and external component will carry 30% and 70% weightage of the total course weightage respectively.

b. The internal component of 30% shall be based on 20% of total course weightage for mid-semester test and 10% of total course weightage to be evaluated by the instructor. Instructor will evaluate this on the basis of assignments, seminars, quizzes, attendance and practical work etc. as announced at the beginning of the course.

c. For each course the passing marks will be 40% aggregate.

d. Declaration of Semester/Trimester Results: For Students, who appeared both at the current Semester/ Trimester Examination as well as at their backlog courses of the Previous Semesters / Trimesters and having the result status as Fail-Detained in the previous Semesters/Trimesters, the result of such students shall be declared as Fail-Detained instead of Withheld in the current semester and the student shall be allowed to appear in the Remedial examinations.

Advantages

- Choice Based Credit System is essential for higher education in the present context.
- CBCS system of courses helps the students to improve the interdisciplinary approach in education and Freedom to choose subjects which is beneficial for students.
- Respects Learner Autonomy Allows learners to choose according to their own learning needs, interests and aptitudes
- Facilitates Learner Mobility: Offers the opportunity to study at different times and in different places. Credits earned at one institution can be transferred to another

- In this system students need not to repeat the full semester if there is fail in one paper and it upgrades educational and occupational aspiration of the upcoming generation.

Disadvantages
- Implementation of CBCS has some Practical limitations; It is complicated, especially in the view of shortage of teachers or infrastructures.
- One subject can be repeated three times, it makes the students irresponsible, Student cannot plan effectively their list of students.
- It needs more punctuality from the student, there is no betterment system of evaluation in this system
- Students can have only partial knowledge of any new subject chosen by the student as extra credit subject.

Conclusion

To conclude it can be said that Education is not the end of process but an integral part of Educational spiral and a well designed system of evaluation is a powerful Educational device. Choice Based Credit System is essential for Higher Education. This system increases the sincerity among the teacher as well as the students. It has improved the academic carrier of many students who were not even much sincere and good percentage holder. In CBCS the span of time which can be allotted for increased so that course of study can be properly acquired by the student. Betterment system should be introduced because the students can better their performance.

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ROLE OF VOCATIONAL AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION THROUGH OPEN LEARNING SYSTEM IN THE PRESENT SCENERIO OF THE GLOBAL ECONOMY

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Introduction

Distance Education is essentially a mode of education whose main focus is on helping learners in their learning. This mode of imparting quality education has crossed many stages of evolution starting from private study to correspondence courses, distance mode and then open and distance learning. **Distance** learning institutes in India have witnessed a remarkable rise in student *enrolment crossing the 10 million mark. While experts in the distance and online* education domain agree that this mode is amongst the best to increase the gross enrolment ratio in higher education (30 percent by 2020), it is the quality aspect in offering such courses which is of prime concern.

It is now generally agreed that distance learning can provide a high quality education at university. As a force in contributing to social and economic development, open and distance learning is fast becoming an accepted and indispensable part of the main-stream of educational systems in both developed and developing countries. The globalization of distance education provides many opportunities for developing countries for the realization of their education system-wide goals. Faced with new training demands and new competitive challenges, many institutions need to undertake profound changes in terms of governance, organizational structure and modes of operation. More and more traditional universities are rapidly transforming themselves from single mode to dual mode universities, recognizing the importance of distance education in providing students with the best and most up-to-date educational resources available in addition to the traditional teaching methods that they receive. Dual Mode system helps to choose the best specialization available.

Vocational and Technical Education

Vocational/technical education in various forms plays a significant role in the socio-economic development of the population. Technical education is defined as development of skills and knowledge to be applied in practical situations, whereas vocational education is the development of knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary for effective utilization of human resources. Vocationalisation of education ranges between pre-trade and para-professional (R.V.R.Chandrasekhar Rao, 1993).

Technical education including management education is one of the most effective ways to create skilled manpower required for development. During the past four decades, there has been a spectacular expansion of technical education in the country. At present, the India has over 200 recognized technical education institutions at the First Degree level and more than 560 Polytechnics at the Diploma level with an annual intake of 40 000 and 80 000 students respectively (B.L.Sadana, 1999). Another 140 institutions offer Post-graduate courses with an annual intake of 9 400 students. There are five national institutions at Mumbai, Kanpur, Kharagpur, Chennai and New Delhi known as Indian Institutes of Technology. These institutions provide facilities for under-graduate and post-graduate programmes and research in engineering and technology. Besides these institutions, there are 17 regional engineering colleges and four Indian Institutes of Management at Ahmedabad, Bangalore, Calcutta and Lucknow which offer excellent management programmes (J.R.Naidu, 2000).

Most of the students in the Open University system, unlike those in the conventional systems are employed and may not be available for full time training sessions of long duration. Besides people who are at work in the country, especially those who are in the far-flung areas need opportunities to upgrade their expertise and qualifications. Distance education mode can provide opportunities for updating, broadening and diversifying their knowledge and skills.

Implementation of Distance Education Programmes in Vocationalisation and Technology

- *Designing of courses:* The course content should be upgraded periodically in consultation with the experts in the respective fields. The contents must incorporate recent developments particularly in socio-economic, institutional and scientific aspects to make the training relevant.

- *Mode of entry:* Unlike programmes in general disciplines, entry into vocational/technical courses requires, along with a formal qualification, professional experience and the admission need to be based on the performance in an entrance examination designed suitably.

- *Duration of the course:* The duration of the course under vocational/technical has to be designed appropriately. It might be suitably fixed considering the requirements of each programme.

- *Lesson preparation:* The course material preparation plays an important role in the distance mode and it requires careful planning, development and production. The course material is to be written by experienced teachers in self-instructional mode. To make the distance education programmes more effective, the delivery system needs to be reinforced with electronic media like audio and videocassettes, radio and television.

- *Conduct of contact programmes in theory and laboratory courses and field work courses:* All the students who have enrolled for the undergraduate and post-graduate courses under distance education programme have to attend contact programmes in the laboratory and theory courses where attendance is compulsory. The contact programme centres need to be selected on the basis of their experience and reputation in the subjects. Evaluation of the performance of the student in the laboratory course is done immediately after the contact programme.

- *Evaluation:* The evaluation in distance education programme in vocational and technical courses should be different from the procedures followed in conventional programmes, assignments and end-examinations will have to be supplemented by continuous assessment. Field experience need to be assessed by project reports.

Every distance education institution should consider the following factors before it decides on its approach to media use. They are (DEC, 1997) –

- Availability: Availability of technology, infrastructure and the trained manpower need to be ascertained.
- Accessibility: The learners should have access to the media.
- Acceptability: The teachers and learners should have a favourable attitude and a proper orientation to use the media available.

- Economics: If the production of non-print material (like electronic media) is too costly, it becomes prohibitive to use. Two or three institutions together may pool the resources.
- Validity: The validity or appropriateness of the choice of a particular medium should be tested. If the course can be taught more effectively through, say the radio than the print, it is better to choose radio as the medium.

Application of Multi-media services in Distance Education in Vocational and technical education

- Print media (self-instructional material) is easy to carry as it can be used according to the convenience of the students. Similarly newspapers are especially useful for maintaining contact among people scattered across the Four Corners of a country.
- In the broadcast media, radio has enormous potential, can cover very large audiences and reach isolated spots. Radio is within the reach of masses and should be used as a home-based means of imparting education. It helps students through distance mode supplementing by way of classroom materials and information services of various kinds.
- TV makes it possible to use broadcasting for visual presentation. TV broadcasting is an important component in the distance education mode and it gives the individual strength in encouraging interpretations by individual learner. Recently, IGNOU has adopted the "Gyan Darshan" channel in Doordarshan for imparting instruction to the distance learners.
- If the audio-video cassettes are available in the study centres of the respective distance education institutions, the students can listen to the cassette in-groups, which facilitates discussion among students and learning from peer-group interaction. Audio and videocassettes are the media, which would possibley be crucial for the success of distance education. For students, study material presented in cassettes offers considerable freedom. It can be used when it appears most relevant to the individual needs of the students and at a time, place convenient to them (Inayat Khan, 1998).
- Through the teleconferencing the counseling sessions can be arranged for students to bring the factor of two way interaction as, it gives the students the opportunity to have direct link with the course coordinator who is the resource person at the headquarters. It provides wider coverage and exposure to latest technology.
- Telephone teaching can provide two-way interaction between learners and teachers.
- The videodisc can be linked to the computer and the learners can interact with the materials at their own pace and choice.
- The most convenient means at least in principle of getting textual information to member institutions is by fax, since this usually arrives the same day in which the message is sent.

Suggestions for Strengthening the Distance Education Institutions

- Media centres have to be started throughout the study areas and also arrange broadcasting and telecast programmes for distance learners.
- Periodically supervise the study centres by the concerned institutions for better results.

- Proper and adequate staff developments schemes in distance education techniques and in open learning methods are essential to maximize the efficiency, effectiveness and quality of teaching/learning.
- In order to improve the quality and standards of the distance education offered by the distance education institutions, it is advised that they may be given autonomy within the university framework for diversifying the activities and upgrading the courses.

- In order to raise the quality of the instructional material and counselling it is necessary to organize orientation/training programmes to the teachers involved in distance education.
- For smooth and effective functioning of the distance education institutions, the different coordination committees like student support services, examination committee, academic committee, library committee, dispatch committee, audio-video faculty, etc. are needed.
- Proper awareness should be created among the distance education learners regarding the availability of different services rendered by the institutions, and
- In order to enhance the quality of all distance sub-systems, proper emphasis should be laid on periodic monitoring and evaluation by undertaking action research projects aimed at improving the efficiency and effectiveness of distance education.

The efficiency and effectiveness of distance education may be improved further by applying an integrated multi-media approach, based on the rational allocation of available resources. These, improvements if made, will enhance not only the learners' level of satisfaction but also the overall quality and standard of the system of distance education in vocational/technical education in particular and distance education in general.

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DISTANCE EDUCATION IN INDIA: PRESENT STATUS AND PREFERRED FUTURE

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Introduction

Distance Education today is stepping forward with the help of recent developments in technology. It should be noted that the growth of enrollment in correspondence and distance education mode has been higher than that of higher education in general(Nidhi and Pooja,2014) However there is a need for more researches on distance education in India , the empirical data of which can be utilized for the advancement of ODL. After the establishment of the Open University system in India in the year 1982, there has been tremendous advancement in the field of higher education. The research studies on distance education have contributed to the knowledge on enrolment, course growth, development and social relevance, course material, instructional strategies and methodology, etc. Data based studies covering the period of 1993 to 2000, on Education reveal that Distance education has not made much progress in research in the last decade. (Review of Research, 2012).This technological era has brought down changes in the needs and aspirations of the learners with regard to the methodology and module of the programmes offered. This need in turn calls for socially responsive planning and execution of distance education system in India. Hence this paper attempts to find out the causes behind the slow progress of distance education and Research on ODL in India, in the light of various research studies.

Objectives

1. To find out the status of research in distance education in India.
2. To suggest compatible measures to enhance the quality

Implication of Distance Education in India

The report of Madhava Menon committee suggested certain regulations through distance education mode.. It has given the following comments on distance education research.

"Research and development forms the backbone of any system in order to bring in quality and standards. Being a dynamic system driven by societal, economic and technological changes, ODL has been changing rapidly and dramatically. The changing technological environment of distance education and paradigm shift affecting it needs to be periodically reviewed. Also the growing acceptance of open and distance learning system in our country and innovations being an integral part of the ODL system it has become imperative to evaluate the system periodically. There is ample proof of growth of distance education research which is evident from the increasing number of journals, seminars, workshops, symposia etc analyzing the growth of the system (Govt. of India 2011)

Distance enrolment constitutes 12.5% of the total enrolment in higher education in India, of which 39.9% are female students. The following data says that enrolment of males is higher than females except certificate courses.

S.No	Level	Male	Female	Total
1.	P.G	772328	531536	1303864
2	U.G	1213524	785429	1998953
3	P.G Diploma	44661	18003	62664
4	Diploma	70580	45595	116175
5	Certificate	37231	38671	75902
6.	Integrated	1523	478	2001
	Total	**2139847**	**1419712**	**3559559**

The above table gives the level of distribution of enrolment in distance education courses, revealed by "All India Survey on Higher Education, Government of India in the 2011-12. Choosing ODL for various reasons like, promotion, higher education, employment etc is on the increase. There is no doubt that distance education contributes to our country's socio economic condition at large.

Present Status of Distance Education in India

Indian research has not grown proportionately as that of the demands for higher education, the number of institutions and programmes available through distance mode. In a study published in international Review of Research in open and distance learning(IRODL), number of Indian contributions reported only 1.7% and 6th rank (Zawacki-Richter,et al;2009). Quality of the research on DE is also questioned frequently. Calvert (1998) stated that most of the researchers in distance education have modest knowledge pedagogical hypothesis, and have ha limited training in Social Science research methodology and design. There is a need for encouraging research on distance education and the ned for rewarding good research work. There are less number of institutional researches due to limited funding for distance education research in India"(Zhang and Venkaiah,2000)

The basic premise to Kearsley's article "The Nature and Value of Interaction in Distance Learning" is that interaction is perceived as one of the most critical instructional elements of distance education, and that increased interaction potentially improves student achievement, attitude towards learning, and course effectiveness. Kearsley identifies three types of interaction: student-teacher, student-content, and student-student, and suggests these three distinctions along with the timing of interactions, either through synchronous or asynchronous activity, has significance in understanding the impact of interaction on a learner and subsequent course effectiveness.

Muilenburg and Berge (2005) identified the following barriers to online learning: in the first place, administrative issues like the lack of sufficient academic advisors online, a lack of communication of clear expectations and difficulty contacting academic or administrative staff. This is followed by barriers regarding social interaction (e.g. afraid of being isolated), academic skills, technical skills, learner motivation (including procrastination) , time and support for studies, cost and access to the Internet, and technical problems, respectively.

In India, growing concerns over the quality of distance education had led the minister of HRD to propose that no new university should be permitted to offer off-campus programmes for 5 years

The institutions in India, which control higher education in general and distance education in particular, do not have clear cut demarcation of powers which affects the distance education. UGC has stopped M.Phil courses through distance mode, which denies opportunity to a large number of aspiring individuals the chance of improving their qualification. While coming to employment, students from conventional institutions are given

preference and those from distance education are ignored. This has trusted distance education to a lower status. Ince there is a complete domination of conventional system of higher education over the distance education and the policies for distance education are framed by persons from conventional education, the virtual need for the development of distance education is not understood and hence it receives setback (Rana Sudharshana, 2011)

In recent years Learners, teachers, decision makers and the public at large , colleges and universities have spent a great deal of time and effort in looking inward to analyze the efficacy of learning through the use of technology. There is a serious need for quality and employability skill, to be provided to the students of distance education. This includes policy papers, "how to" articles, and essays, as well as a limited, though not insignificant body of original research.

Assignments are important component of student support services in ODL. The selection of topic, its preparation and evaluation add value to the quality of service provided by the Distance Education Institutions. The attendance in personal contact programmes, and the methodology adopted by the instructors in study centres require thorough scrutiny.

Use of media have a distinct role to play in the distance and open learning system.(Shah and Mandal,1993). But there are studies which reveal that distant learners do not use audio and video support. Open universities have the autonomy of developing curriculum focused on distance learners. There is a need for research on the process of curriculum development and the quality of execution. For a sustainable growth and positive impact of ODL, new theoretical knowledge is essential.

Suggestions to enhance the quality of education through distance mode.
At the institutional Level
1. Development of curriculum focusing on the employability skill of the learners.
2. Frequent evaluation and improvement of personal contact programmes
3. Regular monitoring of study centres and rewarding the best.
4. Assignments given should be appraised in such a way that it helps the student in developing in depth knowledge in their respective discipline.
5. Due importance should be given to imparting skills in research methodology

At the Policy Level
1. Prevent Commercialization of Open and distance Education, by monitoring whether the institutions follow the prescribed norms and standards with regard to higher education through distance mode
2. Provide necessary financial backup in order to provide quality education to the learners.

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ASSESSING QUALITY OF HIGHER EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

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Introduction

Education is one of the important factors behind human development. It not only enhances the earning capacity of an individual but also makes him/her a useful member of society and nation. In this globalised world which is full of challenges as well as opportunities, the prospect of an individual as well as a country has become critically dependent on the quality and content of the Education system. While the foundation of knowledge and skill is laid down at the primary and secondary levels, it is at the level of Higher Education that a human skill attains perfection. It is this level of education which gives us specialists (i.e.) technocrats, bureaucrats and professionals for different jobs. So the quality and content of higher educational institutions are crucial for the survival and development of nation in this highly competitive globalised world.

Nationalized and Internationalized Governments are aware of the fact that "Education is pre-requisite for development of a person and his society" as such. So an increased importance is attached to education. The destiny of any country is being shaped in its classrooms. Education is not the study of books alone. Education is necessary for observing and understanding the world as it is. "A man without education is a man without eyes. According to Swami Vivekananda," we must have life-building, man-making, character-making assimilation of ideas." So as to deliver quality education, the educational institutions should be a quality one. Hence the Higher education has several policies and criteria have to develop the colleges and universities under this with certain parameters. Let us discuss on it.

The Higher Education in India, in post independence era, has made a lot of progress. The technical and vocational education has grown manifold in recent years. Number of Universities and thousands of Colleges are growing day by day in the country. However the quantitative growth in higher education has not kept with its qualitative growth. Almost two-third of our universities and ninety percent of the colleges are rated as below average on all quality parameters. Poor infrastructure, sub-standard faculty, outdated curricula, ill-equipped libraries and laboratories, poor quality of research, faculty examinations and evaluation systems, administrative inefficiency, computer etc have become the hallmark of most of our universities and colleges. We have to survive in a competitive environment, and then we urgently need to make a substantial improvement in the quality of our higher educational system. Among all the educational institution, the higher educational institutions have a greater role to play in the current scenario.

Innovations and experimentations in different processes and stages of learning have become the need of the hour. Moreover quality sustenance while undertaking these reformations has become an unquestionable and unavoidable benchmark. Considering the significances of this issues and the role of higher educational institutions in ensuring the quality sustenance, is the most important and essential need of the day. It aims to evolve an interactive process between educational institutions and its various stakeholders for imitating measures, practices and activities for maintaining quality in all spheres of Higher education.

The Higher Educational Institutions are assessed by NAAC (National Assessment and Accreditation Council), NCTE (National Council for Teacher Education) and UGC (University Grant Commission) like so wings to maintain the quality of higher Educational institution.

Certain Parameters for the quality Sustenance are:
1. Action Research on Educational Institutions.
2. SWOT Analysis.
3. Policies and Practices of Educational Institutions.
4. Role of IQAC in quality Enhancement and sustenance.
5. Role of Stakeholders in quality sustenance.
6. Quality measures in quality sustenance.
7. Best practices in quality sustenance.
8. Best Activities in quality sustenance.

Total quality Management of Educational Institutions:
1. Vision & Mission.
2. Learner Centered quality education.
3. Flexible curriculum.
4. Cost effective.
5. Feedback and evaluation.
6. Imparting life skills (including critical thinking & problem solving) and core competencies.
7. Relevant courses – periodic change.
8. Teacher – Student Relationship.
9. Job Placement and Higher Education.
10. Documentation – success stories.
11. Proper planning, budgeting, financing and Accounting & Auditing.
12. Industrial – Institution tie up.
13. Infrastructural facilities.
14. Performance Appraisal study – Report.
15. Annual quality Assurance Report.
16. Quality of Faculty Members etc

Conclusion

The Higher Educational Institution needs a thorough re-structuring. We must recognize the fact that today it is not weapon, not army, not even nuclear bombs that constitute the strength of a country. But it is knowledge which represents the strength and this strength gives power to people to face new challenges. Only if we restructure and reorient our higher educational institutions, as per global norms, we can prepare ourselves to face global competitions. However, while liberalizing and globalizing our higher education, we must ensure that our vital national interests and the interests of our weak sections are protected.

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USE OF E-RESOURCES BY ACADEMIC COUNSELORS IN B.Ed. PROGRAMME (DISTANCE MODE) IN TAMILNADU STATE

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Introduction

India has more than 471 universities, 22,064 affiliated colleges and 5.21 lakh faculties. It is estimated that 15% of learns are enrolled in distance education. Kulandaiswamy and Srinivasan observe that it is no longer a choice but a compulsion of the time. One of the most apparent trends affecting distance education is the advancement of technology due to which technological devices are becoming more versatile and ubiquitous. The rapid advancement for ICT has brought a revolutionary change in information scenario giving to a number of options to handle varied information sources conveniently and effortlessly as a result of which e-resources in satisfying varied needs of students, teachers and researchers with minimum risk and time.

Literature Review

The study "The use of e-resources by faculty members of business schools in a state of Orissa" by Swain and Panda has discuss the qualitative use of e-resources. Maunisamy and Swaroop Rani evaluated the usage of e-journals in NIT at Trichrapalli. The study done by Appleton found that perceptions on use of e-resources will impact on teaching and learning activity. The utilization and satisfaction levels of e-resources in Mysore University-studied by Nikam and Pramodini. Hardasan and Khan conducted a study that social scientists in NASSDOC accepted the e-recourses.

Significance of the Study

Tamil Nadu Open University offers B.Ed. programme through distance mode first time in the state (after long gap) since 2004. Every year 10,000 in–service teachers are admitted as student-teachers in 10 B.Ed. Programme Study Centers. Each faculty in school of education is serving as a University Coordinator in a PSCs. The academic counselors in programme study centers (PSCs) are in charge of various activities related to admission, counseling classes, assignments, workshop, practice teaching, theory and practical examinations, result publication and certificate, .

Three tier system is followed i) Administrative activities: School of Education (SOE)= Programme Study Centers (PSCs) = Various University Sections or Divisions. ii) Academic activities: Faculties (University coordinator) in School of Education (SOE) = Faculties (Study Centre coordinator) in Programme Study Centers (PSCs) = Various Teaching Learning Resources in PSCs and in University. .

The heterogonous nature of B.Ed. students is different in nature and wide in scope. These are as follows: age, gender, geography, social class, cultural systems, income, ethnic and racial identity, educational background, working school and language, housing, access to communications and technology, physical disability. These demographic variables are ignored in this study. To make student-teachers more self-reliant, independent and self-confident in all aspects, e-resources will be appropriate to all student-teachers.

Objectives

1. To assess the contemporary use of e-resources by academic counselors.
2. To examine the attitude towards use of e-resources.
3. To find out reasons behind usage of e-resources.

4. To analyze the factors which promote or reduce the use of e-resources.
5. To suggest measure for improve the use of e-resources.

Methodology
   The study is based on survey method; a structured questionnaire was designed to collect data from Academic Counselors in Tamilnadu Open University. The data was personally collected through questionnaire and personal interview to assess the availability, use and problems relating to use of e-resources.

Analysis of Data
   The Academic counselors (N=120) in 10 B.Ed. Programme Study Centres are selected for convenient purpose. The data collected was scrutinized, classified and tabulated for better analysis as follows:

1. Computer Knowledge of Academic Counselors
   Computer knowledge has become essential and must of academic counselors. The study shows that all of them were computer literate, which is good for teacher education.

Table 1: Extent of computer knowledge

S.NO.	Level of Computer Knowledge	No. of Academic counselors	Percentage
1	Excellent	03	2.5
2	Good	17	14.2
3	Fair	54	45.0
4	Satisfactory	46	38.3
	Total	120	100

It shows that as low as 3 academic counselors had 'excellent' computer knowledge. The computer knowledge of 17 of them was 'good', followed by 54 counsellors with 'fair' computer knowledge, and 46 counsellors with 'satisfactory' computer knowledge.

2. Use of Internet

Table 2: Frequency of Internet use

S.No.	Frequency	No. of Academic counselors	Percentage
1	Daily	03	2.5
2	Weekly	16	13.4
3	Two Weekly	91	75.8
4	As when needed	10	8.3
	Total	120	100

Internet has become an important tool for Academic counselors in teaching, administration and other related activities. Regarding frequency of Internet use, only 2.5% were using Internet on daily basis. About 13.4 per cent were using on weekly basis, majority of 75.8 per cent were using Internet on two weekly basis, and 8.3 per cent of them were using Internet as and when they required.

3. Awareness of e-Resources

Table 3: Awareness on e-resources

S.No.	Level of Awareness	No. of Academic counselors	Percentage
1	Yes	37	30.8
2	No	83	69.1
	Total	120	100

The use of e-resources is not satisfactory level in most of the libraries in B.Ed-PSCs. The main reason is the lack of awareness among academic counselors vide. About 37 Counselors (30.8%) were aware of e-resources and majority 83 (69.1 per cent) were not aware of it. The result implies towards further steps to be taken to improve the use of e-resources by academic counselors.

4. Types of e-resources frequently used

Table 4: Types of e-resources frequently use by Academic counselors

S.No.	Types of e-resources	No. of Academic counselors	Percentage
1	e-databases	20	16.7
2	e-journals	26	21.6
3	e-articles / e-reprints	38	31.7
4	e-books	16	13.3
5	e-news groups/magazine	12	10.0
6	e-thesis / dissertation	8	6.7
	Total	120	100

It shows that e-articles / e-reprints and e-journals were the most used e-resources by 38 and 26 Academic counselors (31.7%) (21.6%) respectively. This followed by use of e-databases (61.7%), e-books (13.3%), e-news groups/magazine (10.0%) and e-thesis / dissertation (6.7%). The result indicates that the use of e-thesis / dissertation, e-news groups/ magazine and e-books by academic counselors should be improved by immediate training on e-resources.

5. Knowledge of Copyright / IPR Issues

Table 5: Knowledge of Copy right / IPR of e-resources.

S.No.	Knowledge of copy right/IPR	No. of Academic counselors	Percentage
1	Yes	28	23.3
2	No	92	76.7
	Total	120	100

Copyright and Intellectual Property Right (IPR) are two important legal issues related to any arbitrary and indiscriminate use of any documents. Academic counselors should have this knowledge while using the e-resources. The majority of 92 counselors (76.7%) did not had the Awareness and knowledge about Copyright and Intellectual Property Right (IPR) issues where as only 28 (23.3%) had the above Awareness.

6. Criteria for selecting e-resources:

Table 6: Criteria for selecting of e –resources

S.No.	Criteria for Selecting	No. of Academic counselors	Percentage
1	Reliability	28	23.3
2	Currently	23	19.2
3	Authenticity	42	35.0
4	Usability	16	13.3
5	Objectivity	08	06.7
6	Any other	03	02.5

	Total	120	100

There are various criteria for evaluation of e-resources on the basis of preference of academic counselors. The table 8 shows that as high as 42 and 28 counsellors (35% and 23.3%) depends on Authenticity and Reliability criteria while selecting e-resources.

Competencies for Academic Counsellors

The academic counselors have to act as an information manager/provider to respective B.Ed. distance learners. Access to e-resources and finding of relevant needed information from databases is a difficult task. It requires skill and experience on part of academic counselors. So, there is a need to develop competency regarding use of e-resources. The academic counselors have to equip with writing and publishing skills. The curriculum should include e-resources and its application. The hands-on practice on e-resource software being used in libraries. The practical knowledge of digital libraries shoul be developed. The in-charge of library may be given incentive or any allowance. In addition, academic councellors will have to improve their communication skills, problem solving attitude, presentation skills.

Conclusion

It is presumed that access to e-resources would invariable make qualitative difference on research, R&D activities of academic counselors, teacher educators and resource persons. Quality of teaching, research and publications of subject experts and teacher education resource persons are impacted with accessibility and availability of print and e-resources. Libraries and teacher educators are required to play a proactive role in promoting usage of resources amongst faculty and researchers in teacher education.

Suggestions
1. The university should provide computers with higher speeds Wi-fi .
2. Computers with CD-Rom/UDB ports may be provided to in library of PSCs.
3. A networked printer may be provided for all on minimum cost.
4. There is a need of orientation and training programme.
5. A computer with latest specifications and multimedia kit that can be used for internet telephony, videoconferencing, chatting and other useful e-resource services.
6. A system administrator may be appointed for providing right kind of help during using of e-resource.
8. Electronic version of all e-resources may be subscribed by Universities.
9. Entertainment websites should be blocked.

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WOMEN'S EDUCATION

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Indroduction

" If you are thinking one year ahead, plant rice; if you are thinking ten years ahead, plant trees, if you are thinking hundred yours ahead, Educate.

The above mentioned Chinese proverb clearly depicts the importance of education. Education is important not merely of means to other ends but it is an attribute that is valuable in itself, more important, education is a critical innovative instrument for bringing about social, economic and political inclusions and a durable integration of people, particularly those excluded from the main sham of any role in human life.

Importance of Women's Education

Education is the cornerstone of women's development and empowerment, because it enables them to respond to opportunities; to challenge traditional roles and to change their lives. Although education is essential for everyone; incase of women, it is particularly significant. It not only opens up vast avenues and opportunities for growth, but affects families and future generation as well. Education plays an important role in bringing about awareness on women's rights. Educated mothers can pay due attention to the needs of her children effectively. Mother's education affects more the education of children than father's education. She may secure more resources for her children. Education empowers women to make decisions about themselves, their families and their communities. So, it is essential to expand the women's education. "If you teach a man, you teach a person, but if you teach a girl, you teach the whole family.

In the ancient India, the position of women in the society was exalted. They were highly respected and the discrimination between women and men was almost negligible. Vedas also proclaim "Where women are worshipped god lives there". Such was the status.

The early Rig Vedas mentioned of women as equals who participated in the entire house hold activities related both to social and economic spheres. No important function could be performed by man alone. Men were considered incomplete without women in those days. Women had the rights to read and recite the Vedas and other sacred as well as secular texts. Several of them played very important roles in the formulation of social policies and code of conduct. Rig Veda informs us that women were admitted to religious rites and as a result, they received full educational training. It has been found that the wives were constant participants in the husband's sacrificial offerings. Yajur Veda is of the option that both the married couple should be educated alike. Atharva Veda emphasized the importance of education of women for a successful marriage and happy home. During Panini period, women were taught fine arts like dancing and singing. There were many women who were experts in vocal and instrumental music. Some other women were experts in handicrafts too.

However, in the later vedic period, the status of women underwent significant changes. Degeneration on society brought about many social evils. The women were deprived of the status that once was enjoyed by them. Equality of social and cultural opportunities to express themselves was also denied. Education of women slowly began to be neglected and later on girls were totally denied any access to education.

The Education of women during the spread of Buddhism and Jainism in India

The heterodox religions like Buddhism and Jainism sprang up challenging the vedic orthodox religion. Buddhist monasteries functioned as educational centers where vinaya, sutra and other subjects were taught. Women were admitted to the sangha. In Jainism also women were allowed to become nuns. But Buddhism and Janinisa too were based on the philosophy of avoidance of materialism. Women were regarded as a part of materialism. Moreover, nuns in both these religions were second to the male monks. They walked behind the monks in processions and were not given any position of authority. Among the Jains, even today the nuns outnumber the monks but still women play a second fiddle to the monks.

The Status of women during the Bhakti Movement in India

Another liberal current which to some extent widened the horizon for women was the Bhakti movement – the medieval saints movement. The saints' emphasized salvation through devotion to a deity wherein no intermediary such as a pandit or a purohit was required. The Bhaktas Vehemently attacked ritualism and overlord ship of Brahmins, used the vermacular as a language of communication and opened the gated of religion for women. Not surprisingly it is the Bhakthi movement which produced women saints like Meerabai and Lalla in the north. Andal and Akka Mahadevi in the south and Bhanabai in the west. As the movement did not basically challenge the unequal social structures and limited it only to individual salvation, it could not fundamentally effect the gender subordination.

In Conclusion, in the post – Vedic Period women's position in the society declined. Patriarchal values relating to sexuality and regulation of movement, thus controlling her purity, got entrenched during this phase. A women during this vast spam not only occupied an inferior position but was made to feel that her position was subordinate to men in the society.

The status of women and their education during the Muslim and Mughal rule in India

During the Muslim and Mughal's rule in India, the educational conditions of women deteriorated from had to worst. The women were confined to the boundary walls of the house. Purdah System, Child marriage, dowry system and a number of other evil practices crept in women became the object of sex and were reduced to the status of community. A women became subordinate and subservient to men women were treated. Women were treated just like a machine for procreation. Women became the object of sex and were reduced to a status of a community. Thus for centuries women had been pushed aside from the raco of development in the name of customs, traditions and religion. As a result, they had been denied the opportunities for their social, educational, economic and political status in society.

The contributions of Muslim and Mughal empires towards educations

Muslim education system was essentially religious in character. It was patronized by the Muslim rulers. The educational institutions they founded became strongholds of Muslim orthodoxy. The sole aim of Muslim education was to spread of Islam perpetuation of and preservation of Muslim culture. But it did not spread outside the urban areas. No attention was paid by any muslim ruler towards educating the masses that lived in the rural area. Female education in the Muslim period did not develop very much; yet there were some madarasas for women.

Women's Education during the British Rule in India

Before the advent of the British in India, many Christian missionaries came to India. Though their main aim was to convert people into Christianity, They contributed a lot for the education in general and women's education in particular. Many Schools for women, started and girls began to slowly come forward to join schools. The position of women improved during the British period because of two major movements. These were the Social Reform Movement of the nineteenth century and of National movement of the Twentieth century. Both these movements raised the questions of equal status of women and their educational attainment.

Some of the important social reformers of India are Rajaram Mohan Rai, swamu Dayanandha Saraswathi, Sir Syed ahamadkhan and Gopalkrishna Gokhale. The social refrormer;s felt that the social evils should be eradicated by raising consciousness and making people sensitive to the injustice perpetrated on women. They believed that the uplift of the status of women depended mainly on their education.

Another very powerful force, which helped change the position and attitude towards the women, was the Nationalist Movement particularly during the Gandhian phase. Gandhiji, apart from being a political leader was also a critic of some of the outmoded social institution. He vehemently criticized the custom of child marriage, prohibition of widow remarriage, temple prostitution and the custom of purdah. He had immense faith in the women's inner strength and her moral appeal. Gandhiji also stressed the need for educating women. Many writers credit Gandhiji for bringing women out of their home. Quite literally, he made women more visible.

It is clear that women's education became important before independence. Women began to receive education in large numbers, and some were even taking to city based upper strata of society. Women's education was largely in private hands.

Women's Education since independence

After Independence, the government of India appointed various commissions and committees to promote the cause of women's education. National Committee on women education regarded women's education as a major and a special issue. It recommended that every state should be required to prepare a comprehensive development plans for the education of girls and women in its area. According to the national Policy of Education, education should be used as an agent of basic change in the status of women.

The national Perspective plan for women's Education formulated some important objectives for women's education so that women may also participate in the area of social, cultural, economic, political and economic educational fields. As a result there is a phenomenal expansion of the formal educational system since independence. Male literacy rate has increased from 75.85 percent in 2001 to 82.14 percent in 2011, whereas female literacy rate has increased from 54.16 percent in 2001 to 65.46 percent in 2011. There has been a continuous progress in total male and female literacy rate in the previous decades. However the female population is still steeped in ignorance and illiteracy. The female literacy rate is low when compared to the literacy rate of males. There is a wide gap in the male – female literacy rates.

Major reasons for low literacy

Most Parents believe that education is good for girls, but many parents especially among the poor do not send their daughters to school because these daughters are needed for agricultural and household production tasks as well as for domestic chores such as cooking

and looking after younger siblings. In a poverty situation schooling is seen as a poor investment which provides no definite access to better employment. One important social factor affecting girls' participation in education is early marriage. The availability of certain facilities will also affect the education of girls. Major reasons for low literacy rate among women are listed below:

1. Need for girls to help in the farms or family occupation or house hold chores or responsibility of looking after younger siblings.
2. High intensity of poverty and parents inability, to bear educational expenses.
3. Early Marriage and dowry.
4. Lack of access to schools
5. Shortage of women teachers.
6. Lack of infrastructure facilities which lead to low enrolment and large dropouts.

Universalisation of Elementary Education (UEE)

We in India had taken a pledge through our constitution that within a period of ten years from 1950, free and compulsory elementary education would be provided to all children upto 14 years of age. Since 1950, determined efforts were made towards the achievement of this goal. Over the years, there have been very impressive increases in the number and spread of Institution as well as enrolment.

However, universalisation of elementary education (UEE) in its totality is still an elusive goal and much ground is yet to be covered. Drop-out rates continue to be high, retention of children in schools is poor, achievement levels are low, and wastage is considerable. Despite increased participation of girls, disparity scheduled castes and scheduled tribes.

In the National Policy on Education(NPE) 1986, with revised modifications in 1992, we resolved to achieve the goal of UEE by the turn of the century, emphasizing three aspects: Universal access and enrolment, Universal retention upto 14 years of age, and a substantial improvement in the quality of education.

To operationalise the strategy for UEE through disaggregated target setting and decentralized planning, now scheme entitled District Primary Education Programme (DEEP) has been evolved.

The specific objectives of the programme are: to reduce differences in enrolment, dropout and learning achievements among gender and social groups to less than 5 percent. To reduce the overall primary dropout rate to less than 10 percent. To raise average achievement levels by atleast 25 percent over measures baseline levels and ensure achievements of basic literacy and numeracy competencies and a minimum of 40 percent achievement levels in other competencies by all primary school children, to provide according to national norms access for all children to primary education classes, i.e, primary schooling wherever possible on its equivalent non-formal education. The programme would strengthen the capacity of National, state and district institutions and organizations for evaluation of primary education. NEEM has recently been set up to oversee, among other things, the implementation of this programme throughout the country.

Non-formal education system (NFE)

Non formal education has become an accepted alternative channel of education for children who cannot attend full time schools due to various socio-economic constrains. To reach this large segment of marginalized children, we in India have been running, since 1979-80, a programme of NFE for children in the 6-14 age group, who have remained outside the formal schools, children from habitations without schools, working children who have to

remain at home to do domestic chores, and girls who are unable to attend formal schools for a variety of reasons.

The enlarged and modified version of the NFE programme now in operation visualizes NFE as a child-centred, environment oriented and flexible system to meet the diverse socio economically deprived sections of society. To overcome the shortcomings of the formal school and make education a joyful activity.

Conclusion

The Status of Indian women is changing very fast particularly from the last decades. It is sky rocketing in every field, won many world level competitions heading multinational corporate office etc. Likewise in education too it is growing on a fast track. The major factor behind the improved social and economic status of women is literacy.

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QUALITY COURSE MATERIAL IN OPEN DISTANCE LEARNING- A STUDY

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Introduction

Open Distance Learning Institutions follow multimedia approach as an instructional method. It comprises of printed self-instructional materials, radio lessons, audio lessons, video lessons, tele-lessons, face-to-face personal contact classes, teleconferences, intensive practical training sessions and assignments to provide instruction to the learners. The printed course material is the principal medium and other non-print media act as supplementary media of instruction.

The printed course material supplied to the learners is supposed to be self-explanatory, clear and precise. The master medium i.e. the print, contains the subject content and intend to pass on to the learner. The printed course material in distance education system should substitute the teacher in conventional system. It should provide all the support which a conventional teacher provides in the classroom. As course material substitutes the teacher, they should be self-instructional in design, self-explanatory, self-contained, self-directed, self-motivating, self-evaluating and self-learning characteristics. The course material not only helps the students in self-learning but also enhance the image and academic credibility of distance education institutions.

Objectives of the Study

- To study the perceptions of distance learners, academic counsellors and study centre coordinators on the printed course material of Dr.BRAOU.
- To examine the effectiveness of printed course materials of Dr. BRAOU in providing self-instruction to the learners.
- To offer the suitable measures to improve the quality of course material of Dr.BRAOU.

Methodology

General sampling method has been chosen for the purpose of study. For study, a total of nine (9) study centers have been chosen at random viz. five (5) from twin cities of Hyderabad and Secunderabad (Hyderabad & Ranga Reddy), three (3) from Warangal district and one (1) from Mahabubnagar district. In all 596 students were chosen at random from nine (9) study centers of the university, which constitutes 6.25% of the study centers. Thirty three (33) Coordinators have been chosen from thirty three (33) study centers. 5%, 20% and 100% of the population of students, academic counsellors and coordinators have been chosen at random from each of the selected study centre.

Perceptions of Learners, Academic Counsellors and Study Centre Coordinators

Table – 1. Opinion on Course Material

Sl. No.	Opinion	Students		Academic Counsellors		Coordinators	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1.	Totally different	131	1.98	58	23.77	14	2.42
2.	Different to some extent	406	8.12	171	70.08	17	1.52
3.	No difference	59	89.90	15	6.15	2	96.06
4.	TOTAL	596	100	244	100	33	100

Table – 1 shows the opinion on the course material of Open University. Majority i.e. 68.12% of students, 70.18% of Academic Counsellors and 51.52% of Co-ordinators felt that course material is different to some extent from the conventional textbooks. 21.98% of students, 23.77% of Academic Counsellors and 42.42% of Co-ordinators found that course material is totally different from that of conventional textbooks. Less number of students (9.90%), Academic Counsellors (6.15%) and Co-ordinators (6.06%) opined that there is no difference between the course material of Open University and conventional textbooks.

Course material plays an important role in distance education when compared to conventional textbooks of regular colleges. Course material to a large extent bridges the gap between the teacher and distance learner in distance education. From the above statistics, it is revealed that course material has to be changed totally and it should be different from conventional textbooks of regular colleges.

Table –2. Suitability of Course Material for providing Self-Instruction

Sl. No.	Suitability	Students		Academic Counsellors		Coordinators	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1.	Completely suitable	199	33.39	93	38.11	12	36.36
2.	Suitable to some extent	345	57.89	139	56.97	18	54.55
3.	Not suitable	52	8.72	12	4.92	3	9.09
4.	TOTAL	596	100	244	100	33	100

Table – 2 reveals the opinions of Students, Academic Counsellors and Coordinators on the suitability of course material for providing self-instruction in Open University. Majority i.e. 57.89% of students, 56.97% of Academic Counsellors and 54.55% of Co-ordinators expressed the opinion that the course material of Open University is suitable only to some extent in providing self-instruction. 33.39% of Students, 38.11% of Academic Counsellors and 36.36% of Co-ordinators found that course material is completely suitable for self-instruction. Few Students (8.72%), Academic Counsellors (4.92%) and Co-ordinators (9.09%) opined that course material is not at all suitable for self-instruction.

It may be inferred from the above data that majority of respondents felt that the course material is suitable only to some extent in providing self-instruction. It implies that the University should think of improving the course material further to make it totally suitable for self-instruction to the distance learners. As the distance learners and teachers are separated, the course material should be able to substitute the teacher by providing the self-instruction. The course material should combine the functions of 'classroom teacher' as well as the 'subject matter' in order to provide self-instruction.

Table – 3
Students' ability to understand the Course Material on their own

Sl. No.	Ability to Understand	Students	
		No.	%
1.	Yes	272	45.64
2.	No	324	54.36
3.	TOTAL	596	100

Table – 3 shows the split opinion of students about their ability to understand the course material. Majority i.e. 54.36% students are of the opinion that they cannot understand the

course material on their own. 45.64% of students expressed the opinion that they understand the course material on their own.

On the whole, it is found that most of the students are not able to understand on their own. This infers that the supposed to be printed self-instructional course material of the University is not totally self-instructional. As print materials are an important part of instructional media, the University should review and revise the course material by incorporating all the principles of self-instruction.

Table –4
Reasons for not providing Self-Instruction by Self-Instructional Course Material

Sl. No.	Reasons	Students		Academic Counsellors		Coordinators	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1.	Loaded Content	167	25.42	96	31.17	20	40.82
2.	Language level is high	94	14.31	48	15.58	12	24.49
3	Illogical presentation	70	10.65	30	9.74	4	8.17
4.	Less number of exercises	63	9.59	34	11.04	2	4.08
5.	Printing errors	55	8.37	26	8.44	2	4.08
6.	Content is too brief	146	22.22	46	14.94	7	14.28
7.	Few illustrations	62	9.44	28	9.09	2	4.08
8.	TOTAL	657	100	308	100	49	100

* Multiple Responses

Table – 4 reflects the reasons for not providing self-instruction by self-instructional printed course material. Most of the students (25.42%), Academic Counsellors (31.17%) and Co-ordinators (40.82%) are of the opinion that loaded content in the course material is the main reason for not useful for self-instruction. A good number of students (22.22%), Academic Counsellors (14.94%) and Co-ordinators (14.28%) felt that content in the course material is too brief to be understood by the students. The other reasons include high level language, illogical presentation of subject matter, less number of exercises, printing errors and few illustrations.

Self-instructional print materials are one of the important instructional packages of the Open University system. The problems mentioned above may pose serious hurdles for distance learners in their self-learning process.

Table –5
Students' Measures to overcome the Limitations of Course Material

Sl. No.	Measures	No. of Students	%
1.	Attending tuition	84	8.63
2.	Clarifying the doubts through counselling classes	315	32.34
3.	Seeking guidance from friends/seniors/parents	100	10.27
4.	Depending on guides/help books	254	26.08
5.	Referring conventional text books	140	14.37
6.	Utilising audio-visual materials support	24	2.46
7.	Regular college teachers to explain difficult topics	57	5.85
8.	TOTAL	974	100

* Multiple Responses

Students' measures to overcome the limitations of course material is depicted in Table-5. Many students i.e. 32.34% felt that they are getting their doubts clarified by

attending to counselling classes. Significant number of students i.e. 26.08% are depending on guides and help books available in the market to overcome the problems of self-instructional course material provided by the University. Some students (14.37%) are referring conventional text books, seeking guidance from friends, relatives and parents (10.27%), attending tuitions (8.63%), seeking the help of regular college teachers (5.86%) and utilising audio-visual materials (2.46%).

   Though most of the students are attending Counselling classes, still a good number of students are depending on the guides and help books to overcome the inadequacies in the self-instructional course material. It can be concluded that this trend is a disturbing one and goes against the spirit of self-instructional course material and distance learning methodologies. The University should focus on revising the material fully self-instructional.

Findings of the Study

1. The majority students, academic counsellors and coordinators felt that the printed course material is different only to some extent from conventional textbooks. Significant number of respondents felt the printed course material supplied by the university is totally different from conventional textbooks. A few respondents are of the opinion that there is no difference between the course material of Open University and conventional textbooks.

2. Majority of students, academic counsellors and coordinators felt that the printed course material is suitable only to some extent in providing self-instruction.

3. Most of the students are not able to understand the printed course material on their own.

4. The study of responses of students, academic counsellors and coordinators reveals that the reasons for not providing self-instruction by printed self instructional course material are - loaded content, high level language, illogical presentation of subject content, less number of exercises, printing errors, brevity in content, few illustrations etc.

5. The students' measures to overcome the limitations of course material are clarification of the doubts through counselling classes, dependence on guides / help books, referring conventional text books, seeking guidance from friends / seniors / parents, attending tuition, explanation of difficult topics by regular college teachers, utilising audio-visual materials support etc.

Suggestions to improve the quality of course material

- The course materials which constitute the prime medium of distance teaching-learning have to be made totally self instructional in form and content which should able to help the students for self study.

- The content of course material should be presented logically (from known to unknown), language should be lucid and more illustrations are to be given for better understanding.

- The course material should be divided into more number of volumes (blocks) per course instead of the present practice of having one volume per course.

- The potential of electronic media needs to be adequately estimated and used in the process of instruction to students.

- Feedback from students and academic counsellors should be taken before the revision/ updation of syllabus.

- Additional supplementary material is to be prepared for the students of non-formal stream. This material should give additional explanation for difficult concepts.

- The syllabus and the content may be kept in website and on CDs. This will be helpful to the students even if the course material is received late or delivered at all.

Conclusion

Printed course material plays an important role in Open and Distance Learning Educational Institution. Print medium is the principal medium of instruction and it is the mainstay of any educational institution, more so in ODL institutions. This, to a large extent bridges the gap between the teacher and the learner in Open University. The printed course material should be in self-instructional in format so that the learner studies at his/her own pace, place and time. There should be an in built teacher in the self-instructional course material. As the distance learners and teacher is separated, the course material should be able to substitute the teacher by providing the self-instruction. The course material should combine the functions of 'classroom teacher' as well as the 'subject matter' in order to provide self-instruction.

The study revealed that most of the Students, Academic Counsellors and Coordinators felt that the course material of the university is not totally different from conventional text books and not self-instructional in nature. The printed course material is not able to provide self-instruction to the students at large. The study also reveals the course material has loaded content, high level language, illogical presentation of subject content, less number of exercises, printing errors, brevity in content, few illustrations etc. It seems that the students are facing the problems of understanding the subject and comprehension. To overcome the problems in printed course material, the students are seeking clarification of the doubts through contact-cum-counselling classes, depending on guides/help books, referring sometimes conventional text books, seeking guidance from friends, seniors or parents, attending tuition, explanation of different topics by regular college teachers, utilising audio-visual material support.

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QUALITY OF OPEN AND DISTANCE LEARNING IN MANAGEMENT STUDIES

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Introduction

Management education in India really took off after economic liberalization in 1991 and ensuing structural changes in the country's business scenario. India is already known for its large pool of engineers. There will be a time in the near future when the country will also be known for its managerial talent.

In simple terms, management education is "Educating people to manage any organization" and to do that the right people are to be selected from any discipline to reap the best of the crop. Management Education is formal instruction in the principles and techniques of management, and in related subjects, leading to a degree. Management education strives to develop management knowledge, understanding, and competence through classroom or distance-based methods. Management education is a main component of management development, and differs from management training in that the latter may exploit any one of a variety of formal or informal methods, tends to be focused on a specific skill, and does not result directly in a formal degree.

The open and distance learning MBA can be the difference between a stressful MBA and a flexible one, leaving time for a healthy life. The complexity of our everyday lives makes finding time to study for an MBA program increasingly difficult. Top business schools expect students to have over four years work experience behind them, but with conflicting pressures of a career, personal and family life, returning to study full time can be problematic if not impossible. This paper discusses the Quality of open and distance learning in management education. The study is descriptive in nature. It is developed based on the secondary source and also a few interactions with the stakeholders of management education.

Open and Distance Learning in Management Education

Gone are the days when education was just confined within the four walls of the classroom. Distance education and learning is the new entrant in the field of management education and fast growing year buy year. With advancement in computing networking and technology, distance learning (or distance education) has merged with online learning (e-Learning) as most of the education is imparted through computers and internet.

Simply put, distance learning is the mode of imparting education that contracts time and space between the instructor and the student due to geographical or time constraints. Correspondence programmes are designed to help meet the best needs and requirements that arise when learning takes place outside the domain of traditional classroom. Distance learning has reversed the dynamics of education; instead of the student going to school, the school now comes to the student.

No doubt, distance learning is becoming a viable and hot option as it enables students to complete a degree due to its flexible approach. However, with more flexibility comes more responsibility on the part of the learner. Students must learn to work independently without the constant monitoring as in classroom regular program. Thus distance learning is best for students with high degree of self-motivation.

Distance learning programmes allow students to study at their own speed and time, or get additional job-training while balancing work and family commitments. It is also a great for students who are in geographically remote areas or those who cannot attend regular classes. In short, it removes all barriers of time and location.

Growth of Management Education in Open and Distance Learning

India took a lead in the management education, with the Indian Institute of Social Welfare and Business Management, Calcutta offering postgraduate diploma in 1954.The contact of the Indian elite with western management culture had grown because some individuals received education in western institutions and also because western literature was becoming increasingly available in India facilitated by the Government's liberal policy on this subject. In the context of this awareness, the Government began to move towards promoting management education in the country. A beginning in the promotion of management education was made in 1953, when AICTE adopted a programme for the promotion of business education in India. Accordingly, a Board of Management studies was set up in 1954 under AICTE to lay down standards co-ordinate, guide the government and provide financial assistance. The Board of Management Studies selected six reputed institutions of higher learning to introduce courses in business management in industrial administration and general management.

In India the distance mode of learning is not a very new concept. The genesis of this form of education is traceable to correspondence education which has been initiated for over 35 years in some selected universities (Swamy, 1992). These correspondence courses have began to open up the educational facilities to those - who were at home, involved in some vocation / profession, and who aspired to pursue further studies at their relative pace. Correspondence course at the tertiary level was introduced for the first time in 1962 by University of Delhi. The concept of open university came to India when the Government of Andhra Pradesh took the lead and after consideration of a proposal in 1970, launched the Andhra Pradesh Open University (renamed as B R Ambedkar Open University), Hyderabad in 1982. The Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU), New Delhi established in the year 1985 marks a watershed in the history of distance education in India. At present there are seven open universities in India, offering varieties of degree post degree and diploma not only in social sciences and humanities but also in technical and professional disciplines. Besides a number of correspondence institutes under conventional university system cater the need of higher education. The National Open School serves as an apex institution to provide school education having a reach in the whole country.

Quality of the Management Education

Management is not just the 'latest fad' in the field of education. Undoubtedly, the mushrooming of a variety of courses and institutes offering to produce managers tends to give such an impression. At the same time it is also true that the well-accepted two-year post-graduate MBA does not necessarily ensure uniformly good quality. Quite a few of many universities offering the management courses over the length and breadth of the country are identified with their reputation for easy-to-obtain degrees. Industry needs not just managers, but quality managers. However, in the absence of any certainty about the ever-increasing number and variety of courses, it is not possible to identify those that are of adequate quality. Hence, there is a need for standards in this area, just as courses for other professional education are levels needs to be established for degrees and diplomas. An Indian management studies institution is essential. It would be standardize education in the area and identify the institutes and universities, which offer adequate education and will automatically, isolate those that are run only as business enterprises.

Indian management education has been long-suffering from poor quality of teaching, inadequate classroom facilities and lack of accountability, all of which has to change urgently as vision. The author affirms that it will not be appropriate to say that management education is ailing in the country as a whole. There are some very well run institutes of management set

up in collaboration with top management schools in the USA which also use the American syllabus of the curriculum. These have adapted well to the Indian environment on the basis that even the management education models and theories, which are universal, should vary depending upon the social, cultural and economic environment of the country. Hence the need of the hour is looking into the present state of management education and rebuilds it as per the domestic needs and international quality standards.

The problem with Management Institutes, however, is that they flourish on the principles of commercialism, focus primarily on professional courses, and are highly practical. Their driving forces are business-oriented trained jobs, which also form a part of the curriculum. However, it does not stop there; they also place their students in well-paying jobs, depicting the strong linkage between industry and institution. Keeping the greater view of institutes' commercial interest, the courses and training are narrowly focused, as well as micro-specifically designed.

Following are some of the things that can be done while setting up such a quality of the Management Education in Open and Distance Learning :

- There has to be participation of the corporate in the institute
- The Institute must be visible to the corporate
- Institute will have to organize seminars inviting Industry participation
- Regular interaction with Industry in terms of lectures will have to be organized
- There has to be separate identity for the Institute
- Campus will have to be 24x7 open for the students
- Institute or Group should sponsor programs in all the commercial clubs of the city where senior students can participate in the games/competitions of these clubs that will give the acquaintances and jobs. This will also help to make the institute visible to the industry.
- The institute can hold information seminars in the chamber of commerce where industry people can be invited. Once the Institute gets recognition, they can charge some fee for such seminars. Recognition would depend on the quality of presentations.
- Institute can hold yearly lectures seminars inviting eminent speakers to speak on current subjects. It can also hold annual debates in association with any organisation or independently inviting leaders of the society and industry.
- Institute can create a chair for people in the industry.

Pros and Cons of Management Education in Open and Distance Learning

Pros	Cons
▪ Easier to get admitted into distance learning programs when compared to regular programmes. ▪ Distance MBA programmes are affordable ▪ Offers flexibility to the working population as they can opt to study in their free time. ▪ When you decide to skip the programme, formalities are very less to come out of it.	▪ Management education can be best imparted only when there is a tutor. When you opt for MBA distance learning, this is ruled out. ▪ There is no scope for a proper learning environment that will motivate you to learn with discipline. ▪ When the programme is not opted from a reputed and certified institution, it might be considered to be less valuable by the employers.

Conclusion

The quality of management education in open and distance learning given by most of these institutions is not yet to the global competent. So, it is an immediate requirement to shape the management education in accordance with the global changes to improve competitiveness with quality of management.

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RIGHT TO EDUCATION Vs EQUITY AND JUSTICE IN EDUCATION AS CONTAINED IN BHARAT RATNA DR.M.G.RAMACHANDRAN'S FILM SONGS

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Introduction

Right to Education was a part of the directive principles of the State Policy under Article 45 of the Constitution, which is part of Chapter 4 of the Constitution of India. It should be understood that rights in Chapter 4 are not enforceable. For the first time in the history of Indian politics the law makers amended this part putting it in Chapter 3 of the Constitution as Article 21 and thereby it has become a fundamental right for every children of India to acquire education.The Right of children to Free and Compulsory Education Act came into force with effect from April 1, 2010. This was a historic day for the people of India because from 1.4.2010 onwards right to education will be accorded the same legal status as the right to life as provided by Article 21A of the Indian Constitution. That means every child in the age group of 6-14 years will be provided 8 years of elementary education in an age appropriate classroom in the vicinity of his/her neighborhood (1).

States Roll in RTE

The State shall have the responsibility of enrolling the child as well as ensuring attendance and completion of 8 years of schooling from the age of 6 to 14 years. Education of such students in Government owned school is absolutely free. No child shall be denied admission for want of documents; no child shall be turned away if the admission cycle in the school is over and no child shall be asked to take an admission test. Children with disabilities will also be educated in the mainstream schools.

NCPCR's Role in RTE

The National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) has been mandated to monitor the implementation Right to Education. A special Division within NCPCR has been assigned to monitor. NCPCR wants all civil society groups, students, teachers, administrators, artists, writers, government personnel, legislators, members of the judiciary and all other stakeholders to join hands and work together to build a movement to ensure that every child of this country is in school and enabled to get at least 8 years of quality education.

Equity and Justice in Education as contained in MGR's Film Songs

Entertainment is a form of activity that holds the attention and interest of an audience or gives pleasure and delight. It can be an idea or a task, but is more likely to be one of the activities or events that have developed over thousands of years specifically for the purpose of keeping an audience's attention or enthrall (2). Although people's attention is held by different things, as individuals have different preferences in entertainment, most forms are recognizable and familiar. Storytelling, music, drama, dance, and different kinds of performance exist in all cultures. History of the world reveals that these were supported in royal courts, developed into sophisticated forms and over time spread to the common man as well. The technological advancement made by the media industry is phenomenal and now a

day's media has become an indispensable companion and everyone depends on it one way or other.

The experience of being entertained has come to be strongly associated with amusement, so that one common understanding of the idea is fun and laughter, although many entertainments have a serious purpose. This may be the case in the various forms of ceremony, celebration, religious festival, or satire for example. Hence, there is the possibility that what appears as entertainment may also be a means of achieving insight or to satisfy the intellectual curiosity and some time lead to knowledge explosion.

An important aspect of entertainment is the audience, which turns a private recreation or leisure activity into entertainment. The audience may have a passive role, as in the case of persons watching a play, opera, television show or film or then audience role may be active, as in the case of games, where the participant/audience roles may be routinely reversed. Entertainment can be public or private, involving formal, scripted performance, as in the case of theatre or concerns; or unscripted and spontaneous, as in the case of children's games. Most forms of entertainment have persisted over many centuries, evolving due to changes in culture, technology, and fashion. Films and video games, for example, although they use newer media, continue to tell, present drama, and play music.

Some activities that once were considered entertaining, particularly public punishments, have been removed from the public arena in many parts of the world. Others, such as fencing or archery, once necessary skills for some, have become serious sports and even professions for the participants, at the same time developing into entertainment. In the same way, other necessary skills, such as cooking, have developed into performances among professionals, staged as global competitions and then broadcast for entertainment.

The familiar forms of entertainment have the capacity to cross over different media and have demonstrated a seemingly unlimited potential for creative remix. This has ensured the continuity and longevity of many themes, images, and structures. Of late songs sung by artists and play back singers occupy the minds of younger generation by and large and older generation for their time pass. Very many times were spent to entertain crowds by stage performance by leading play back singers and the artisan themselves wherein dance is also involved along with stage singing to enthrall the crowd.Entertainment can be distinguished from other activities such as education and marketing even though they have learned how to use the appeal of entertainment to achieve their different goals. The importance and impact of entertainment is recognized by scholars (3,4) and its increasing sophistication has influenced practices in other fields such as museology (5,6).

Psychologists say the function of media entertainment is "the attainment of gratification (7). No other results or measurable benefit are usually expected from it (except perhaps the final score in a sporting entertainment). This is in contrast to education (which is designed with the purpose of developing understanding or helping people to learn) and marketing (which aims to encourage people to purchase commercial products). However, the distinctions become blurred when education seeks to be more "entertaining" and entertainment or marketing seek to be more "educational". Such mixtures are often known by the neologisms "edutainment" or infotainment. The psychology of entertainment as well as of learning has been applied to all these fields (8). Some education-entertainment is a serious attempt to combine the best features of the two (9,10).

It is quite possible that an entertainment might go beyond the pale of gratification and produce many insight to the audience when we consider universal philosophical questions such as: "What is the meaning of life?"; "What does it mean to be human?"; "What is the right thing to do?"; or "How do I know what I know?". Questions such as these drive many narratives and dramas, whether they are presented in the form of a story, film, play, poem,

book, dance, comic, or game. Dramatic examples include Shakespeare's influential play the Hamlet, whose hero articulates these concerns in poetry; and films, such as The Matrix, which explores the nature of knowledge (11) and was, released world-wide (12). Novels give great scope for investigating these themes while they entertain their readers (13). An example of a creative work that considers philosophical questions so entertainingly that it has been presented in a very wide range of forms is The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy. Originally a radio comedy, this story became so popular that it has also appeared as a novel, film, television series, stage show, comic, audio book, LP record, adventure game and online game, its ideas became popular references and has been translated into many languages (14). Its themes encompass the meaning of life, as well as the ethics of entertainment, artificial intelligence, multiple worlds, God and Philosophical method (15).

Similar is the fact that Dr.M.G.Ramachandran's philosophical Tamil Film Songs indeed these immortal songs awakened millions of common man in Tamil Nadu. Indeed it made them to

Think about their position in the society!
The general freedom guaranteed to them!
What is righteousness and how should they behave in the society?
Great cultural heritage inherited in the Tamil society
What constitute general good and welfare of society?

The general public of Tamil Nadu looked M.G.R's Tamil Film songs with awe and majesty, and he had become their guide, philosopher and role model. During his lifetime he was awarded many titles by his fans and followers: *PuratchiNadigar, MakkalThilakam, PonmanaChemmal, Vathiyar* etc. but to Tamilians and fans of Tamil movies all over the world he was known by three alphabets – MGR though he was awarded the highest civilian award of India the Bharat Ratna.

MGR's genius in using the medium of cinema to revolutionize the Tamil Society has not only carved a name for himself in the annals of history of Tamil Cinema but kindles interest to present this research paper on Effective use of Media in Propagating Right to Education by Bharat RatnaDr.M.G.Ramachandran through his Film Songs.

In this day and age of 24 hour cable TV where politicians especially in the western countries rely on image consultants, publicists, stylists etc. to create the "right" image for the public, MGR did this already on his own from the mid-1950 onwards and his influence is still felt in Tamil movies. In many ways he also brought changes to Tamil movies where its real effect would not be seen until much later (16).

This way the present paper is aimed to provoke academic and intellectual introspection in the area of right to Education especially equity and justice in providing educational facilities to the general public.

The then Prime Minister of India Dr.Manmohan Singh emphasized that it is important for the country that if we nurture our children and young people with the right education, India's future as a strong and prosperous country is secure. What could be done to make education free and compulsory by the Government of India after 62 years of independence MGR's film song emphasized 58 years ago.

Consider the following song :(movie: Malaikallan sung by TM Soudarrajan).

For how long politicians try to cheat the common man in this country!
One acts as though he has crossed the boundary of virtue however cheats people at the appropriate time by all means!
With attire as a great devotee attract the common man but when they fall in their trap ultimately cheat them.

Let us build schools at every street and make the people unknown to illiteracy!
Let us learn different technical skills and eradicate the word poverty in the society!
Let us build house for each and every family in the society and create learning opportunity on the nuances of all the life skills!
Even to pass the rest of one's leisure time in amusement and fun let us collect information relating to questioning on wisdom and debate!
Thus this song at the outset envisions society's plight and at the same time enunciates steps to be taken to educate the masses and weed out illiteracy in the society and no doubt enunciates the concept that education is the right of every citizen in the society.

Consider another song:

Make your knowledge to work i.e. make your knowledge (negation and assertion) to work. Leave sophistry, time changes and concept also changes weshouldalso changeaccordingly and the nation should change because of us.They built the body like a fort with nine gates and lit knowledge as its lamp.Bad habits and the habit that never suits knowledge would certainly ruin the purpose and destroy a man.

With the use of shovel (sand puller) they dig trap for others to fall-in but they ultimately forget that the sand puller is pointed towards them while they dig the trapand perhaps ultimately fall in the trap dug by them.

When we throw a ball it will bounce back to us after striking the wall – if one understands this concept would they inclined to do harm to others!   Therefore make your knowledge to work. Leave sophistry - time changes and concept also changes we should also change accordingly and the nation should change because of us.

This song gives importance to knowledge. Knowledge should be considered as a lamp lit in the body. It should be used for self-development that will also help the nation to develop. Cultivation of good habit and character building is important in the process of attainment of knowledge. Bad habit and ego centered attitude will only ruin the progress of the individual and thereby affect the nation's progress.As such this song is not addressed to any particular sect or cast or creed but it address to the general public of the society and thereby indicate that attainment of knowledge simultaneously cultivating good character and effective use of the same for self- development and the ultimate development of a nation is important. Now a day's we see knowledge explosion among the youth but character building is absent with the result large scale crimes and socially unacceptable incidents takes place wherein educated are involved in these crimes and this song makes an appeal for growth of knowledge with ethical values. Prof.M.S.Ananth says that "Character is perhaps the most important component; yet character-building processes in education are the least well-defined and most difficult to implement" (17)

Right to education would become weak if it is not developed with ethical values and the society will be depressed by social crimes like corruption, tax evasion and the like which will result in uneven growth of economy. This song foresees all these social evils while advocating explosion of knowledge along with good character.

Conclusion

Thus the above songs of Bharat Ratna MG Ramachandranenunciates spreading of education to eradicate illiteracy in the society but growth of ethical values along with knowledge explosion is also important for an integrated growth of the society. Therefore right to education should be understood also an opportunity for cultivation of good character along with growth of knowledge of a person.

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USE ICT FOR ENHANCING THE QUALITY OF DISTANCE EDUCATION

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Introduction

In a developing country like India where the 'digital divide' is more the rule than the exception, delivering instruction through the distance mode presents a significant challenge to educators. In a nation where the concern of most people is meeting their basic need for food, clothing, and shelter, access to information and communication technologies (ICT), especially the most modern ones, is very low on their list of priorities – and oftentimes, not considered a priority at all.

Nonetheless, ICT has a major impact on open and distance learning (ODL) in India. More than the availability of these technologies, issues such as geographical location, lack of knowledge and skills to use ICT, and financial constraints, are major considerations in deciding what ICT to use and in what combination. Indeed, the use of a particular ICT must not only address certain pedagogical concerns, it must aim to bridge the digital divide and democratize access to quality education. Experience has shown that when a decision has been made to use a technology in ODL, this decision influences not only the teaching and learning environment; it leads to the development of new cultures, concepts, and understanding. Put simply, the introduction of ICT can alter and raise expectation among users and institutions alike.

ICT and Distance Education

In distance education, knowledge is imported to the learners through printed materials, audio cassettes, video devices, personal contact programmes and weekend counseling, radio lessons, e-library, etc. Apart from providing knowledge and information to the distance students, their doubts can be clarified through radio counseling, audio conferencing, video conferencing, e-mail etc. To cater the needs of the learners in distance education and to improve the quality of distance education and enhance students' learning multimedia network providing video clips, animations, internet, on-line learning, e-learning, etc. can also be used.

Audio Medium

Among different electronic media available today, educational radio broadcast, radio lessons and radio counseling can play a vital role in distance education for its easy accessibility, ability to reach the masses and overcome distance, low cost, availability at chosen time and place, appeal for imagination, ability to cater to people of all ages and help in direct instruction for definite target groups. For example in open Universities FM educational Channels could be used for enhancing and supplementing the teaching learning process of students who enrolled for different programmes. If the radio programmes are broadcast following a regular time slot and keeping with the sequential order of subjects or courses of different programmes then they will be effective and enhance the quality of learning. Apart from broadcasting radio programmes, radio counseling could be conducted for clarifying the doubts of students.

Audio Conferencing

Simple audio conferencing technologies can be used as effective means for teaching and learning in case of distance learners. Audio conferencing in distance education contexts provides 'virtual' interaction equivalent in quality to face to face conventional classroom interaction. Audio conferencing uses synchronous technology in which teachers and learners communicate to each other real time. Many of the most common tasks in educational settings like providing information, asking questions, clarifying doubts, problem solving can be done effectively through audio conferencing can also be viewed as consisting of learner centered experiences that can be effectively integrated with other media such as print and video media. Research studies reveal that audio conferencing is best suited to interactive work, where tasks are based around the verbal exchanges of participants.

Tele-Lessons

Lessons given and recorded by experienced teachers can be telecast through educational channels, which can be viewed across a wide geographical area. The principle is to help students in making use of expertise of qualified teachers. Instructional television programmes are to be tailored in the same fashion as classroom instruction.

Tele-Conferencing

The satellite based technology of teleconferencing can be used in distance education to provide information, solve the problems of the students, and to enhance the quality of the distance education. The satellite based technology of teleconferencing makes it possible to overcome the problem of orienting, training the personnel and providing instruction to the students who are located in different places. The satellite based teleconference is a technology used to send a one way video telecast from one site to many sites through the use of satellite equipment's. Simply it is one way video and two way audio system. One way video link may be established between the transmitting station and various receiving ends through satellite. In open universities various receiving ends through satellite. In open universities teaching or training and may be the nodal center.

Learning through Internet

The Internet or the World Wide Web opens up a way of enhancing exponentially the physical limits of the open universities by giving students and teachers access to other students and teachers, experts and resources around the world. It is possible to give the distance learners the best they deserve through internet. Internet is a network of computer networks. It is a network of networks, that is, it connects many Local Area Networks (LAN) and Wide Area Networks (WAN). Internet is a global collection of people, who are linked through cables and telephone lines, making communication possible with each other for specific purposes.

E-learning

The term e-learning is used interchangeably in wide variety of contexts. E-learning or electronic learning can be used effectively in distance education for offering some of the programmes or providing some of the course materials and other required information. E-learning is defined as a planned teaching / learning experience that uses a wide spectrum of technologies, mainly internet to reach learners. Developments in internet and multimedia technologies are the enablers of e-learning. The three key components of e-learning are content technologies and services.

Websites

Distance education institutions and Open Universities can have their own websites and they can provide wide variety of information to the students through their websites. For example information regarding programmes, details and dates about contact programmes, week-end counseling, examination etc. Examination results of different programmes of the institution can also be provided on the website, e-library can also be made accessible to the students through its website.

On-line Education

The internet also opens up way to on-line education. Online learning education is basically credit granting programme or training delivered primarily via internet to students at remote locations, including their homes. The on-line programme may not be delivered synchronously. An on-line programme may require that students and teachers meet once or periodically in a physical setting for lectures, labs, or examinations, so long as the time spent in the physical setting do not exceed 25 percent of the total programme time. On-line education encompasses various degrees, programmes and courses. The main attraction of on-line education is the flexibility through which education is imparted through the internet. The distance learner can pursue an on-line programme within the comfort of his/her home or any other place that he chooses.

E-mail

E-mail is one of the extensively used modes of communication between individuals. It is an internet services that facility on going communication. Distance education institutions can have mailing lists. Basically, a mailing list is a discussion form to share knowledge and experiences, ask questions, give answers on a current topic etc. Distance education institutions should make these mailing, lists available to the students on their web-site. If a particular student has a question or doubt about his course material or studies, he/she can seek the help from a related mailing list. It is up to the institution, teachers and educational system to blend in the right proportion to provide excellent education to its students. The tremendous developments made in the field of education are an eye-opener to the transformation that has taken place in open education. With the advent of internet now, computers are our link with the rest of the world and they facilitate two way communication.

Conclusion

It can be said that these ICTs have potential for distance education which are to be fully utilized for facilitating students' learning. The staff members of the distance education need to understand the content area and also be highly trained in the use of the computer and internet. With proper planning and preparation different ICTs can be used effectively for enhancing the quality of distance education.

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EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN THROUGH OPEN DISTANCE EDUCATION WITH REFERENCE TO DR.B.R. AMBEDKER OPEN UNIVERSITY

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Introduction

Education is an agent of social change and social empowerment. It has been mainly instrumental for the development of science and technology Social empowerment is a process by which people reclaim their power, the power to shape their own lives and to influence the course of events around them. Education enables people to become not only economically independent but also autonomous and decision-oriented. Open universities and distance education institutions are able to democratize higher education by taking education to the large numbers, particularly the poor and needy at an affordable cost.

BRAOU

The concept of 'open university' has revolutionized contemporary educational history. As an institution, open university is regarded as a powerful instrument for equalizing higher educational opportunities and leveling educational imbalances. Open University has become a valued component of many national educational policies, programmes and practices. The foundation of the Open University in the United Kingdom in 1969 marked the beginning of a new and prestigious era in the history of distance higher education. In the 1970s and in the following years, a good number of open universities in both the developed and developing countries have been established. India is one developing country, in which a number of open universities have been established. At present, there are fifteen open universities, one at national level and other at provincial level. Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Open University (BRAOU) is one such university established originally as the Andhra Pradesh Open University in 1982.

It is the first Open University in India. The establishment of BRAOU was a great land mark in the history of distance education in India. It heralded a new era in India's higher education. One of the important objectives of BRAOU is "to realize equality of educational opportunities for higher education for a large segment of population including those in employment, women including housewives and adults who wish to upgrade their education or acquire knowledge and studies in various fields through distance education"

In 1993, BRAOU established Women's Studies Cell which was later renamed as the Centre for Women's Development and Extension Centre with main objectives of:
1. Critically studying the problems, aspirations and needs of women learners constituting 35 percent of University's enrolment.
2. Providing information, knowledge and skills for economic independence of women, particularly for women learners and their family members.
3. Enhancing access to legal literacy and information on women's rights and entitlements in society.
4. Organizing extension activity in the areas of literacy, health, nutrition, environment, entrepreneurship, etc.
   BRAOU has been conducting, over the years of its existence, varied academic

programmes, extension activities and counseling practices for the advancement and empowerment of women of the region through open distance education methodology.

Gender-wise Enrolment

It may be seen from Table-2 that there is an increasing trend in the enrolment of both male and female students from the beginning.

Table-1: Gender-wise enrolment of students in first year undergraduate programme in BRAOU (1983-84 To 2009-10)

Year	Male	Female	Total	MALE (%)	FEMALE (%)
1983-84	5296	935	6231	84.99	15.01
1985-86	11291	4411	15702	71.91	28.09
1990-91	20002	7502	27504	72.72	27.28
1995-96	34276	12209	46485	73.74	26.26
2000-01	33077	15043	48120	68.74	31.26
2005-06	50409	26642	77051	65.42	34.58
2009-10	46500	30918	77418	60.06	39.94

However, there is a steady and gradual increase in the case of female students' enrolment, recording an ever-high enrolment of 30,918 (39.94 per cent) in 2009-10. The enrolment of women has always been more than 25 per cent except in one year (i.e. 15.01 per cent), the first year in which the university started offering the courses.

Employed Vs. Unemployed Students

The occupation-wise analysis (Table-3) of student enrolment in the first year U.G. programme shows that the number of unemployed students was more than that of the employed students except in the first year i.e., 1983-84.

Table-2: Occupation-wise 'enrolment of students in first year undergraduate programme in BRAOU (1983-84 To 2009-10)

Year	Employed	Unemployed	Total	%Employed	%Unemployed
1983-84	4109	2122	6231	65.94	34.06
1985-86	6157	9545	15702	39.21	60.79
1990-91	8364	19140	27504	30.41	69.59
1995-96	15517	30968	46485	33.38	66.62
2000-01	15095	33025	48120	31.37	68.63
2005-06	7740	69311	77051	10.05	89.95
2009-10	10877	66541	77418	14.05	85.95

During the first year the percentage of the employed students was 66% while that of the unemployed students was 34. It may be seen from the table that the percentage of unemployed persons increased to 60.79 per cent in 1985-86. The number of unemployed students has increased perceptibly reaching the maximum i.e. 89.95% in the academic year 2005-06. The percentage of employed students has been less than 15% from 2005-06.

Reasons for Educational Backwardness of Girls and Women

Responses of learners on the reasons for educational backwardness of girls and women are:

- General indifferences to the education of girls.
- Social resistance arising out of fears and misconceptions that education might alienate girls from traditions and social values and lead to maladjustment, conflicts and non-conformism.
- Early marriage and social inhibitions against girls pursuing education after marriage.
- Prevalence of child labour among girls belonging to weaker sections and the hard domestic chores which some of the unmarried girls are required to perform.
- Prevailing notions that sole occupation of women is to bear children, look after her husband and children, and thus be restricted to domestic work.

For Women's Wider Utility of Distance Education

A review of research in distance education recommends the following for the women's wider utility of distance education. These suggestions are:

1. Continue efforts to reduce and eliminate barriers that prevent and restrict women's participation in learning activities.
2. Develop courses that build upon women's diverse experience and that do not impose rigid external expectations and arbitrary requirements.
3. Recognize the student learning environments comprise the home and local centre from which women study as well as the educational institutions; "education, like technology, has to be adapted to local circumstances".
4. Create support and safe environments in distance education contexts. Educators need to be sensitive to women's personal and unique circumstance and to investigate ways to help students develop effective support systems.
5. Increase the number of women's studies courses available via distance delivery and ensure that feminist perspectives be incorporated into curriculum in other disciplines.
6. De-emphasize the utility of prescribed materials and promote the assumption and fact that course materials are not the course per se. Women students require opportunities to make real and significant choices regarding their learning goals and activities.
7. Conduct research into the type and levels of interaction essential to feminist learning in distance education contexts. Collect empirical data about actual interactions and processes that students and tutors experience in distance mode learning. The nature and prevalence of social aspects of learning essential to feminist learning also require specific investigation in distance settings.
8. Provide tutors employed for feminist distance courses with useful, appropriate training. Orientation activities need to include skills training in telephone and teleconference technologies and their applications. Such training should have as its focus effective use of communication strategies and feminist processes for facilitating adult learning in distance settings.
9. Examine the context in which distance education technologies operate. It is important to scrutinize institutional constraints and to moderate or eliminate those that have a negative impact on student learning. The constraints experienced by teachers/tutors need to be recognized and measures taken to mitigate against these constraints.

Distance Education promotes Women's Educational Development

Distance education as non-formal method of education should fully exploited and

utilized. Distance learners have many advantages over the conventional learners. The advantages are:

- Distance education materials are written by good teachers.
- Distance education materials are self-teaching in form and hence there is no need to go to colleges regularly.
- Distance education uses technologies like radio, television, computers for providing education.
- Distance education enables people to study while working.
- Distance education enables people to study while working.
- Distance education students who join from rural and remote areas need not stay in hostels and spend money.
- Distance education system given books for study while conventional education does not provide any books to students.

Conclusion

As an institution, Open University is regarded as a powerful instrument for equalizing higher educational opportunities and leveling educational imbalances. Open University has become a valued component of many national educational policies, programmes and practices. From this study, it is clearly evident that BRAOU has played an important role in social empowerment in Andhra Pradesh by catering to the needs of the aspirants of higher education and meeting the requirements of diverse groups of students including socially disadvantaged sections. In addition, it has been able to establish credibility for distance education by means of its quality assurance procedures. Given the opportunities, women are keen to embark on self-development initiatives without being hampered significantly by the social or cultural inhibitions imposed on them. Better and easily accessible educational opportunities and the impact of communication technologies on the social and cultural environment are making substantial difference to the attitudes, values and concerns. In the changing scenario, women are likely to benefit much more from improved access to education. They have the confidence, the will and the motivation.

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E-CONTENT PACKAGE IN TEACHER EDUCATION

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Introduction

Educational Technology has great potential for improving the teaching-learning process. Education technology is the development, application and evaluation of systems, techniques and also aids in the field of human learning. One of the important contributions of educational technology is individualized instruction, which enables us to make use of self-instructional programmes. Teacher-centered and group-centered approaches are inadequate since they hardly make any provision for individual differences of the learners. The premise is that, strictly speaking, no two students in the class are alike and that there are many permutations and combinations of individual differences.

Need for Individualized Instruction

We have three categories of learners in our classrooms, viz., Brilliant/Gifted, Average, below average/Slow learners. Frankly speaking, the teachers can satisfy the first two categories of the learners in the classrooms. We must give individual attention to the slow learners and transform them into average learners. Individualized instruction is not only the best option for slow learners but it can also be used to the other two categories of learners. Individualized instruction means, learners are learning at their own pace. The learner is not forced to move with the other learners of the class. Such an approach creates confidence in him. There are methods in individualized instruction, viz., Assignment, Learner Controlled instruction, Programmed Instruction, Personalized System of Instruction, Computer Assisted Instruction, etc. The recent method of individualized instruction in the field of education is 'e-Learning'

e-Learning	e-Content
Objective are general and not specified in behavioral	Objectives are specified in behavioral terms
Various ranges of technologies can be used for delivering the information	Any one of the technologies can be used to deliver instruction at a time
The duration of programme cannot be fixed	The duration of programme can be fixed
Immediate feedback cannot be collected	Immediate feedback can be collected
There will be no control over the situation	It is carried on under controlled situation
Pattern of interaction cannot be studies objectively	Pattern of interaction can be studied objectively

Development of e-Content Package

The following steps are to be involved in developing an e- Content package ADDIE model.

I.   **Analysis Phase:** In the analysis phase the following steps are to be followed:

  a) *Selection of system / stage:* In school education, we have different education systems viz. Tamil Nadu State Board (TNSB), Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) and Indian School Certificate (ISC). We can decide on any one of the systems. In higher education, we have different disciplines. We can select any one of the disciplines to develop an e-Content programme with the help of faculties in different disciplines.

   b) *Selection of target group:* We have to select a target group the school college university learners. General information of the learners can be collected viz., Name, Sex, Group studying, Name of the institution, Locality of the institution , Kind of the institution, Study habit, Computer courses undergone, Internet facility, and Browsing habit.

   c) *Selection of the unit:* The development of e-Content can be applied to all the subjects. Selection of the unit will be decided after thorough discussion with the subject experts and faculties / teachers of the concerned subjects on the basis of the following points:

       (i)   Whether the lecture method is sufficient to deliver the instruction to the students.

       (ii)   Whether the media option is to be used to deliver the instruction.

       (iii)   Whether animations or graphics are to be utilized in the instruction.

   d) *Decision on duration of the programme:* After consulting with the subject experts and faculties teachers of the concerned subjects, duration of the e-Content programmed will be finalized. Allotment of duration / session will be fixed on the basis of the curricula of the subjects.

   e) *Developing the instructional objectives of the programme:* The instructional objectives can be decided on the basis of the behavioral changes to be expected from the learners after going through the e-Content programme developed.

   f) *Classification of Students:* A pre-requisite test consisting of basic units of the subject, can be conducted for classifying three categories of learners, viz., Brilliant, Average, and Slow learners.

II.   Design Phase

   a) *Consultation with the subject experts and faculties / Teachers:* Script for e- Content can be planned in consultation with the subject experts and faculties teachers of the concerned subjects in which the following things are discussed.

       (i)   What are the aspects to be covered?

       (ii)   Where are audio and video clippings to be added in the programme?

   b) *Consultation with the media experts and software programmers:* e- Script for e-Content is planned in consultation with the media experts and software programmers to decide where graphics and animation to be added in the instruction and how audio and video clipping are to be added in the e-script.

III.   Development Phase

   a) *Preparation of the script:* Contents of the script for the programme are prepared on the basis of discussion with the discussion with the subject experts and faculties / teachers of the concerned subjects. The contents are to be organized logically as well as psychologically and an ideal balance is to be struck on the basis relevant literature, text books, work-books, manuals and other reference material.

   b) *Preparation of e-script:* After preparation of the content script, it is to be converted into e-Script on the basis of consultation with software programmers and media experts. e- Script is considered in the following aspects:

       (i)   Audio and Video Clipping

       (ii)   Linkages between one content to another content

       (iii)   Graphics and Animation

       (iv)   Exercises of the programme to be done by the students.

       (v)   Explanations to the concepts.

c) ***Editing the e-Script:*** After the first draft, the e-script is to be edited at the following three levels.

        (i)   Technical accuracy editing is to be done for ensuring technical accuracy of the subject in consultation with subject experts.

        (ii)   Programme technique editing is to be done for aptness of the illustrations used in the script etc.

d) ***Developing the instructional objectives of the programme:*** The instructional objectives can be decided on the basis of the behavioral changes to be expected from the learners after going through the e-Content programme developed.

Conclusion

      A cell for e- Content should be established in all the schools, colleges and universities. Faculties of the schools, colleges and universities should be involved to prepare e- Content packages in their respective subjects. University's Education Departments, Educational Multi-media Research Centre's and Colleges of Education should train the faculties of the schools, colleges and universities for preparation of e-Content. Useful subject oriented websites can be created and also utilized to deliver the validated e-Content packages for the benefit of the learners. Continuous Assessment cell on e-Content will be established for improvement of the programme

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THE NEED OF M-LEANING IN DISTANCE LEARNING

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Introduction

Mobile Learning (M-Learning) is the exploitation of ubiquitous handheld technologies together with wireless and mobile phone networks, to facilitate, support, enhance and extend the reach of teaching and learning (MoLeNET 2011). M-learning uses mobile technology to aid in the learning of, reference of or exploration of information useful to the user at that moment or in a specific use context (Float 2011). Mobile Devices are defined by several criteria: Form, connectivity, and state. The form factor clarifies a mobile device as comfortably fitting into the palm of one's hand. Mobile devices must be connected to a network via a cellular network or a wireless network. A mobile device is "always on" allowing for instant on-demand learning, anytime, anywhere (Agarwal, 2009). Mobile devices vary in size from fitting in the palm of your hand to larger tablets, smart phones make up the middle range of these sizes.

According to a recent ITU's report (2013), the world has nearly as many mobile cellular subscriptions as human inhibitions; the figure will likely pass seven billion early in 2014.In developing countries the subscriptions to mobile broadband have climbed from 268 million in 2007 to 2.1 billion in 2013: an average annual growth rate of 40 percent. Distance education is growing rapidly as a means of teaching and learning in a flexible, online environment.

The use of portable devices that are familiar to students is a key to harnessing the potential of mobile learning. Research has shown that facilitating mobile learning can improve the entire distance education by enhancing ways of communication among distance learners, tutors and supporting staff. This improvement in communication is accompanied by an increase in flexibility (Yousef, 2007). This allows students and faculty the ability to use time that would otherwise be unavailable to them for teaching and learning. Distance education, while a valuable and flexible option for both students and faculty, also brings with it some limitations and concerns. The transactional distance theory defines distance education in terms of not only the physical separation of teacher and student, but of a psychological separation as well (Park, 2011). Transactional distance is impacted by the amount of dialogue present in the course between instructor and learners. As communication between teacher and students increases, transactional distance decreases (Park, 2011).Mobile technologies, with their ability to create diverse learning contexts with increased dialogue and communication have great potential to overcome the transactional distance divide that is inherently apart of distance education.

Benefits of m-learning

Based on Yousef's (2007) research, mobile learning brings the following benefits to the distance education experience:

- Can be used for independent and collaborative learning experiences
- Helps learners to overcome the digital divide
- Helps to make learning informal
- Helps learners to be more focused for longer periods.

- The provision of course content to off-campus students.
- The provision of feedback to off-campus students.
- The provision of student support services to off-campus students.
- Student-to-student interactivity.
- Student to tutor and institution interactivity.

The strongest advantage of learning with mobile devices, however, is portability. While mobile technologies have huge potential for learning, particularly in a distance environment, they are not without their limitations.

Challenges of m-learning

Most of the studies did note technology problems during their projects, including bandwidth issues, storage space, access, and other technology failures. Data on these types of issues were not included in the reviewed survey reports from South Africa, Pakistan, and the USA. What continues to be learned is that m-technology, like any other educational technology, should be tested with activities and resources. As Williams et al. (2005), Sprake and Rogers (2006), and Corbeil and Valdes-Corbeil (2007) all suggest, planning in advance and flexibility are essential to designing instruction with any new technology. These studies also suggest that m-learning has the potential to extend education resources by opening access (safe) to disadvantaged peoples (e.g., women, homeless, M offenders, disabled, sick, rural poor) and increase equity of access to education (Attewell, 2005; Garrison & Shale, 1990; Viljoen et al., 2005; Vosloo & Botha, 2009). Further, the examples point towards learners developing a sense of ownership of their learning when using m-technologies (Attewell, 2005). Personal ownership of technology devices (Marks, 2000) and control of learning processes (Ormrod, 2007), which disrupt conventional approaches to knowledge transfer from teacher to student. Both suggest positive attitudes and actions toward self-learning and self-esteem especially for marginalized learners (Attewell, 2005).

Attewell (2005) suggested that potential m-learning participants, especially adult distance learners, are willing to invest in more expensive sophisticated devices that can serve them beyond short message services if they realize the benefits in their learning. Therefore, if learners are willing to invest in sophisticated devices for learning, it remains a challenge for educators to explore and design instructional strategies effectively support m-learning.

The work of integrating m-technologies into instruction is continuing. Designing m-learning is a process similar to designing any effective and engaging technology enhanced instructional activity, with the nuance of the mobile learner.

Taylor et al. (2005), for example, warn that mobile devices are not central content delivery tools; they are primarily communication devices. Vosloo and Botha (2009) concur and warn that the types of communications also need to be monitored and the developing literacy skills promoted as it appears that texting is affecting grammar and spelling. Content displays are often small and do not allow detailed information to be viewed easily. Therefore, mobile devices should not be used to deliver large amounts of content but rather should be used to provide small amounts of summarized and synthesized information. Learners should be directed to computers and laptops for larger amounts of information as required. This suggests that activities should be designed that require summarized information and that resources should be designed that provide short, bullet-pointed information bites that are easily and quickly communicated.

Instructional materials should also provide scaffolds to support effective collaboration. Many times even the most experienced mobile phone and distance education users are not effective in virtual team collaborations (Koszalka et al., 2008). Providing

prompts, guidelines for sharing information, and collaboration protocols may be helpful to learners.

Conclusion

Mobile learning has the potential to help improve the quality of teaching, learning, and education management. This potential is especially appealing at a time when poor-quality teaching and a lack of educational resources characterize many low-performing education systems. The number of people using mobile devices continues to rise, and increased interest in mobile learning is resulting in more mobile learning initiatives. Usability problems are prevalent, such as physical limitations (screen size, weight, battery life),software limitations (missing functionality, fragmented availability of applications across mobile platforms, initial procedural learning curve), dependence on available networks and speeds, and physical environment considerations (using the device outdoors, device security, exposure to radiation) (Park, 2011). Using students' own devices helps to overcome some of these concerns, as individuals are more likely to have a base knowledge of their own hardware and software, rather than being assigned a specific device by their institution (Elias, 2011).

The potential benefits of mobile learning are not yet understood from the perspective of either safe or disruptive uses. The success of the dissemination of m-learning will depend greatly on scholarly reports. Like m-learning itself, educational research on m-learning needs to develop further (Litchfield et al., 2007). Large-scale multidisciplinary implementation projects, effort to investigate and inform educators about the utility of mobile technologies in teaching and learning, rigorous evaluative and research data collection methods, and investigation of teacher strategies that make the most of mobile technologies are needed to better understand and develop support mechanisms (e.g., teacher training, tool development, and use policies) and provide better access to multiple types of resources for student learning. Although there is merit in starting the effort, planning and making careful research or evaluation methodology choices are critical to obtaining results that clarify the relationships among teaching, learning, and technology in m-learning situations. There are many possibilities for using m-learning to support those who are able to participate in classrooms and those who are not able to come to classroom-based instructional settings. The understanding of these tools and their uses in learning is meager. The possibilities for them to be used in safe learning and disruptive learning and to support those traditionally marginalized by the education system are there. However, there is the potential for these tools, as any other, to inhibit or distract from learning. Careful design of m-learning will suggest whether the use of this widely dispersed technology can make an ongoing and positive impact on learning.

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MASSIVE OPEN ONLINE COURSES (MOOCS): FAD OR FUTURE

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Introduction

Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) are free and open online courses offered by some of the country's leading universities and institutions including Harvard, Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), and Stanford. In recent years, there have been a growing number of MOOCs on the Internet. This paper introduces a brief history of MOOCs and their characteristic massiveness, openness, and connectivism. Accessibility, student engagement, and experiences for lifelong learning are recognized as the advantages of MOOCs. Additionally, challenges are discussed regarding individual instruction, student performance assessment, and long-term administration and oversight.

History

For many, the concept of MOOCs is not well understood. What originated as open online courses (OOCs) using web technologies to present an open education experience suddenly morphed into an experience for the masses when 2,200 people signed up for Siemens and Downes' Connectivism and Connective Knowledge course in 2008 [CCK08] (Fini, 2009; Rodriguez, 2012). Shortly thereafter companies such as Coursera, which launched in April 2012, began coordinating a growing number of MOOC offerings. Individuals involved in the early development of MOOCs as an instructional strategy included Siemens and Downes' CCK08; the University of Illinois' not-for-credit course with 2,700 participants in 2011; and Thrun and Norvig's Artificial Intelligence course (CS221) with 160,000 students enrolled from 190 countries (Carr, 2012; Rodriguez, 2012).

As a result of his experience, Thrun launched Udacity in 2012, a for-profit company providing alternative lifelong learning options primarily in computer science and math. In May 2012, Harvard and MIT launched the non-profit, edX, with the University of California at Berkeley joining soon after. They were clear that their agenda was to explore innovative ways to improve classroom education, not to replace it (Kolowich, 2013a). Also in 2012, the for-profit company Coursera was founded by Stanford professors Koller and Ng (Carr, 2012). Coursera partners with leading universities to provide educational access to all. Some suggest that the MOOC revolution is the past repeating itself, although with a very different delivery model. Carr (2012) reminded readers of the radical change in higher education in the early 1900s. Essentially, access to higher education was provided to anyone with a mailbox through correspondence courses. However, academic rigor and course completion remained a major concern and a number of educators questioned the instructional quality.

Characteristics

MOOCs are built on the characteristics of massiveness, openness, and a connectivist philosophy. McAuley, Stewart, Siemens, and Cormier (2010) explained that MOOCs use strategies similar to social networking to connect the masses but with the added benefits of subject matter experts to facilitate the content and to coordinate a vast array of free, online materials. Students also have the opportunity to engage with others throughout the world with some organizing sub-groups specific to their learning goals and interests.

Massiveness

MOOCs easily accommodate large numbers of students. More than a million people in the world have taken MOOCs (Carr, 2012). "From a pragmatic perspective, MOOCs provide access to large numbers of people who might otherwise be excluded for reasons ranging from time, to geographic location, to formal prerequisites, to financial hardship" (McAuley et al., 2010, p. 6). The artificial intelligence course developed and conducted by Stanford faculty Sebastian Thrun and Peter Norvig is an example of massiveness as 160,000 enrolled in the course (Martin, 2012).

Openness

Openness involves several key concepts: software, registration, curriculum, and assessment; communication including interaction, collaboration, and sharing; and learning environments (Rodriguez, 2012). He discussed that the software used is open-source, registration is open to anyone, and the curriculum is open (perhaps loosely structured and it can even change as the course evolves), the sources of information are open, the assessment processes (if they exist) are open, and the learners are open to a range of different learning environments. (p. 4)

Connectivism

MOOCs offer an emerging online teaching methodology inspired by a connectivist philosophy. The MOOC format is commonly referred to as cMOOCs (Connectivist Massive Open Online Courses). Connectivism values autonomy, diversity, openness, and interactivity (Rodriguez, 2012). Connectivism teaching strategies allow an instructor to assume the role of facilitator with learners actively interacting with other students. It is not a knowledge transfer from instructor to learner in a single learning environment (Kop, 2011). Therefore, active engagement and interaction are key MOOC instructional methods.

Advantages

Although much controversy surrounds the idea of MOOCs, studies have cited several advantages. Some of the areas in which MOOCs have been cited as most beneficial include increased options for accessibility, increased potential for student engagement, and expanded lifelong learning opportunities (Carr, 2012; Duderstadt, 2012).

Accessibility

Participants and instructors note benefits from the enhanced accessibility that MOOCs offer (de Waard, 2011). MOOCs, typically low cost or free, create irresistible appeal for recruiting potential participants. The online format of MOOCs offers access and flexibility and eliminates the need for prerequisites. Leber (2013) stated that, "as online education platforms like Coursera, edX, and Udacity burst onto the scene over the past year, backers have talked up their potential to democratize higher education in the countries that have had the least access" (Para 1). In addition, MOOCs have not been limited to college students, and/or professionals, but even younger students can participate in the MOOC experience.

Student Engagement

MOOCs are designed to enhance student engagement as improving student outcomes is one of the primary goals. According to Trowler and Trowler (2010), Student engagement is the investment of time, effort, and other relevant resources by both students and their institutions intended to optimize the student experience and enhance the learning outcomes and development of students, and the performance and reputation of the institution. (p. 2)

Student and instructor participation, motivation, instructional method, and delivery are all important aspects necessary to create a MOOC environment conducive to learning. MOOC educators play a vital role in enhancing student engagement.

Lifelong Learning Experiences

According to de Waard (2011), "lifelong learning skills will be improved, for participating in a MOOC forces you to think about your own learning and knowledge absorption" (p.2) MOOCs allow participants to pursue a particular interest or to continue their professional development. Beyond MOOCs conventional lifelong learning experiences, educational opportunities exist for underprivileged populations as a way to encourage lifelong learning. In addition, employers can utilize MOOCs to keep employees abreast of the competitive labour market throughout their lifetime and in a way that is cost-effective.

Challenges

Although some educators recognize the advantages of MOOCs, several challenges exist. Among the most common challenges are individual instruction, student performance assessment, and long-term administration and oversight.

Individual Instruction

MOOCs require course delivery to a large number of learners. They attract a wide variety of students with different learning styles from all around the world. It is a challenge for instructors to engage students, maintain their interest in the course, and tailor the learning environment to fit the need of each student. A solution proposed by Carr (2012) is machine learning. Machine learning utilizes computers to collect and analyse data from a learning system to test hypotheses about how people learn (Carr, 2012). Carr discussed that, during the course data collection process, every variable is tracked such as a student's pause during a video, increased feedback speed, response to quiz questions, revised assignments, and forum discussion. Collected data is then used to analyse student behaviour and test how people learn. In this way, an instructor could tailor the learning environment to fit each student's learning style and needs. However, some researchers disagree with the use of machine learning. They believe that a critical component of education is the interaction between students and teachers.

Student Performance Assessment

One of the biggest challenges of MOOCs is the assessment of student performance (Rodriguez, 2012). Cheating presents a major challenge of online education (Carr, 2012). How to validate original work to prevent or detect plagiarism is one of the widely discussed challenges in online education (Cooper &Sahami, 2013). Some solutions for the challenge are being proposed by institutions that offer MOOCs. For example, Udacity and edX use test centers for their online courses. However, the cost to students presents a barrier.

Long-Term Administration and Oversight

Those on the front lines of MOOC development and implementation warn that, although MOOC's might be open and free to participants, the costs to institutions can be significant. For example, course development assistance through edX can reach upwards of $250,000 per course with an additional $50,000 fee each time the course is offered (Kolowich, 2013b). For instructors who develop their own courses, human resource needs include course development (typically 100 hours) and course management (8-10 hours per week) in addition to existing professorial duties.

Some institutions have rejected the MOOC concept not because of resources, financial or human, but because of philosophical differences citing that MOOCs are contradictory to the overarching institutional mission. Amherst College was one that recently decided, by faculty vote, to decline an invitation to join edX. Although Amherst faculty were not opposed to exploring innovative teaching or delivery methods, the idea of joining a consortium of institutions through edX was not appealing (Kolowich, 2013b).

Other institutions remain cautious and are waiting for the hype to subside. For some presidents and chancellors, "MOOCs are a perfect storm of hype, hyperbole, and hysteria-and yet many have plunged headlong into them without a real clear sense of why or how MOOCs can help more students succeed" (Greenstein, 2013, Para. 5). Government and policymakers are looking at MOOCs through the lens of affordability and accessibility. Faculty are raising questions about the influence of MOOCs on academic freedom, relevancy to institutional mission, and instructional quality.

Implications for Open and Distance Education Institutions

MOOCs represent an unbundling of the traditional services in which higher education institutions (both distance and campus) have been engaged. My colleague Rory McGreal and I have published about this unbundling and the creation of a "no frills university". These lower cost, more accessible, but currently lower quality alternative, fits many of the characteristics of Christenson's disruptive technology, with potentially to radically reconstruct the product and the processes of the higher education business. This presents threats but as former Harvard President Summers noted in his foreword to Pearson's ominously titled essay *An Avalanche is Coming* "the potential unbundling is a certainly a threat, but those who re-bundle well, will find they have reinvented higher education for the 21st century."

Conclusion and Recommendations

The development of technologies in distance education continues to influence the context of education and learning (Bouchard, 2011). MOOCs bring a new perspective to traditional education but are still in the infancy stage. It seems that institutions, as a whole, might be apprehensive about MOOCs as they relate to access, affordability, and student success. For those who are proponents of the MOOC, increasing numbers might be leery about signing over long-term administration and oversight to companies such as edX, Udacity, or Coursera. However, in a time when higher education is being criticized for low productivity, increasing costs, and inefficient use of technology (Levine, 2013), MOOCs provide viable alternatives of high productivity, low cost (or free), and utilization of leading edge technology. The challenge is to find common ground that not only improves access and affordability but maintains academic rigor and ensures student success.

Although educators and administrators might proceed with caution, it would be prudent to take a closer look at the MOOC concept to weigh the pros and cons and to recognize the potential value. Ways in which MOOC strategies might improve accessibility, student engagement, and lifelong learning opportunities should continue to be explored. MOOCs also present major challenges related to instruction, assessment, and long-term administration and oversight. Further research and analysis regarding these challenges should be conducted to determine what solutions might exist. Only time will tell if MOOCs are a passing fad or predict the future of higher education. Each of us, as responsible open and distance educators, is compelled to examine the affordances and challenges of MOOC development and delivery methods, critically examine their effect on public education and

perhaps most importantly insure that our own educational systems are making the most effective use of these very disruptive technologies.

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BARRIERS IN EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY IN EDUCATION

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Introduction

Barriers are the impediments in the path of progress. Barriers are in several forms like Poverty, Challenging geographies, Insecurity and Refugees, Gender, Infrastructure and Resources. This paper focuses on Physical, economical, social and cultural barriers in equality of opportunities in Education. Barriers prevent one to have access to the support system needed for accomplishment. Lack of infrastructure and other structural factors hinder the accessibility to certain aspects necessary for educational advancement. For instance, Lack of transport facility in a tribal area. Apart from infrastructure, money plays a major role in education. Students who have completed their school level need economical assistance for their higher education. Students from poor and downtrodden families find it difficult to spend for higher education and are not aware of assistance from Government. Culture is the beliefs, customs and traditions followed by the society. Sometimes culture stands as an obstacle in the path of educational development of an individual. In our country sons get more preference when compared to daughters. In rural India, where Higher Educational Institutions are limited in number, parents hesitate to send their daughters to cities for availing higher degrees.

Physical Barriers

Inadequate public transportation and school facilities can be determinant factors in excluding students from the education system. Persons living in poverty are particularly affected; the concentration of communities living in poverty in remote areas or in areas that are poorly served by transportation is a key factor limiting their access to education institutions. This is particularly acute in rural areas where schools are not present. These obstacles are commonly addressed through support for transportation of students and by bringing schools closer to communities, often through improvements in transport infrastructure and the construction and expansion of education establishments in poorly served locations. Strategies also include the establishment of boarding schools.

Threat of violence against girls on the way to and from schools limit their educational opportunities. Household surveys in many countries identify distance as a major factor in parents' decision to keep daughters out of school and concerns over security figure prominently.

The lack of support for transportation and inadequate facilities can also be a determinant factor in the exclusion of students with disabilities from education systems. Inadequate public transportation and poor infrastructure in rural and urban areas still impede access to schools for persons with mobility restrictions and those who have impaired vision. Within schools, inadequately built classrooms and toilets also restrict their use by students with disabilities.

Economical Barriers

Surveys in various countries point to economical constraints – direct and indirect costs of schooling as a central reason for children being out of school or dropping out. Tuition fees appear as the most obvious economical obstacle and the accumulation of indirect costs, such as those related to transportation, school materials, uniform and other indirect contributions, undermine access to educational opportunities. Besides, disparities in the

provisions for public education contribute to unequal opportunities for many students receiving education in poorly resourced schools as compared to well-resourced ones.

Even if primary or basic education were to be accessible free of cost, such access cannot be universalized effectively unless economical support in the form of grants and bursaries is provided to the children who are excluded, in particular those who are victims of extreme poverty. Furthermore, targeting elimination of child labour in order to safeguard mandatory education is particularly relevant.

While significant efforts have been undertaken to improve access to free primary schooling, less efforts have been made in relation to higher levels of education. Students with limited resources therefore have very limited prospects to progress to secondary education and beyond. States have the responsibility to alleviate this economical burden and ensure that secondary education is generally available and accessible to all, as well as ensure equal access to higher education on the basis of merit or capacity.

A number of in-kind incentives, such as Noon-meal programmes , especially in poverty-stricken areas, are implemented in order to ensure that income deprivation or poverty in general does not result in exclusion from schools. In broad terms, State investment in social-protection policies and its contribution to alleviate the burden on families and child and poverty plays an important role in the promotion of education.

As poverty and social exclusion remain the major barriers to achieve the Education For All (EFA) , the use of direct economical support (through fellowship schemes, conditional cash transfers or social assistance for children of school age, for example) can be effective in enlarging access to education.

Affirmative action and promotional measures are highly important for addressing the educational needs of those living in poverty. Such measures may be suitable in cases of long-standing or historical and persisting forms of discrimination. The systemic exclusion of specific groups from higher levels of education can also be addressed through the adoption of temporary special measures. These might range from the establishment of enrolment quotas to the offer of economical incentives targeted to vulnerable groups particularly .

The right to education establishes the obligation of States to undertake promotional measures including the introduction of economical support schemes. Article 13 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights proposes the establishment of "an adequate fellowship system" among its provisions on the right to education, while the Committee's general comment No. 13 on the right to education states that "the requirement that 'an adequate fellowship system shall be established' should be read with the Covenant's non-discrimination and equality provisions; the fellowship system should enhance the equality of educational access for individuals from disadvantaged groups."

Linguistic and Cultural Barriers

The lack of education in mother-tongue or native languages is often a source of exclusion. This is particularly relevant for minorities and migrants. Estimates indicate that around 221 million children speak a different language at home from the language of instruction in school, limiting their ability to develop foundations for later learning. The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Persons belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities, establishes in article 4(3) that States should take appropriate measures so that, wherever possible, persons belonging to minorities may have adequate opportunities to learn their mother tongue or to have instruction in their mother tongue. Moreover, available experience shows that a child learns better in his or her mother tongue in the formative stages and initial period of education.

Countries with numerous local languages, where the official language is not the same as that used at home, face particular challenges in establishing educational policies and language rights. The Forum on Minority Issues recommended that States take appropriate measures, wherever possible, to ensure that persons belonging to minorities may have adequate opportunities to learn their mother tongue or to have instruction in their mother tongue. These measures are deemed to be most critical at the pre-school and primary school levels, but may extend to subsequent stages of education. Respecting the richness of linguistic and cultural diversity, education policies in today's global world should give high consideration to mother-tongue based multilingual education.

Conclusion

This paper has thrown light upon the various barriers to get access to education. Government of India plays a dominant role in providing funds for education and also in the administration of educational institutions. While education is the fundamental right of people in India, access to higher education is a thorny for many sections of our society due the barriers discussed in this paper. Interventions by the policy makers and the educational institutions are essential at this hour for positive enhancement of educational and the socio - economical development of our country at large.

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DIGITAL LESSON PLAN – AN INNOVATIVE APPROACH TO TEACHING AND LEARNING

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Introduction

During the last half-century, information technology has infiltrated our lives at an unprecedented rate. In education, it took the form of "audiovisual aids". Ever since, technology have "revolutionise" teaching and learning. Innovations in information technologies are interacting with new educational practices to bring about significant changes in human experience. Traditionally, the school and classroom have been places where teachers and students are isolated from the general culture and where information and ideas have been relatively scarce – the textbook is a meagre selection of what a field of knowledge comprises, a skilled teacher is a bundle of ignorance relative to the sum of learning, and a school library a sparse collection at best.

Digital technologies are for education as iron and steel girders, reinforced concrete, plate glass, elevators, central heating, and air conditioning were for architecture. Digital technologies set in abeyance significant, long lasting limits on educational activity. Networks reaching through the school into the classroom and to the desktop are ending the isolation and substituting a rule of abundance for that of scarcity. Such a new rule is not without its pitfalls, but to cope with these we must recognise that it is a new rule, deeply different from the old. Today, the educational problem changes profoundly, shifting from determining strategies for disbursing scarce knowledge to finding ways to enable people to use unlimited access to the resources of our cultures.

Multimedia, and its extension in virtual reality, is not merely a glitzy vehicle for edutainment hype. It is an epistemologically interesting development in our culture. For the most part, the work of thought has seemed to take place primarily through the manipulation of language, with the formal symbolisation of mathematics and logic seen as extensions of more everyday linguistic forms. Multimedia make it increasingly evident that the work of thinking can take many forms – verbal, visual, auditory, kinetic, and blends of all and each. As educators experience changing conditions of communication in their work, they understand that these developments are profoundly altering the spectrum of pedagogical possibility.

Definition of Multimedia

The term multimedia can be defined as 'the integration of sound, animation, images, video and text with computing technology'. Multimedia technology can also be considered an effort to improve interaction or communication between the computer and its users.

Multimedia in Education

The advent of information technology has brought radical developments in the field of education. One of the most exciting of these developments is the emergence of computer based programs. Multimedia programs are considered powerful tools for enhancing the student learning process due to the following reasons.

- Multimedia programs are interactive. The interactive nature of these programs helps students to clearly understand concepts, ensuring greater comprehension, longer retention and faster recall.
- Multimedia programs are used to teach complex topics in a user-friendly manner
- Multimedia programs can be designed to allow student to perform self-assessments of their knowledge of the topics covered in the programs. In addition, Multimedia helps keep students engaged in the learning process by allowing them to get immediate feedback and to monitor their own progress.
- Students can go through the same session of topic repeatedly until they are confident of their understanding.

Teaching - Learning Process

Teaching – learning process is a means through which the teacher, the learner, the curriculum and other variables are organised in a systematic manner to attain pre-determined goals and objectives. Teaching – learning process is influenced by the totality of the situation. Teachers can play an important role in facilitating learning when they take into account the needs of the learners.

Teaching and learning are interlinked. We cannot think of teaching without learning. The teacher teaches and the students learn. Teaching is not in a vacuum. It is therefore obvious that for making teaching learning sound and effective in our educational institute the teacher must look into its various aspects very carefully and critically so that they contribute in making teaching – learning inspirational and relevant.

Following are the chief aspects
- Command, planning and organisation of the subject matter or content and activities
- Class control and discipline
- Psychology of learners
- Evaluation

Teaching objectives

Our teaching objectives are the changes we wish to produce in the child. The changes that must take place through education are represented in
- The knowledge children acquire
- The skills and abilities children attain
- The interest children develop
- The attitudes children manifest

Variables and components in the learning process
- Task to be learned
- Characteristics of the task to be learned
- Characteristics of the learner
- Conditions under which effective learning takes place

Components of the Teaching process
- Instructional goals
- Entering behaviour
- Instructional procedures
- Performance Assessment

A close review of the components of learning and teaching processes reveals that there is a close correspondence between the two. In a traditional society the aim of teaching-learning was the assimilation of the accumulated stock of knowledge. But in the modern society, the main aim of teaching learning is not acquisition of knowledge alone. It is the awakening of curiosity, the stimulation of creativity, the development of proper interests, attitudes and values and the building of essential skills such as independent study. Teaching – learning process has to serve as powerful instrument of social, economic and cultural transformation of the society. One of the main aims of teaching – learning in the modern society is to keep pace with the advancement of knowledge and skills.

Role in Teaching
1. Teaching is a scientific process and its major components are content, communication and feedback
2. There is a close relationship between teaching and learning
3. It is possible to modify, improve and develop the teaching learning activities
4. The terminal behaviours of the learner in terms of learning structures can be established, by appropriate teaching environments
5. Teaching skills can be developed and strengthened by means of feed back devices with or without sophisticated techniques
6. Pre-determined learning objectives can be achieved by designing suitable teaching activities
7. Use of achievement motivation techniques enhances the output of the teacher and the learner.

Identifying Learning goals

Learning problems in the classroom are as broad as the curriculum offered by the school. A teacher may aim to bring his pupils to a true understanding of current local, national or international affairs and the historical forces which shaped them. Whatever the broad teaching goals established by the curriculum the teacher must translate each curriculum study unit into specific learning goals which, in step by step sequence, will result in the efficient learning of the major goals of the unit. Moreover, he must define these learning goals in terms of the needs and relevance to his particular pupils.

One of the factors which has contributed to teachers continual dependence on outdated and essentially verbal classroom methods has been their failure to translate the general objectives outlined in the curriculum into finer and more specific learning goals which will be meaningful the pupils and relevance to their existing frames of reference.
Selecting suitable Teaching materials

After the goals of instruction have been defined, the teacher will need to arrange for learning experiences which will be useful in helping his pupils to attain these goals. Teaching learning materials – the chalk board, pictures, charts and diagrams, models and specimens, maps and globes, field trips, transcriptions and sound tapes, film strips and slides, films, television, etc., as well as books and other, verbal materials – all have their own unique characteristics. Thus, the selection of suitable materials to be used singly or in combination should be based on how well they can be expected to help pupils reach the specific learning goals desired.

In analysing the role of media in learning and the basis on which they should be selected, Gagne points out that planning for media and planning for optimal learning are essentially parts of the same process.

Key factors in Lesson Planning

When you are planning to teach difficult groups or new topics or when introducing a previously untried teaching method, planning may be more complex and require a much deeper understanding of education theory. You will certainly need to have some knowledge of the following:

- The capabilities of the students you are going to teach;
- What you think the students should be learning;
- The ways in which you feel the students will learn best.

Let us therefore consider a preliminary list of the questions that you might need to take into account when starting to plan lessons:

- What is the scheme of work that the students are following?
- What has been taught and learnt in the previous lesson(s)?
- What do you want the students to learn in the lesson you are planning (and in future lessons)?
- How will your lesson plan facilitate learning?
- What resource will you need?
- What activities will the students undertake?

Three further questions will need to be posed after the planned lessons have been taught:

- How will you know what the students have learnt (assessment)?
- How will you know how effective the lesson has been from your perspective as the teacher and the students' perspective as learners (evaluation)?
- What action will you need to take in future lessons to ensure the effective learning is taking place?

In essence, these questions breakdown into considerations of four major components of the lesson and how it should planned:

1. The *purpose* of the lesson (the aims, objectives and expected learning outcomes).
2. The *substance* of the lesson (the subject knowledge, understanding skills).
3. The *methods* of the lesson (the strategies employed to ensure learning).
4. The *evaluation* of the lesson (of student learning and teacher teaching).

These components are underpinned by an even broader range of consideration that may also be phrased as questions: How do students learn? What are the best ways to match one's teaching to the different 'abilities' of students? What are the most appropriate forms of assessments in the classroom? Although these questions may not be directly answerable for each specific learning event in every lesson you will need to appreciate why such generic questions are important.

Designs as Devices

Unwin (1968) has given a comprehensive definition of instructional design; "Instructional Design is concerned with an application of modern skills and techniques for the requirements of education and training. This includes facilitation of learning by manipulation of media, methods and the control of environment so far as this reflects on learning" Such type of thinking was introduced in 1950 and the different approach has been evolved for the problems of education and training but the following three approaches are most popular;

1. Training psychology
2. Cybernetic psychology

3. System Analysis

The three approaches of Instructional Designs are not contradictory but supplementary to one another in solving the problems of education and training. Training psychology emphasises on task analysis and design of interrelated training components. Cybernetic psychology focuses on dynamic feedback and self- regulation. System Analysis focuses on system.

The Functions

Instructional Designs provide the scientific basis for the instructional system. It develops the professional skill and efficiency of the teachers. The sequence of teaching acts or events that a teacher plans, organises and carries out, in order to create learning environment for the college students is called the Instructional Design. Glaser (1968) has enumerated the functions of Instructional Design. They are

1. The instructional task is analysed for the structure of the content
2. Learners' responses are analysed in terms of objectives and levels of learning. The entering behaviours of the students are studied appropriate stimuli for better performance
3. Teaching strategies, techniques and approaches are selected by the teachers for presenting the content so that the desired learning structures result
4. The performance of students is assessed in order to find out if the objectives of learning have been realised

Digital Media in Education

In addition to conventional chalkboards, teachers of today rely increasingly on digital media. Digital lessons, being attractive and interesting, captivate the young audience. Digital lessons help students to understand and retain concepts and information. Students vouch for this new teaching methodology in their classrooms and feel that it is a boon. This is mainly because the teachers are no longer facing blackboard all the time. Instead they are able to interact with the students even as the class is in progress and elicit immediate responses to their questions. The interest kindled in the children also encourages them to be creative, leading to an enquiry- based learning process.

Conclusion

In the experiential world, digital technologies are an expression of the power of reason in human life, making plausible the hope and expectation that reason is still becoming an evermore effective asset in the service of human life. Educators are far from having made their mission obsolete, and the digital technologies provide an important new means to advance towards unfinished enlightenment aspirations.

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EDUCATION USING COMPUTATIONAL DATA MINING MODELS

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Introduction

A Data Mining Process can be defined and applied for exploring and analysis data to identify useful pattern. Data Mining is a process of extracting previously unknown, valid, positional useful and hidden patterns from large data sets. Data Mining task can be classified into two categories: Descriptive and Predictive. Descriptive mining tasks characterize properties of the data in a target data set. Predictive mining tasks perform induction on the current data in order to make predictions. The present study reveals that the drop out at primary level especially among socially backward and economically poor people is due to their peculiar type of culture, which hinders educational processes in tribal society of tribal blocks. Within the approach of unprivileged and deprived section of the society like other part of the country but it has now been realized that all efforts are failed to produce the desired results. The children may be enrolled in school's register and official data may also be showing high retention and low drop-out rate but actual scene is quiet different behind the curtain. Presently there is hardly any school without teacher and government has tried to appoint at least two teachers per school but many of them are still not running properly its require many and more subject teacher. The teachers remain usually absent from their schools for a long period and the situation becomes deteriorated and suffer student.

Data Mining in Education

In the education field, Educational Data Mining is application of Data mining Extracted information is useful for management decision making process, teachers as well as students. With the help of data mining in education, we can classify students in to groups. One group is need more guidance means have poor performance and other have less performance means need less guidance. In educational data mining following steps are performed.

First is data preprocessing, in this preprocess we study about dataset that is used for analysis. Many factors about data set like accuracy, completeness, consistency, timelines, believability, and interpretability will be considered during preprocessing. Second is Attribute Selection, only the essential attributes will be selected for mining knowledge from educational data. Third is Classification, in the classification we can use linear or linear models. Clustering can be applied over the mining information grouped into the same cluster and the objects that are dissimilar are grouped into other clusters. Clustering can be hierarchical or non hierarchical. K-means clustering algorithm is widely used to make the cluster. It is simple clustering algorithm. The main reasons for use this technique is ease of implementation and its simplicity. In K-means clustering algorithm following steps are performed.

1. Partitional clustering approach.
2. Each cluster is associated with a centroid (center point).
3. Each point is assigned to the cluster with the closest centroid.
4. Number of clusters, K, must be specified.
5. Apply algorithm.

- Select K points as the initial centroids.
- Repeat.
- Form K clusters by assigning all points to the closets centroid.

- Recompute the centroid of each cluster.
- Until the centroids don't change.

The use of Clustering in education system is partition to students into homogeneous groups according to their characteristics and abilities. Fourth is Visualization. .Visualization is the representation technique used for present mined knowledge for users. Mining results are presents in readable form, which is useful for student as well as teacher and management
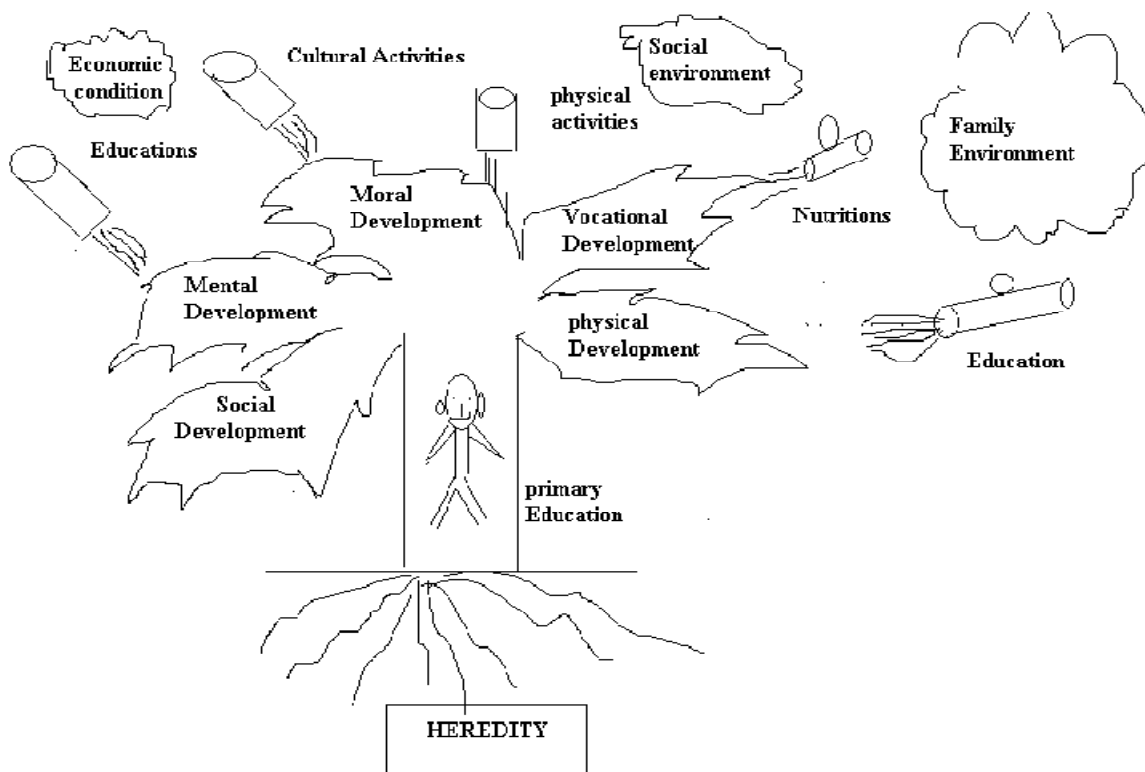
Figure-1: Student Information Modal

Being aware of the fact, the investigator tried his best in collecting related field authentic data from the initial stage seeking out dropped out students their parents, teachers of respective schools and members of the community properly. Sometimes, the information was not readily at a time, available in schools owing to leave of head of institutions dealing with the records of whole school; some head of institutions were not promoted in giving reply. It becomes difficult to get up to date information in the absence of relevant data of student. It was not possible to ascertain whether a certain student who seek school leaving certificate got admission in some other school or dropped out to be related. All the needed information was available in the District Education Office in form of reports and official documents.

1. Information not to be collected from the District Education office or the using web side and district project office, specially designed questionnaire were used in collecting information and data of student Accuracy and Efficiency.
   - Classifier accuracy: predicting class label to be.
   - Predictor accuracy: guessing value of predicted attributes and its field.
2. Speed or Time.
   - Time to construct the model or training time.

- Time to use the model by using classification or prediction time.
3. Robustness: handling noise and missing values of data.
4. Scalability: efficiency in disk-resident databases of student.
5. Interpretability: Understanding and insight provided by the model of real.

Motivation

We are going to create a software based on the education systems followed in the school .we are going to make a complete analysis of the student activities and based on same factors we will give a result such that each and every student can improve his activities in education fields. We are going to take the marks of all students and analyze the mark with activities and we tell them how to improve according activity. We are planning to design Backend of our project with My Weak. We have performed by using the classification technique and the algorithm based.

Conclusion

It showed using graph how useful data mining can be in education in particularly to improve student performance of school. We used students' data from database course of primary school . Discovered Classification rules based and we sorted Data mining works as a bridge in educational system for student, teacher and decision making for management. We can improve performance of student and manage the course selection and attention on weak student with the help of Data mining techniques. The used preprocess and data mining algorithms could be embedded into learning system so that anyone using the system can benefit from Classification rules the data mining techniques.

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E-LEARNING CREATES A JOYFUL ATMOSPHERE TO THE CURRENT AND FUTURE GENERATION

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Definition of e-learning

E- Learning refers to use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) to enhance and/or support learning in tertiary education. It covers a wide range of systems, from students using e-mail and accessing course work online while following a course on campus to programmes offered entirely online. E- Learning can be divided into several types. In all cases, a campus-based institution is offering the courses, but using e- learning tied to the internet or other online network to a different extent.

Web-supplemented courses focus on classroom-based teaching but include elements such as putting a course outline and lecture notes online, use of e-mail and links to online resources.

Web-dependent course require students to use the Internet for key elements of the programme such as online discussions, assessment, or online project/collaborative work, but without significant reduction in classroom time.

In *mixed mode* courses, the e- learning elements begins to *replace* classroom time. Online discussions, assessment, or project/collaborative work replace some face-to-face teaching and learning. But significant campus attendance remains part of the mix.

And when courses are offered *fully online,* student can follow course offered by a university in one city from another town, country or tine zone.

Scopes of e-learning

The term e- learning comprises a lot more than *online learning, virtual learning, distributed learning, networked or web based learning.* As the letter "e" in e- learning stands for the word "electronic", e- learning would incorporate all educational activities that are carried out by individuals or groups working online or offline, and synchronously or asynchronously via networked or standalone computers and other electronic devices. Individualized self-paced e-learning online refers to situations where an individual learner is accessing learning resources such as a database or course content via an Internet or the `internet. A typical example of this a learner studying alone or conducting some research on the Internet or a local network.

Individualized self-paced e-learning offline refers situations where an individual learner is using learning resources such as a database or a computer-assisted learning package offline (i.e., while not connected to an Intranet or the Internet). An example of this is a learner working alone off a hard drive, a CD or DVD. Group-based e-learning synchronously refers to situations where group of learners are working together in real time via an Intranet or the Internet. It may include text-based conferencing, and one or two-way audio and videoconference.

Group-based e-learning asynchronously refers to situations where groups of learners are working over an Intranet or the where exchanges among participants occur with a time delay (i.e., not in real time). Typical examples of this kind of activity include on-line discussions via electronic mailing lists and text-based conferencing within learning management systems.

Types of E-Learning

There are a few of the most common types of e-learning. Types are as gives below;

- Technology Based Learning (TBL)
- Web Based Training (WBT)
- Computer Based Training (CBT)
- Synchronous and Asynchronous e-learning

These are a few of the most common types of e-learning

a) Technology Based Learning (TBL)

The phrase, interchangeable with e-learning, technology-based learning includes deployment of methods that use recent technological developments such as computer-mediated communication, videoconferencing, multimedia, groupware, video on demand, desktop publishing, intelligent tutoring system, virtual reality just to name a few.

b) Web-Based Training (WBT)

Generally web-based learning, e-learning uses streaming media, text, and graphics to develop exciting learning environment that is developed right on the user via the internet. It is a great way to e-learning for the large group of people scattered across the globe, but it can present the same development challenge that the audience encounters in dial-up connecting.

c) Computer-Based Training (CBT)

This is great alternative to WBT for graphic or audio rich e-learning, computer e-learning, deployed via CD-ROM, which elements the streaming issues that can be associated with WBT.

d) Synchronous and Asynchronous e-learning

With synchronous e-learning, learning means learning and teaching takes place at the same time while the trainer and learners are physically separated from each other.

Examples of synchronous learning are as follows:

- Internet telephony
- Web conferencing
- Online lectures
- Distance learning via-interactive satellite
- Audio/Video conferencing

Asynchronous e-learning means that the user can take the training indent of any schedule. At Resource Bridge it refers to this as "wherever they are whenever they need it." Asynchronous e-learning does not need a facilitator or instructor, and is one of the more popular e-learning development methods.

Examples of asynchronous learning are as follows:

- Self-paced courses taken via internet on CD-ROM
- Store audio/video level presentation or seminars.

Advantages of e-learning:

There are a number of benefits to tertiary learning online that are unique to the medium. Some of which are extracted here.

- *Any time:* A participant can access the learning programme at any time that is convenient – not just during the specific 1-3-hour period that is set for a conventional course. The episodes can be quick snatches at old times or long late-night sessions. Cross-time-zone

communication, difficult to arrange in real time, is as easy as talking to someone across town when using the Internet.

- *Any place:* The participants do not have to meet. That means they can be anywhere. International sharing   is feasible. Individuals can log on at work, home, the library, in a community learning center or from their hotel when traveling.
- *Asynchronous interaction:* Unlike face-to-face or telephone conversations, electronic mail does not require participants to respond immediately. As a result, interactions can be more succinct and to-the-point, discussion can stay more on-track, and people can get a chance to craft their responses. This can lead to more thoughtful and creative conversations.
- *Group collaboration:* Electronic messaging creates new opportunities for groups to work together, creating shared electronic conversations. Sometimes aided by on-line moderators, these net seminars can be powerful for learning and problem solving.

Advantages to the Learner

Alone with the increase retention, reduced learning time, and other aforementioned benefits to students, particular advantages of e-learning include:

- *On-demand availability* enables students to complete training conveniently at off-hours or from home.
- *Self-pacing* for slow or quick learners reduces stress and increases satisfaction.
- *Interactivity* engages users, pushing them rather than pulling them through training.
- *Confidence* that refresher or quick References materials are available reduces burden of responsibility of mastery.

Disadvantages to the Learner

The ways in which e-learning may not excel over other training include:

- *Technology issues* of the learner are most commonly techno phobia and unavailability of required technologies.
- *Portability* of training has become strength of e-learning with the proliferation of network linking points, notebook computer, PADs, and mobile phones, but still it does not rival that of printed workbooks or References material.
- *Reduced* social and cultural interaction can be a drawback. The impersonality, suppression of communication mechanisms such as body language, and elimination of peer-to-peer learning that are part of this potential disadvantage are lessening with advances in communication technologies.

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USE OF NEW TECHNOLOGIES IN EDUCATION

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Introduction

The teacher in the emerging Indian Society has a pivotal role in the social reconstruction and in the transmission of wisdom, knowledge and experiences of one generation to another. Children are the potential wealth of a nation. They are always exposed to the information of the teacher. It is, therefore, necessary to realize that the emerging Indian Society can achieve all-round development with the help of the teacher who acts as a powerful agency in transmitting its cherished value. A teacher is not only a custodian of a nation's values but he is also an architect par excellence of new values. A teacher can help our country in the process of reconstruction for recent technology in education.

Electronic Learning (e- LEARNING)

E-learning is, 'Any learning that is facilitated and supported through the use of Information and Communication Technology'. Communication is education and education is knowledge. This is an age of knowledge explosion and exploration. Technology has had a significant effect on the education system for many years. Technology continues to move forward. The development in computer technology has resulted in e-learning. It is a technology-based distance learning program conducted online wherein students can communicate with peers and instructors. With e-learning, distance education is conducted through electronic components like computers, internet, etc. This leads to the formation of Virtual University, which means there are no actual classrooms, no teachers or textbooks, but it gives the impression of studying in a classroom.

E-learning Philosophies

- E-learning is the online delivery of information, communication, education and training.
- E-learning provides a new set of tools that can add value to all the traditional learning modes - classroom experiences, textbook study, CD-ROM and traditional computer based training. Old world learning models don't scale to meet the new world learning challenge. E-learning can provide the tools to meet the challenge.
- E-learning will not replace the classroom setting, but enhance it, taking advantage of new content and delivery technologies to enable learning.
- With E-learning you can empower learners, and the learner, as well as the mentoring system, is held accountable.
- Retention for a learner varies, based on the content type and the delivery vehicle.
- The better the match of content and delivery vehicle to a learner's style, the greater the results.

E-learning is considered a more effective way of teaching to a large group of students, thereby providing consistency in educational quality. The opportunities made available through e-learning are both significant and numerous. However, when it is conferred with

mobility, it allows the learner to have access to learning and information anytime and anywhere.

Importance of e-learning

- *Faster Learning:* By virtual clarification and simplified steps, the learning is faster, because the course progresses as fast as the student can without worry for other student or an instruction.
- *Consistent Instruction:* With e-Learning, the course is software driven and each student receives the same high quality content.
- *Higher Level in Retention:* An idea and concept is being explained in a concretized way, the retention can be obtained considerably
- *Greater Levels of Assessment:* With an e-Learning solution student activity can be tracked down to the finest level. Every student's response to quizzes, simulations and examinations can be tracked and fed into customizable reports
- *No Travel Expenses:* With web-based training, there is no need to coordinate hundreds of different and conflicting schedules and no need to pay for student travel to a training site.
- *No Need for a Classroom***:** In e-learning, there is no actual classroom, no teachers or textbooks, but it gives the impression of studying in a classroom.
- *Simplified Training Management:* By merging an e-Learning course with the inspired learning management system, he/she can virtually automate the training process for a given course.
- *Incredible Saving of Time and Money:* e-Learning means no travel, no schedule conflicts, no equipment issues, consistent instruction, higher retention and less money than instructor-led training.

Types of E-Learning

The following are a few of the most common types of e-Learning,

- Technology-Based Learning (TBL)
- Web-Based Training (WBT)
- Computer-Based Training (CBT)
- Synchronous e-learning
- Asynchronous e-learning

Characteristics of e-Learning: Teachers' Perspective:

- E-Learning permits instructors to develop materials using the world-wide resources of the web.
- Allows instructors to communicate information in a more engaging fashion than in text-based distant education programs. E-Learning offers a wide range of text, diagrams and images with video and sound, including virtual reality technology that in the future will improve the effectiveness of the approach even further.
- Convenient for instructors to access any time, any place. Allows instructors to package essential information for all students to access. Instructors can then concentrate on high level activities.
- Retains records of discussion and allows for later reference through the use of threaded discussion on bulletin boards.
- Generates more personal gratification for instructors through quality student participation.

E-Learning Cycle

The process of e-learning can be represented in the following e-learning cycle model.

- *Need analysis* **-** The learning manager analyzes the learner's present needs and set them as learning goal, and obtains the necessary material information. The manager then searches for the related material (registered for the search).
- *Material development* **-** The developer creates exercise questions and the material structure (tables of contents) linked with explanatory pages.
- *Learning* **-** The learner engages in learning that is proper to the need, that is, individual learning for knowledge acquisition, or collaborative learning for workshop-type learning.
- *Evaluation* **-** The learner carries out exercises and takes examinations using questions designed according to the learning goal.

Role of Teachers in E-Learning

The introduction of e-Learning in education has created a fear among the teaching community that the use of ICT in the process of teaching and learning would relegate the place of the teachers to some extent and eliminate teachers from the teaching scene. But the teachers, instead, should take it as a challenge and equip themselves with various ICT skills to face the changing needs and trends in education. They must enrich themselves with the knowledge of latest developments in the field of ICT and should play the following roles as "multi-facilitators" to learners;

- **Content facilitator**   :   Assisting learners understand the course content.
- **Process facilitator**   :   Facilitating online learning activities.
- **Advisor/Counselor**   :   Providing individual counseling support to learners.
- **Assessor**   :   Providing grades and feedback on performance.
- **Administration**   :   Managing learner records.
- **Designer**   :   Devising worthwhile learning task
- **Research**   :   Discovering new knowledge relevant to subject taught
- **Technologist**   :   Providing technical support to the students and uplifting their technological environment.

Conclusion

The rapid development of information and communication technologies during the past two decades has had many points of contact with education and training. The development of technology is placing new demands on expertise and it is also leading to the increasing use of information technology in teaching and learning. It is unfortunate that most of our teachers are still unaware of the immense possibilities that e-Learning offers in ushering an e-Learning society in our educational setup. Already in the west many universities are offering distance education through e-Learning (also known as online learning) and the teachers involved are trying to integrate some of its important characteristic features into their regular classroom instruction.

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ICT: NEW PERSPECTIVES: APPROPRIATE TECHNOLOGIES FOR FUTURE

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Introduction

Over the last few years, Distance Education has come into its own as the mainstay in the field of education. The integration of satellite technology and education has yielded rich rewards socially, culturally and economically, to name just a few. It being a truism that education has its own reward for any society; distance education has also been a boon in a more specific sense to educational institutions themselves as it allows extremely useful contact across national and international borders. Government of India launched the Educational Satellite (EDUSAT) in September 2004, which is expected to revolutionize the Distance Education Programmes in the country.

One of the serious problems associated with Indian school education has been high dropout rate. The reasons are many and varied but the major constraints are: non-availability of adequate number of competent and trained teachers in most of the schools and separate room for each class. To overcome such problems and increase equitable access to all, it was considered prudent to use capabilities of satellite based teaching-learning. This network was also to be used for capacity building of in-service teachers. So an indigenously built, dedicated satellite for education. Educational Satellite (EduSat) was launched on September 20, 2004. They were trained in developing content for tele-teaching; development of knowledge repositories as effective and sustainable sources of courseware. Feedback studies undertaken to judge the effectiveness of EduSat reveal that it is being well received and making steady progress towards improvement in attendance and academic achievement of children and creation of better learning- environment in schools.

EduSat and E-Learning

EduSat is the first exclusive satellite for serving the educational sector. It is specially configured for audiovisual medium, employing digital interactive classroom and multimedia system. This EduSat network provides satellite e-based tele-education facilities to students and teachers of the engineering colleges across the country. While ISRO provides the space segment for EduSat System and demonstrate the efficacy of the satellite system for interactive distance education, content generation is the responsibility of the user agencies. ISRO provides technical and managerial support in the replication of EduSat ground systems to manufacturers and service providers. The first Indian satellite built exclusively for serving the educational sector, and can interact and ask questions through audio-video conferencing or text mode or through telephone.

Curriculum-based education is being imparted via the satellite by the University Grants Commission (UGC) through the Consortium for Educational Communication (CEC). The infrastructure of EduSat is being utilized by Indira Gandhi National Open University - (IGNOU) for curriculum-based education, teachers' training, professional educational courses and for conducting teleconferencing sessions for software content generation. National Council for Educational Research and Training (NCERT) also conducts inter-active orientation/training programs of teachers and teachers' educators. The Department of Science and Technology (DST) utilizes EduSat network for group discussion, lectures, demonstrations, video-shows, training and capacity building programs.

In the present context and with the availability of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) many prefer to attend online and live sessions of lectures and practical in

e-learning mode. It will also help the individual to learn at anytime from anywhere. Distance education (DE), or distance learning, is a field of education that focuses on the technology and instructional systems design that are effectively incorporated in delivering education to students who are not physically "on site" to receive their education. Instead, teachers and students may communicate asynchronously by exchanging printed or electronic media, or through technology that allows them to communicate in real time (synchronously). Computers and the Internet have only made distance learning easier, just as it has for many other day-to-day tasks

EduSat - A New Beginning

EDUSAT was launched on 20 September 2004; it is the first of its kind designed solely for the purpose of education. It was launched to have an impact on the entire education system of India. It provides virtual classroom for the primary students located in remote areas, high quality and technical proficient lectures of reputed people in college and universities which lacked proper well qualified teachers. It also provides training to teachers and aids them with the current knowledge.

EduSat - Changing the conventional education system

The mission is monitored by ISRO (Indian Space Research Organization) and also the Sarv Shiksha Abhiyan in these states also, specific geographic regions and areas are identified for the virtual classrooms. The hardware required at community level is a computer system with a webcam, mike and speaker and LAN for internet connection. Projectors, screen, Osprey Card, NVidia Card are the technical requirements Its network is spread through schools, higher secondary and colleges, professional universities, state capitals and places with only its receiving terminals. The schools have only RECEIVING terminal, higher secondary and colleges have satellite interactive terminal, state capitals have hubs and for the already existing networks, direct reception system to cater televisions and landline phones.

EDUSAT is an interactive medium. It uses videos, web based seminars, chats etc. By these, the students are able to convey their point of views and also let the instructor enhance their mode of teaching. Such virtual coaching has also taught various people to operate minor injuries and ailments in rural and remote areas. These places do not have proper amenities such as city development authority and dispensaries. They are also spread awareness about the need to build washrooms in the house. By these classrooms, not only literacy, but living standards and societal norms are also improving. It appears to bring a digital revolution in lives of those, who are still untouched by the advances in technology.

There are two ways, synchronous and asynchronous. Asynchronous is through CD-ROM, document and e-books, bulletin boards etc. these can be used at any intended time. The synchronous mode is under use when a teacher is guiding and the students have to be present in the temporary classroom to listen and reciprocate his views and answers. The communication satellite provides interactive classes to the people living in remote areas. Here electricity, school infrastructure and skilled teachers are scant. Since such basic resources are unavailable, the respective students also show low enthusiasm and morale to join such study programmes, where they have to attend a virtual class. Their self-motivation is the only driving force. All the states used EDUSAT for its own unique needs to improve the condition of education in their respective states. Moreover, it was a very economical investment for improving the literacy rate in the state and improves the quality of education imparted to the students.

Impact of EduSat Programme

- The lunch of EDUSAT programme has helped in providing quality instruction through video programs to students studying in the interior villages.
- The students have benefited from the video programme delivered through the satellite.
- Significant improvement in enrolment and attendance in these schools.
- Reduction in drop outs
- Increased interaction among students and teachers.

Future EduSat Programme

- Production of subject wise video films in Kannada (first language) English, Urdu as a minority language, Maths, General Science and Social Science and revision of films.
- Replacement of EduSat equipment in the existing project schools.
- Extension of EDUSAT programme in remaining districts. EDUSAT, launched on September 20, 2004, is the first Indian satellite built exclusively for serving the educational sector. It is mainly intended to meet the demand for an interactive satellite based distance education system for the country. It strongly reflects India's commitment to use space technology for national development, especially for educating the population in remote and rural locations

EduSat and Teacher Training, Tamil Nadu

The main role of EDUSAT has been to change the way teachers are trained in pedagogical methods. There is an up-linking facility in Anna University, Chennai, and there are down-linking facilities in all the DIETs, BRCs, and Government teacher training institutes. This technology has made it possible to bring the best teaching learning resources to teachers in remote rural areas. The Learning Centres which have SITs not only bring quality elementary education inputs to remotely situated teachers, but can also, once the schools are networked through EDUSAT, be used for E-governance, health care and community welfare. The technology can eventually bridge regional, rural and urban divides by bridging the digital gap between the developed and the developing segments of the student population. The linkage of EDUSAT with a large-scale teacher training initiative implemented in 2005-06 is described below.

Other Distance Learning in India and Worldwide

Various studies have been done on the availability of distance learning courses in India and worldwide. The courses are either available through public domain networks such as the Internet or private networks such as satellite or wired/wireless local networks. E-learning and Information Communication Technology (ICT) have proved to be a boon for participants of DE. This unavailability of high speed internet connections in parts of India has given a definite edge to satellite based educational networks which needs to be exploited. In India, IGNOU and state open universities are the two major bodies imparting DE at professional level. IGNOU offers a plethora of programs across its 21 schools (IGNOU, 2012). Although the scale at which the programs are conducted is large, standalone organisations can learn important lessons on conducting professional courses as outreach programs. In Indian context, Rajashekhar et al., points out that satellite communication technology are the "only solution" as the majority (70%) of the Indian population lives in inaccessible rural areas along with various economic, cultural, demographical and topographical conditions.

Conclusion

In being a developing country is using the technology in the best possible way to increase the education status. This is mode of providing education to masses with very less resources proves to be highly beneficial for all the countries who want to raise their stand of education. A small investment that was done for development of this satellite has proved to be the best asset in the Indian Education. Here through this paper we have been able to understand that how technology can change the whole scenario for education. This satellite is proved to beneficial for all the sections of the society and service a large variety of audience. Due to its unbearable success, we should expect that there would be more countries which will involve themselves and there will be a day where a group of satellite can serve the whole of world for all its educational need.

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PERCEPTION OF LEARNERS TOWARDS DISTANCE EDUCATION – A CASE STUDY IN KOLKATA

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Introduction

Distance Education is internationally recognised and accepted as an alternative channel for providing broader access to education in a cost effective manner; wider and diversified curricula and a means for continuing lifelong education. The terms "distance education" and open learning have been used in different contexts with somewhat different meanings. Distance Education has been defined as an educational process in which someone conducts a significant proportion of the teaching removed in space and/time from the learner. Open learning has been used to refer to the process of making learning available to learners no matter who they are or where or when they wish to study.

It is no longer disputed that one of the models for meeting the needs of education is the open system. In this system education reaches out to a widely scattered student body. In our country especially introduction of the open education system has become a paramount necessity to meet the demands of an ever growing population desirous of education and yet not being able to take it because of reasons which are well identified. Even to meet the ever increasing knowledge base and to uptake knowledge and skills in all aspects of life, this promises the greatest success.

The essential aspects of distance education are well-planned correspondence materials that are self-instructional, set books, charts, reading materials, television and radio broadcasts which provide academic support to learners.

The changing needs and aspirations of anticipated learner groups in particular and society in general can influence the planning and management of distance education system with a view to making the system socially responsive. Therefore research is needed to identify the needs of existing distance learners as well as future target group keeping in view the general course of socio-economic development of the country. Several researchers reported a positive attitude of the learners towards distance education (Sultana et al., (2011); Osei (2010); Adeoye (2010); Kumar (1998 and 1999). In comparison with the male students, the female students had expressed more favorable attitude and employed students were more positive than unemployed students towards distance education (Sahoo and Bhatt, 1987). Gaba (2010) and Pant (2005) found that students have favourable attitude towards information and communication technology. Some of the studies conducted by Sahoo (1998); Singh and Chaturvedi (1996) and Das (1992) reported attitude and academic performance of distance learners differ from students of traditional universities. Distance education can be more learner-centred if distance educators are aware of the problems, needs, attitudes and characteristics of their learners (Biswas 1999). In designing an effective learner support system, the institution should be familiar with the students' home and community environments, community's attitudes to education, availability of peers that can render academic assistance and a lot more other related issues (Andrew, 2003). Tripati and Kanungo (2010) analysed types of research published in Indian Journal of Open Learning from 2000 to 2009 and concluded that there were certain gaps in the research which had been reported in a ten year time period. Nembiakkim and Mishra (2010) studied distance education research attitude and barriers and concluded that respondents were positively disposed towards research in distance education, and believed in the need for more research, that is quantitative and collaborative.

Operational Definition

Perception here means the different types of barriers that exist in Open Learning, their perception on advantages and future prospects of Distance learning and the views of the students on extent of skill improvement as a result of education imparted through the medium of Open Learning.

Learners here mean the students studying Post Graduation in NetajiSubhash Open University, West Bengal.

Objectives of the Study

1. Effect of Gender on the perception of the Distance Education Learners of NSOU.
2. Effect of employment on the perception of the Distance Education Learners of NSOU.
3. To find out the perception of the learners on skill improvement.

Methodology

Data were collected from 150 learners of NSOU and the sample was selected through purposive sampling. A questionnaire was framed by the researcher which consisted of 45 close end Items on student barriers; faculty barriers; organizational barriers and course considerations (containing both positive and negative items). There were two open end items where the respondents were asked to give their views if Masters from NSOU will help in improvement skills.

Results and Discussion

Table :1

Objective 1: Effect of Gender on the perception of Distance Education Learners of NSOU.

Areas in Distance Education	Responses byMale (in %)		Responses by Female (in %)	
	Yes	*No*	*Yes*	*No*
Student Barriers	26 (42.62)	35 (57.37)	35 (39.33)	54 (60.67)
Faculty Barriers	20 (32.78)	41 (67.21)	23 (25.84)	66 (74.15)
Organizational Barriers	27 (44.26)	34 (55.73)	31 (34.83)	58 (65.16)
Course Content & Evaluation	21 (34.42)	40 (65.57)	29 (32.58)	60 (67.41)

In all the four aspects of perception towards distance education there was not much difference in opinion of both male and female students,both had a positive outlook towards NSOU. In *student barriers* items regarding fees, assignments, admission, library and reference books both the male and female gave likewise responses. 57 % male and approximately 61% female have a favourable outlook and felt that NSOU was quiet student friendly. Some of the female respondents said that they had problems as they had to attend classes from 10 AM in the morning. Some students both male and female had problems collecting study materials but this was not true for all the study centres. Regarding assignments some mentioned that they don't receive the feedback on time.

In *faculty barriers* items regarding counselling sessions, teachers' outlook, teachers' helpfulness most of the students had a positive outlook towards their counsellors or teachers. They said that they received lots of help from the teachers as they don't have access to library

books the teachers supply them with Xerox from the relevant books. 67% male and 74% female said that teachers were really helpful.

In *organisational barriers* items were there regarding information on classes, study materials and admission procedure and organisation of counselling sessions on time. 65% female and approximately 56 % male have a favourable attitude towards their study centre. Data was collected from a study centre where students from 4 other study centres also came for classes.

In *course consideration and evaluation* items regarding information on content of study materials, evaluation procedure and review procedure of NSOU were included. There is no provision of review in this University which they felt was a negative feature. Regarding course content they did not have any problem .

Table:2
Objective 2: Effect of employment status on the perception of Distance Education Learners of NSOU.

Areas in Distance Education	Responses by Unemployed Learners (in %)		Responses by Employed Learners(in %)	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
Student Barriers	28 (33.73)	55 (66.26)	19 (28.35)	48 (71.64)
Faculty Barriers	23 (27.71)	60 (72.28)	17 (25.37)	50 (74.62)
Organizational Barriers	19 (22.89)	64 (77.10)	22 (32.83)	45 (67.16)
Course Content & Evaluation	35 (42.16)	48 (57.83)	27 (40.29)	40 (59.70)

As per Table 2 it was found that status of employment was not a major factor in the perception of learners towards NSOU.66% unemployed learners and more than 71% employed learners have said that they don't face any student barriers. Those who have said that they face some problems belong to 2 particular study centre where they have some problems. Faculties are helpful and more than 74% Employed and 72% Unemployed learners have agreed on this. In the aspects of Organizational barriers 67% employed and 64% unemployed felt that the Organizational barriers could be overcome. In course content and evaluation there was not much difference in the opinion of employed and Unemployed learners both felt that the course content should be reviewed and evaluation should be more effective.Researchandevaluationactivitiesarevery limited in NSOU. As a result, not much revisionisbeingmadewiththestudy   materials.Onceitisproduced,reprintofthe   samestudy materials   aregoingonyearafteryear.Sometimesfewcorrectionsaremadewith   some   course materials, which donot improve the contents ofcourses at all.

Objective :3 To find out the perception of the learners on skill improvement.

It was found out that there were different types of learners with different background come here to study. The students believe that earning a degree from this University will help them in future. Some learners are doing a second time Masters i.e. they already have a M.A. in one subject. Some have enrolled themselves for obtaining a M.A. degree as they could not enrol themselves into the conventional system for some reason. Some employed learners

especially in the subject education are in-service school teachers and Teacher- Educator of Primary Teachers' Training Institute. They are doing M.A for improving their teaching skills. It was found out that there were more female learners than male learners (Table 1) the ratio stands at 5:1. This also proves that there is more accessibility to Higher Education and NSOU serves the purpose of educating the women learners.

Conclusion

The gross enrolment ratio (GER) in higher education has increased from 7% in 2001 (according to the 2001 census) to 10% at the beginning of the Eleventh Five year Plan (2007) and now the government of India has decided to touch the target of 30% GER in higher education by 2020. And to achieve this goal, the govt. has to strengthen the open and distance learning system. Because of the limited capacity of the conventional system, ODL system can accommodate more number of learners. The in-service persons who want to enhance their qualification and knowledge for professional up-gradation, the ODL system is the best learning process for them. Again some persons are there in our society, like hundreds of elderly persons and housewives who want life-time learning or left out from the higher Education system, they can easily get access to the ODL institutes. Such achievements are possible only through the ODL institutions. .

The success of the distance education institutes lies in their ability to extend educational opportunities to all, including the unreached, disadvantaged, underprivileged and the community as a whole, thereby, contributing to the manpower development and growth. The result of this study points towards to rethink about the support system provided by the Open Universities. Distance education institute serve as a bridge between the supporting organization and student. The distance education institute should take care of this aspect, otherwise the moral of distance learner will be disoriented and disenchanted from distance education. Counseling sessions, workshops, group discussions need to be organized to improve the attitude of distance learners. Timely feedback on assignments, timely declaration of results, better evaluation system, video/audio and library facilities in study centre etc. help in nurturing more favourable perception towards the distance learning.

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ICT IN BUSINESS MANAGEMENT PROGRAMMES -NEED FOR A RETHINKING IN ODL SYSTEM

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Introduction

Management education is today at the center stage as a dynamic force for change and transformation in our economy. Its growth and expansion is leading the institutions to face the competitive forces from within and outside the country. It is expected to mould the personality, acquire new knowledge and skills to build a niche for excellence in management. Therefore, management education has to be in a symbolic relationship with the teaching-learning methodologies and use of latest communication technologies. Hence, there is a need to develop an open attitude to adopt communication technologies as in other B-schools to deliver the programmes with, the quality and productivity consciousness. The communication technologies have broken the boundaries of class room to bring education and educator into the realms of the learner. In this direction, the role of communication technologies in improving both quality and quantity of management education needs greater attention.

Interactive Process of teaching-learning in Management Education

The ever changing phenomenon of business world has posed varieties of changes as well as opportunities to our management education. It makes unprecedented demands for new managerial skills. In view of the contemporary management, theory and practice is undergoing changes and to obtain an understanding of these new trends in management, it is now necessary to present such changes to the learners of management studies. The main task of management education is, therefore to make the learners fit into the current thinking under such changing business environment. The revolution of communication technologies is influencing the concepts and practice of industry and management education system. It has opened up opportunities to management institutes to experiment with the emerging technologies of imparting management studies. In the changing context, the objectives of the educational delivery for management studies calls for a revamp to reach the future learners and their new needs, thus initiating the interactive process of teaching –learning more effectively than done earlier.

Uses of New Communication Technologies in Educational Delivery

- To change and strengthen the foundations of the learning process by providing opportunities for reflective thought and reasoned response.
- To introduce more flexibility of movement between education, training and work.
- Advocates constructive and collaborative learning by increasing the interaction or dialogue in learning process.
- New role for public and private software institutes that contribute to a new interactive teaching-learning process.
- Developing the generic competencies necessary to participate in the future 'knowledge societies'.
- Skill development for social and economic advantage.
- To make multi-media to remove the inconvenience of time, place, and limitations of print media thus provide greater access to students at a distance.

- Ensure efforts to increase the quality of teaching-learning process thereby increasing the access and equity.
- Finally, it promotes a sense of equality among students.

Challenges and Opportunities for Institutions

The opportunities and challenges encountered today by the management education providers in adopting the new communication technologies are greater and more diverse. The institutions that succeed will be those capable of adopting and adjusting to new changes in the educational technology. At the same time, it is also requires some managerial strategies to adopt and implement changes in the educational delivery. Some of the opportunities and challenges are:

Challenges	Opportunities
1. Institutions capacity to pay new cost.	1. Provides student support services at a low cost in the long run.
2. Training aspects of the staff and functionaries in the delivery system	2. Reduces exclusively dependence of Teachers and print media.
3. Role of funding agencies and their support policies to the changing communication technologies.	3. Develops learning skills and different forms of interactive ness.
4. Different organizational structures and administrative setups.	4. It is a problem solving tools for administrative and academic activities.
5. Nature of technology and related factors- choice of appropriate technology and media mix decisions.	5. Enables to introduce new methods of teaching, new support services and delivery system to the learners.
6. Optimum utilization of the infrastructure in meeting the expectations of effective outcomes.	6. Aspects of sharing, collaborations and networking at regional and national level ensures quick changes and more benefits.
7. User related skills, unprepared learners and uniformed learners.	7. Provides tailored packages and programmes meeting particular targets.
8. R & D is also yet another area of concern to develop appropriate strategies suitable to varied learners.	8. Facilitates data base and benefits of new knowledge generated and accumulated can easily be transformed to the learners.
9. Resistance to change, beliefs, behaviour and attitude of the staff, institutional heads and authorities.	9. The newness of technology excites and motivates the learners psychologically.

Pedagogical Considerations in Distance Education

There are a large number of distance delivery systems available for delivery of instruction to distance learners. The scope, diversity, and rate of technical change make selection of pertinent delivery systems difficult and risky. Yet decisions for implementing distance education must be made. Thus, it is crucial for decision- makers to consider pedagogical issues in providing appropriate guidance for action. Some of the important pedagogical considerations in distance education can be centered on four important issues; interaction between instructors and learners, instructional strategies, motivation, and feedback/ evaluation.

1. ***Interaction between Instructors and Students:*** When distance delivery systems are applied, it is important to consider which types of interaction between instructors and students will be used. Interaction between learners and teachers can be one-way, two-way or multiple-way. For example, interaction between learners and instructors in audio teleconferencing is two-way; however, print materials go only one-way.

2. ***Instructional strategies:*** Instructional strategies in essence refer to teaching activities. Teaching activities are also important pedagogical considerations for distance education because a growing body of literature indicates that when students actively participate in the learning process, they are likely to perform better and remember more.

Positive Impact of the Changing Technologies

On the Students

- Facilitates a large and varied clientele the autonomy to learn at their convenience overcoming the barriers of place, time, control, place of learning or the communication activity.
- The variety and newness of these technologies can excite and motivate learners psychologically.
- Guides problem solving, enables to learn through computers, various media devices and through different forms of interactions.
- Facilitates data base to search for the additional resources, literature and books.
- It extends the benefit of new knowledge which is being generated and accumulated at rapid pace.

On the Staff

- A range of new teaching methods can be applied as supplementary or complimentary approach to fulfill various pedagogical functions.
- The practices of team building, coordinated tasks, practicing new strategies, diagnosing students problems etc., develops creativity..
- Ensures specialization and expertise by acquiring new skills from designing curriculum, programmes, courseware administration, script writing, layout planning, producing, editing etc.
- Promotes to initiate exchange programmes to share and learn new concepts and strategies from similar as well as related institutions.

On the Institutions

- Promotes efficiency in the operations and service aspects of support services, admissions, examinations, correspondence, feedback and evaluation.
- Provides support services at a minimum cost per student without lowering the quality of instruction and services. Of course, the initial expenditure would be high but later in the long run it comes down.
- Enables to review its internal organizational and managerial structure to meet the new demands.
- A new culture and environment is created among the teachers, students, institution and the society since it generates useful effects with large audience, reputation, advertising possibilities and the pride to move with changing trends.

Globalization- Threat or Opportunity

Indian society has witnessed that liberalization and globalization of commodity market has brought positive benefits to consumers and the society. Likewise, the globalization of management education can also bring various benefits to India. The apprehensions against opening of management education for foreign providers are unfounded and baseless. The reasons are many. Firstly, there are four modes of providing education services under GATS' provision of WTO, cross boarder deliver of education service via internet, etc, movement of students from one country to another country, establishment of foreign campuses, collaborations, franchising, exchange programmes etc. Even now foreign B-Schools through various modes are exporting management education to India. Secondly, business education needs heavy investment and foreign direct investment is easy way to meet the financial requirement. Lastly, management education is a high-tech system and hence, foreign collaborations and investment can help import modern educational technology.

Conclusion

In the context of globalization, the developing countries like India are witnessing the increased penetration of the advanced communication and information technology. The WTO and the GATS agreements have emphasized education is a part of International Trade Services and advanced information technology is a powerful tool for expansion of trade in services. Further, the Human Development Report also states that in the context of globalization, the link between university and industry has been emphasized to stimulate innovation with technology.

In view of this, management education needs to scrutinize its infrastructure, market dynamics, collaborations, partnerships, industry-institute interactions, and create an integrated educational service. In distance education environment, learners need to interact both with the learning material, and with the tutors or instructors, and other students, in order to learn effectively. Delivery system should be matched to appropriate conceptual models of thinking and interactivity activities. Thus the learner should be exposed to multiple forms of experience through the technology. Also, it should be flexible to accommodate different learning styles.

Technology can contribute as a dynamic force for student centeredness in this teaching –learning process. An understanding of the innovativeness and interactiveness of IT based teaching-learning methodologies besides the regular class room teaching practices can add to the educational value of the management courses. Therefore, rethinking of the delivery system in distance education and training practices needs to be emphasized especially in management studies.

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ROLE OF SELF-INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIAL IN DISTANCE LEARNING

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The success of any Distance Education Institution is mainly depends on the quality of its study material supported to distance learners. In most distance education institutions, the primary course materials are represented by print in the form of: Existing texts and articles with specially written study guide material: Specially written texts; Notes on broadcasts, non-broadcasts, audio-visual materials and practical activities; Assignment question papers.,

Good quality distance learning materials should have three features:
- they should have academic acceptability:
- they should reflect the students' resources, capacities and abilities;
- they should be self-instructional.

Acceptability of materials entail
- actual accuracy and lack of ambiguity;
- avoidance of over-simplification or over-generalisation;
- a satisfactory balance of subject-matter and its treatment;
- the avoidance of conscious or unconscious bias in the treatment of subject;
- the chance for the student to become aware of differing points of view and interpretation;
- an appropriate balance between imparting facts and developing the sills to use them.

Materials need to be self-instructional and should be:
- Written and presented in a style that is stimulation;
- Easily 'accessible' to the student;
- Clear and evident structure – in terms of content and presentation;
- Ideally, alternative routes and ' by-passes' should be built into the materials, to allow, where feasible, for student difference in learning rate, interest and learning style.
- Minimal use of forward and backward referencing, or of references out to other materials.

Walter Perry, the first Vice-Chancellor of the British Open University and Greville Rumble, the planning officer of the British Open University provided guidelines to distance teachers in the preparation of instructional materials. According to Perry and Rumble, teachers preparing the materials can help:
- by preparing the materials in 'chunks' which will occupy the student for no more than one hour at a time. One hour is the longest reasonable time to expect students to settle down and concentrate on their studies.
- By asking the student to do something. For example, one can ask a student to stop reading, think about what he or she has been doing, and then write an answer to a

'self-assessment question' written into the text. The text can then give a model answer, and discuss why the answer given is a better one than some of the alternatives which students could have given. Do not, however, be surprised if some students ignore these self –assessment question.

- by varying the things students do – for example, by getting them to read a passage from a text, carry out an experiment, listen to an audio cassette, and then answer a self-assessment question, before going on with the reading. Do not be surprised if students study the materials in a different order from the one you have suggested.
- by varying the things do – for example, by getting them to read a passage from a text, carry out an experiment, listen to an audio cassette, and then answer a self-assessment question, before going on with the reading. Do not be surprised if students study the materials in a different order from the one you have suggested.
- by varying the way in which material is presented through the use in texts of illustrations, cartoons, diagrams; varying the voice or style of delivery in audio cassettes, etc.
- by avoiding a dreary or boring style
- by making the materials easy to read and nice to look at, a pleasure to read and nice to look at a pleasure to listen to, good to watch, etc., thus making it a pleasure to learn.

How are our course materials?

Do we see all the essential features and characteristics of instructional materials in the course materials produced by Correspondence Course Institutes / Centers of Distance Education in Conventional Universities (CCIs). This question is not investigated or researched by many. Very few scholars attempted to find out the qualities of instructional materials and their impact on distance student learning.

The following are the difficulties generally faced by learners regarding study materials.

- Definitions & Terms not adequately clarified
- Lessons written in complex style
- Lack of explanations with examples
- Much printing errors
- Lack of upto-date content
- No link between one lesson & anoter
- Lengthy presentation

H.C.S. Rathore in his study of 2800 distance students from 14 selected Correspondence Courses Institutions in the country highlighted different operational aspects of distance education. The study revealed that 47 percent students were not satisfied with the course materials. They listed a variety of defects in the course materials. The most frequently mode observations of the students are the following.

a) The materials are sketchy, content are not fully elaborated and explained'
b) Vital concepts are often overlooked and reference of the same are not traceable;
c) The language is very difficult and often hard to understand;
d) The reading materials do not contain sufficient expels / illustration;
e) Not enough for sound preparation for exam;
f) Materials sent are old; not revised, hence, not upto the mark;

g) The reading materials sent are generally written in text-book format; and sometimes course writers even copy down the same lines and paragraphs from the books.
h) There are lot of printing mistakes
i) The materials are stereotyped, boring and unable to sustain interest for long period.

How to improve the Effectiveness of Instructional Materials

With the above issues we will know the current status of the teaching materials used by CCIs. An interesting development in recent time is the availability of notes or guides for many subjects which are used by distance learners as substitutes for the course materials freely provided by CCIs. The guides have interesting names. Some are named after flowers such as LOTUS GUIDE, ROSE GUIDE, JASMINE GUIDE. By their aim they are also called SURE SUCCESS GUIDES. Their covers, colors, titles and sizes greatly attract average and below average students with low level of motivation. Hence, it is need for improving quality and effectiveness of materials. Some significant suggests drawn from reach studies are given below.

- The lessons should be written in simple and easy language.
- The reading material should be supplemented with more examples, diagrams, and illustrations.
- The materials should be systematic and logical having short sentences, paragraphs and headings.
- The printing mistakes in the reading materials that confuse students must be avoided.
- Revised and up-dated materials with latest data should be developed each year.
- Unit-wise annotated references must be provided in the materials.
- Sufficient self-check exercises and summary must be given at the end of each unit.
- Students level of understanding and knowledge should be kept in mind while preparing the materials.
- The materials should be self-explanatory.

Besides the above, CCIs should make use of the Student Support System to motivate students to develop as independent learners and acquire additional knowledge and additional knowledge and skills. The student support system has several components of which the important ones are TUTORING, COUNSELLING, INFORMATION, GUIDANCE. All these four components can be used to motivate learners to base their study on the course material supplied by the institution while counseling students as other materials supplied by the institution while counseling students on other matters.

Students can be explained the vital role the materials would play in individualizes learning. They should be told how the materials are produced by experienced college and University Teachers. They should further told that examination pass should not be their only goal and acquisition of additional knowledge and skills are also essential for their overall development.

Assignments play an important role in student learning. Compulsory assignments develop in students punctuality and regularity. They force that students to compulsorily study the course materials. Assignments should be such that without going through course materials, students cannot write responses to assignment questions.

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MOOCS : A NEW PERSPECTIVE FOR ONLINE HIGHER EDUCATION

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Introduction and History

Technology and globalization have increased the accessibility to higher education. Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) are online courses aimed at unlimited participation and open access via the web. In addition to traditional course materials such as filmed lectures, readings, and problem sets, many MOOCs provide interactive user forums to support community interactions between students and professors. A MOOC is by itself a non-defined pedagogical format to organize learning / teaching / training on a specific topic in a more informal collaborative way. MOOCs are a recent trend in distance learning promoted by several prestigious universities and private players around the globe. In a short period the popularity of MOOCs has exploded.

In the year 2008, around 2,200 people signed up for the Siemens and Downe's Connectivism and Connective Knowledge course[CCK08] (Fini, 2009; Rodriguez, 2012) which was the first Massive open online courses (MOOCs) using web technologies. It was an open education experience for the masses. Shortly thereafter companies such as Coursera, which launched in April 2012, began coordinating a growing number of MOOC offerings. Individuals involved in the early development of MOOCs as an instructional strategy included Siemens and Downe's CCK08; the University of Illinois' not-for-credit course with 2,700 participants in 2011; and Thrun and Norvig's Artificial Intelligence course (CS221) with 160,000 students enrolled from 190 countries (Carr, 2012; Rodriguez, 2012). As a result of his experience, Thrun launched Udacity in 2012, a for-profit company providing alternative lifelong learning options primarily in computer science and math. In May 2012, Harvard and MIT launched the non-profit, edX, with the University of California at Berkeley joining soon after. They were clear that their agenda was to explore innovative ways to improve classroom education, not to replace it (Kolowich, 2013a). Also in 2012, the for-profit company Coursera was founded by Stanford professors Koller and Ng (Carr, 2012). Coursera partners with leading universities to provide educational access to all. Low or no cost, technology, market needs, learner demand, masses training and conformity are the potential drivers for growth of the MOOCs.

The paper is structured as follows. In the following section, we discuss the characteristics; next to that benefit of MOOCs followed by how MOOCs work. In the next section, we present the design models for MOOCs and various MOOC platforms with some statistics. Finally, we present the case study and issue, challenges and conclusion.

Characteristics of MOOCs

MOOCs are built on the characteristics of massiveness, openness, and a connectivist philosophy. McAuley, Stewart, Siemens, and Cormier (2010) explained that MOOCs use strategies similar to social networking to connect the masses but with the added benefits of subject matter experts to facilitate the content and to coordinate a vast array of free, online materials. Students also have the opportunity to engage with others throughout the world with some organizing sub-groups specific to their learning goals and interests.

- *Massiveness*: MOOCs easily accommodate large numbers of students. From a pragmatic perspective, MOOCs provide access to large numbers of people who might otherwise be excluded for reasons ranging from time, to geographic location, to formal prerequisites, to financial hardships. The Artificial Intelligence course developed and conducted by Stanford faculty Sebastian Thrun and Peter Norvig is an example of massiveness as 160,000 enrolled in the course.
- *Openness*: Openness involves several key concepts: open content, open source software, open registration, curriculum, and assessment; communication including interaction, collaboration, and sharing; and learning environments (Rodriguez, 2012).
- *Online*: Delivered via web
- *Connectivism*: MOOCs offer an emerging online teaching methodology inspired by a connectivist philosophy. The MOOC format is commonly referred to as C-MOOCs (Connectivist Massive Open Online Courses). Connectivism values autonomy, diversity, openness, and interactivity (Rodriguez, 2012). Connectivism teaching strategies allow an instructor to assume the role of facilitator with learners actively interacting with other students. It is not a knowledge transfer from instructor to learner in a single learning environment (Kop,2011). Most significantly, MOOCs build on the engagement of learners who self-organize their participation according to learning goals, prior knowledge and skills, and common interests.

Benefits of MOOCs

The following are the benefits of the MOOCs:

- You can organize a MOOC in any setting that has connectivity (which can include the Web, but also local connections via Wi-Fi e.g.)
- You can organize it in any language you like (taking into account the main language of your target audience)
- You can use any online tools that are relevant to your target region or that are already being used by the participants
- You can move beyond time zones and physical boundaries
- It can be organized as quickly as you can inform the participants (which makes it a powerful format for priority learning in e.g. aid relief)
- Contextualized content can be shared by all
- Learning happens in a more informal setting, at a place of your convenience and often around your own schedule.
- Learning can also happen incidentally thanks to the unknown knowledge that pops up as the course participants start to exchange notes on the course's study
- You can connect across disciplines and corporate/institutional walls
- You don't need a degree to follow the course, only the willingness to learn (at high speed)
- You add to your own personal learning environment and/or network by participating in a MOOC
- You will improve your lifelong learning skills, for participating in a MOOC forces you to think about your own learning and knowledge absorption.
- Student engagement through activities.

How MOOCs Work?

MOOCs are online courses where lectures are typically "canned," quizzes and testing are automated, and student participation is voluntary. They attain large scale by reducing

instructor contact with individual students; students often rely on self-organized study and discussion groups. An alternative model allows students to vote on which questions should rise to the professor's attention (e.g., Coursera). edX encourages students to rely on each other, awarding "Karma points" to students who correctly answer other students' questions.

Initial MOOCs have often been from disciplines that lend themselves to quantitative assessment, such as engineering, computer science, and maths. However, MOOCs are becoming applicable to all fields as the platforms enable assessment methods such as peer review. MOOCs generate massive quantities of data about learner behavior, which can be used to understand cognitive growth and how to improve instruction. Some platforms may evolve from course-delivery systems toward adaptive learning platforms— systems that personalize the experience based on the learner's performance.

MOOCs embody a convergence of technology and culture that is creating new energy around e-learning. On the technology side, the tools enabling web-based instruction are more effec-tive and reach greater scale than ever before. E-learning technologies that are widely used in MOOCs include:

- *High-quality indexed video*
- *Data capture and analytics*
- *Delivery platforms*

From a cultural perspective, communication, collaboration, and knowledge discovery via the web have become commonplace. Sites like TED, Khan Academy, iTunesU, and YouTube, which house rich collections of instructional material, have paved the way for MOOCs.

Technical, Infrastructure, Instructional and Other Requirements

MOOCs require investment. Whether the MOOC is self-hosted or offered through a commercial platform, integrated course support is required. Support requirements include:

- **Technical** (Videography, Editing, Graphic Design)
- **Instructional** (Instructional Design, Courseware development, Teaching Assistant Support)
- **Library** (Resource Discovery, Copyright clearance)

Institutions intending to self-host MOOCs will need a sophisticated, highly scalable LMS-like platform, servers, Internet connection, ability to effectively market the courses, and the capacity to offer technical system support remotely catering to a large scale.

Credits

Most MOOCs are offered as noncredit courses and award "badges" or certificates of completion after their successful completion. To date only Colorado State University's Global Campus has agreed to provide students full transfer credit toward a CSU bachelor's degree for an introductory computer science MOOC. They must earn a "certificate of accomplishment" from Udacity, the company supporting the course, showing that they passed, and then pay to exam fee in dollars to take a proctored examination also offered by Udacity through a secure, physical testing center.

Issues and Challenges in MOOCs and Conclusion

Although most of the educators recognize the advantages of MOOCs, several issues and challenges though exist as listed in the next section.

- It feels chaotic as participants create their own content

- It demands digital literacy
- There is no individual instruction a MOOCs require course delivery to a large number of learners
- As a participant you need to be able to self-regulate your learning and possibly give yourself a learning goal to achieve.
- Student Performance Assessment
- Long term Administration and Oversight
- Identity and credit transfer
- Intellectual Property
- Copyright Clearance

To conclude, the development of technology always influences the context of education and learning (Bouchard, 2011). MOOCs bring a new perspective to traditional education. It seems that institutions, as a whole, might be apprehensive about MOOCs as they relate to access, affordability, and student success. The providers like edX, Udacity, Coursera etc are providing the services to launch the courses by the Universities and others. In a time when higher education is being criticized for low productivity, increasing costs, and inefficient use of technology (Levine, 2013), MOOCs will provide viable alternatives of high productivity, low cost (or free), and utilization of leading edge technology. With the help of these MOOCs offered by the world class premium Universities any learner with requisite qualifications can enroll themselves for the courses taught by the renowned faculty and get certified.

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STATUS OF WOMEN EDUCATION IN INDIA

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Introduction

Women education in India has also been a major preoccupation of both the government and civil society as educated women can play a very important role in the development of the country. Education is milestone of women empowerment. because it enables them to responds to the challenges, to confront their traditional role and change their life. So that we can't neglect the importance of education in reference to women empowerment India is poised to becoming superpower, a developed country by 2020. The growth of women's education in rural areas is very slow. This obviously means that still large womenfolk of our country are illiterate, the weak, backward and exploited. Education of women in the education of women is the most powerful tool of change of position in society. Education also brings a reduction in inequalities and functions as a means of improving their status within the family. Women have a much lower literacy rate than men. Far fewer girls are enrolled in the schools, and many of them drop out. In the patriarchal setting of the Indian family, girls have lower status and fewer privileges than boy children .Conservative cultural attitudes prevents some girls from attending school.

Women empowerment through education

Education is the key to empowering women and girls, which helps bring about social equality. Girls' education programme works on improving lives and providing opportunities for girls and women through increased participation in formal and alternative education systems. Provision of formal and functional education is needed for the women folk, because:

- It would empower them to know and ask for their rights to education, health, shelter, food clothing etc.
- It would empower them to fight against every form of discrimination against their folk, assert themselves about their right to equal treatment with their men counterpart as bonafide citizens of this nation.
- It would enable the women take decisions and accept responsibilities for taking such decisions concerning themselves
- It would give economic power to the women and there by enable them to contribute their quota to the economic growth of the nation.
- It would empower the women scientifically through exposure to science and technological education for the challenges of the present technological age and information computer technology break through unfolding world wide.
- It would help women to reduce maternal and infant mortality through improved nutrition, improved child rearing practice, health care and prevention against killer diseases.
- It would avail women with the opportunity of participating keenly in the world of sophisticated politics and governance as enlightened citizens. Importance of Women Education Napoleon was once asked, what the great need of France was. He answered," Nation's progress is impossible without trained and educated mothers. If the women of my country are not educated, about half of the people will be ignorant."

A woman has to play three roles in the course of her life. Each of these roles expects some duties from her. It is only with the help of education that she would be able to do them successfully.

- The first duty of a woman is to be a good daughter.
- The second duty is to be a good wife and third duty is to be a good mother.
- Education teaches a woman what she should be.
- It also teaches her how she should do it to be good daughter, a good wife and a good mother.
- Many men spend their evening time at clubs and societies.
- But a gentleman with an educated wife will not feel the need of a club or a society.
- He can share his thoughts with her. He can have her advice in trouble.
- He can spend his leisure in her pleasant company.
- An educated lady is a good friend, a clever nurse and a useful adviser to her husband.
- So she is a true help-mate. She can get her husband's affection and regard.
- An educated lady is always able to share his sorrows.

There is a saying in English" The hand that rocks the cradle rules the world". The meaning is that the mother exercises a very great influence over the lives of her children. She is able to mould their thoughts and character.

- If she is educated, she will make such impression on the mind of her children that will enable them in the later life to grow into a great man. Jeeja Bai mother of Shivaji wished to make Shivaji a great man. It was Shivaji who overthrew Mughal Empire and became what his mother wished. It is true that education will enable women to make their parents, husbands and children truly happy. Hence it is very necessary that women should be educated.
- The high status that women enjoyed during early Vedic period gradually started deteriorating in the late Vedic period. Lineage began to be traced in the male line and sons were the sole heirs to family property. As the economic and social status of sons began to rise, the position of women saw a steep decline.
- The position of women reached an all-time low during the age of the Dharmashastras. It is during this age that codes of conduct prescribing behaviour norms for women were evolved. This period saw the exclusion of women from both economic and religious sphere. During the period of Dharmashastra, child marriage was encouraged and widow marriage was looked down upon. The birth of girl child was considered as an ill omen and many parents went to the extent of killing the female infants.
- The practice of Sati became quite wide spread because of the ill treatment meted out to widows. Although in the Vedic period women had access to education in India, they had gradually lost this right. In cultural reality, the women enjoyed a privileged position in the Vedic period. The women had special customs, rituals and spirituality, with which men were not allowed to interfere.
- Women Education in Medieval Period The condition of Women in society deteriorated more during the medieval period with the entrance of Muslims. At this point of time several evil practices like child-marriage, sati, and female infanticide were practiced largely. `Purdah` system was started. These women were also forced to practice 'Zenana'. Rajput women of Rajasthan practiced 'Jauhar'. Polygamy was common in Hindu Kshatriyas.

- At the same time many women excelled in arts, literature, and music. Women were also rulers in the medieval period. Some of the great women rulers were Razia Sultana, the only women monarch to rule the throne of Delhi. The Gond queen Durgavati ruled for 15 long years, before she lost the battle to Asaf Ali emperor.
- The literacy rate before independence was 2.6% rose in 1961 to 15.3% and 50% by the year 2001. And now, according to the 2011 Census, the male literacy rate is 82.14 while female literacy rate is 65.46.

Women Education in Modern Period Kerala and Mijoram are the only states in India that have achieved universal female literacy rates. The improvement in social and economic status of women is said to be one of the reasons for literacy. In cities the literacy rate is almost equal between girls and boys in the country however the rate in rural areas continues to be less than the boys. 40% of the centers under NFE, non formal education programs are set apart for women.

According to statistics of women education in India, today 0.3 million NFE centers have primary education to 0.12 million girls out of 7.42 million children. However in tribal areas there is not much of a gender bias as compared to all other castes, tribal community statistics show lower male ratio in spite of much low income, literacy, education and other facilities several efforts are being made towards women education and empowerment. The government is taking steps to increase the rate of women education and employment.

Conclusion

Women Empowerment through Education Women Empowerment is a global issue and discussion on women political right are at the fore front of many formal and informal campaigns worldwide. The concept of women empowerment was introduced at the international women conference at NAROIBI in 1985. Education is milestone of women empowerment. because it enables them to responds to the challenges, to confront their traditional role and change their life.

So that we can't neglect the importance of education in reference to women empowerment India is poised to becoming superpower, a developed country by 2020. The year 2020 is fast approaching; it is just 13 year away. This can became reality only when the women of this nation became empowerment. India presently account for the largest number no of illiterates in the world.

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ICT IN TEACHER EDUCATION

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Introduction

This is the time when more people everywhere are involved in acquiring new knowledge and skills continuously throughout their lives and from virtually every context of daily life. Technology has entered the classrooms as a support system in the form of television literacy and computer literacy which include Wire, Web, and Windows leading to connectivity, networking and applications.

Role of NCTE

The National Policy on Education (NPE, 1986) highlights,"The status of the teacher reflects the socio-cultural ethos of the society. Teachers should have the freedom to innovate, devise appropriate methods of communication and activities relevant to the needs and capabilities and the concerns of the community."

In the 11th Five year Plan (2007-12) importance of ICT in education has been emphasized. In this plan 10,000 crore rupees has been allocated for ICT integration to improve the infrastructure and training programmes, 5000 crore for school education, 5000 crore for Higher education to apply ICT by the Ministry of HRD and the Department of Information Technology. In the 11th Plan period, every school will have five Pcs , Printer, Internet connectivity of 256 kbps plus other consumables etc.

NCTE insists on integrating ICT in Teacher Education curriculum as a result Educational Technology becomes the compulsory paper. INTEL(R) takes worldwide efforts to help pre service and In-service teachers integrate technology in the classroom. NCTE in collaboration with INTEL (R) introduced CAI (Computer Assisted Instruction), CAL (Computer Assisted Learning), and CBT (Computer Based Testing). The Teachers should 'glow' in their profession. They should never 'glow out' and become 'burn outs'. The causes of 'burnout' syndrome are as follows:

- Lack of personal accomplishment
- Depersonalisation
- Emotional exhaustion
- Lack of social support

Teaching technology is the application of philosophical, sociological, psychological, anthropological and scientific knowledge to teaching for achieving some specific learning objectives. In the light of ICT's utility in Teacher Education, certain essential conditions by International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) are to be implemented.

Essential Conditions of ICT

- *Shared Vision:* For shared vision**,** proactive leadership and administrative support from the entire system is needed. In addition to this, the collaborative environment necessary for creating a shared vision is also needed to sustain that vision.
- *Access:* Educators should have adequate and consistent access to current technologies, (Computer labs, software, microscopes, Internet, word processing etc).

- *Skilled Educators:* The teachers must be skilled in the use of technology for the presentation and administration of their course work.
- *Professional Development:* Professional development is not a one-time event. Educators should have consistent access to professional development in support of technology use in the teaching-learning process.
- *Technical Assistance:* It is a critical factor for success in implementing ICT in TE. Most of the present Teacher Educators and pre-service teachers do not focus on the learning of trouble shooting procedures and other technical assistance. To make teaching innovative, they should come out of traditional teaching.
- *Content Standards and Curriculum Resources:* Educators should learn to use technology in ways that meet synthesising the content standards and technology standards for students and teachers. Technology brings relevant resources from the real world to subject area content, provides tools analysing and data and conveys content through a variety of media and formats.
- *Student –Centred Teaching:* Teaching in all settings should encompass student-centred approaches to learning. Technology should not be used as a tool for demonstration, as an electronic overhead projector or a blackboard. In this approach, students collect and analyse data, draw conclusions and convey results using tools to accomplish this task.
- *Assessment:* There should be continuous assessment of the effectiveness of technology for throughout the teacher preparation environment. This continuous assessment will provide information regarding the learning strategies used, potential problems and data for altering policies and instructional strategies.
- *Community Support:* The community and school management should provide expertise, support and resources for technology implementation of Teacher Education.
- *Support Policies:* Policies either support or hinder the implementation of technology. School and university policies, financing and rewards structures related to technical assistance should support the use of technology rather than obstruct it..

Advantages of ICT in Teacher Education
- ICT is used effectively to benefit students' learning and achievement.
- ICT is supported by trained technical personnel to use to the maximum.
- ICT should be ongoing process, enhancing curriculum, building on the prior knowledge, and with help of updated information innovation takes place continuously in the teaching learning process.
- ICT makes work more enjoyable, efficient and creative.
- Students and Teacher educators utilize ICT ethically, independently and collaboratively using the latest techniques and methods of teaching.
- ICT helps to share instructional materials, develop Research and Teaching competencies.

The 21st century Teachers and students require the lenses of learning From ICT, with ICT, Through ICT, and Around ICT with the skills of:
- Digital Age Literacy-Basic, Scientific and Technological Literacy, Visual and information Literacy, Cultural Literacy and Global Awareness.
- Inventive Thinking- Intellectual Capital- Adaptability- Ability to manage Complexity, Curiosity, Creativity and Risk-taking.
- Effective Communication skills, Social and Personal skills- Teaming, Collaborative and Interpersonal skills, Intra personal skills.

- High productivity and Quality assurance of learning – ability to prioritize, Plan and manage for the good results, Effective use of Relevant Tools which results in High Quality Products.

Conclusion

Emergence of Information and Communication Technology has ushered in a new era in our civilization in which digitisation has almost become a better alternative, because it has influenced every facet of human life including education. With the use of ICT, the basic transformation is taking place in the way our teachers teach and the students learn. From the above discussion it is clear that if we take a cursory look at the B.Ed. Syllabus, the trend of integrating ICT component in pre-service teacher education programmes of different Indian universities that can be clearly noticed. But the efforts are of a sporadic nature and ICT is mostly introduced as an optional subject. Possibly it is for this reason the TE in India could not make significant impact on the changing scenario of education. Teachers in India need to be prepared to face the challenges of 21st century by imparting the new era of education programme in India integrating ICT component in such a way that teachers are enabled to face new demands in this noble profession.

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USE OF MULTIMEDIA LEARNING IN TEACHER EDUCATION

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Introduction

Education is a continuous, complex, dynamic and life-long process. Now-a-days technology occupies a prominent place in the teaching-learning process. The purpose of ICT is to improve the effectiveness of teaching-learning process in formal or informal setting and to utilize scientific principles to that end. ICT can be defined as the development, application and evaluation of system, techniques and teaching aids to improve the process of learning. It will help the teachers to teach well as well as the learners to learn well.

E-Learning in Teacher Education

E-learning is the use of electronic media and information and communication technologies (ICT) in education. E-learning is broadly inclusive of all forms of educational technology in learning and teaching. E-learning is inclusive of, and is broadly synonymous with multimedia learning, technology-enhanced learning (TEL), computer-based instruction (CBI), computer-based training (CBT), computer-assisted instruction or computer-aided instruction (CAI), internet-based training(IBT), web-based training (WBT), online education, virtual education, virtual learning environments (VLE) (which are also called learning platforms), m-learning, and digital educational collaboration. These alternative names emphasize a particular aspect, component or delivery method.

E-learning includes numerous types of media that deliver text, audio, images, animation, and streaming video, and includes technology applications and processes such as audio or video tape, satellite TV, CD-ROM, and computer-based learning, as well as local intranet/extranet and web-based learning. E-learning can occur in or out of the classroom. It can be self-paced, asynchronous learning or may be instructor-led, synchronous learning. E-learning is suited to distance learning and flexible learning, but it can also be used in conjunction with face-to-face teaching, in which case the term blended learning is commonly used.

E-learning is defined as learning facilitated and supported through the utilization of information and communication technologies (Jenkins & Hanson 2003). Thus, e-learning includes the use of ICT tools (e.g. Internet, computer) and content created with technology (e.g. animations, videos) to support teaching and learning activities.

Multimedia Learning in Teacher Education

Multimedia is media and content that uses a combinationof different media content forms. Multimedia means, combination of text, audio, still images, animation, videoand interactivity content forms delivered electronically. Multimedia may be broadly divided into linear andnon-linear categories. Linear active content progresseswithout any navigational control for the viewer suchas a Cinema Presentation. Non-linear content offersuser interactivity to control progress as used with avideo game used in self-paced computer based training.

The term "multimedia" was coined by Bob Goldsteinin July 1966 at Southampton, Long Island. On August 10, 1966 Richard Albarino explained the utility of Multimedia in

seminars. In India, this concept wasstarted in 1993.Commonly recognized examples of new literacy'sinclude such practices as instant messaging, blogging,maintaining a website, participating in online socialnetworking spaces, creating and sharing music videos,pod casting and video casting, photo shopping imagesand photo sharing, emailing, shopping online, digitalstorytelling, participating in online discussion lists,emailing and using online chat, conducting and collatingonline searches, reading, writing and commenting onfan fiction, processing and evaluating online information,creating and sharing digital mash-ups, etc. Multimedia tool was proposed byFallon et al., (2011), which can simulate video deliveryover Stream Control Transmission Protocol (SCTP) andit can communicate multiple heterogeneous networks.

Utility of Multimedia in Teaching

When we watch a movie or Television program, superficial and even deep feelings and emotions areelicited, such as excitement, anger, laughter, relaxation,love, whimsy, or even boredom (Prensky, M. 2006).These emotions are often triggered or heightened by the mood created by specific visual scenes, the actors,and the background music.A multimedia content can have a strong effect onour mind and senses. It is so powerful that we maydownload it off the Internet or order the DVD from anyinterested subject along with the CD soundtrack so wecan relive the entire experience over and over again. This attraction to multimedia videos extends to movies, TV programs, commercials, and music videos.

Multimedia Learning Theory

Over the past decade a corpus of studies hasaccumulated that investigates the effects of multimediastrategies on learning. Multimedia typically refers to thepresentation of material in two forms: auditory/verbaland visual/pictorial (Higgins, J. A., & Dermer, S. 2001).The strategies have included PowerPoint (Mayer &Johnson, 2008), Educational games (Nachimuthu, K2010), and computer-assisted video learning(Vijayakumari, G 2010) in a variety of content areas, inaddition to auditory and video media.The empirical findings of research on theeffectiveness of videos embedded in multimedia classesor modules are very encouraging. Numerous studies inspecific areas such as teacher education have producedsignificant results favouring videos (Borko& Pitman,M.E 2008)If we observe the students, they can utilized the

following electronic gadgets; (a) Listening to music; (b)Playing PC & video games; (c) Talking on iPhone; (iv)Sending text & picture messages; (v) Watching videosand or Television; (vi) Using Face book, Orgut&Twitters ; (vii) Utilizing videos from You tube, Skype,other Yahoo and Google messengers (Champoux, J. E.2005).

According to Sagarmay Deb (2012) Multimediatechnology and internet networks have changed thewhole philosophy of learning and provided us with theopportunity for close interaction between teachers andlearners with improved standard of learning materialscompared to what was exists only with the printedmedia. It has gone to such an extent to create a virtualclass room where teachers and students are scatteredall over the world.

Types of Multimedia Contents

Multimedia learning refers to learning from words and pictures. The twoapproaches of multimedia design are (i) a technology centered approach and (ii) a learner centered approach. There is a wide range of multimedia categories that canbe used in the classroom. The actual choice will dependon the instructional purpose or outcome and thecharacteristics of the students and their interests. The multimedia sources having different way of

contentsexpressions viz., (a) drama, (b) action, (c) romantic,(d) comedy, (e) romantic comedy, (f) documentary, (g)Television programs, (h) commercials, (i) college music videos, and (j) faculty or student made videos.All of these types of multimedia contents can evokeor induce anger, excitement, terror, activity, motivation,love, laughter, whimsy, tears, dreams, calmness,relaxation, sleep, and a coma.

Multimedia can have powerful emotionaleffects. Instructors need to decide the effect they wantto produce in a given learning situation. Appliedinappropriately, the multimedia clips can distract anddecrease learning even incites students to riot.

Conclusion

In this context, every teacher should be aware of ICT. Sincetoday's trainees are the teachers of tomorrow. It is concluded that the B.Ed. students are to be strengthened to utilize the e-learning components in their classroom. Teacher-educators maybe given in-service training on e-learning, so as they can able to use e-learning features in their teaching methods. Therefore the Teacher-educators can keep their students more attentive and to make them to understand the concepts of their subject-matter easily which will enhance their learning process. Multimedia encyclopedias have become the latestaddiction to students' reference tools, and the WorldWide Web is full of messages that combine words andpictures. (Mayer, R.E. 2012). A multimedia need thevideo journalism concept and it is a new field that hasgrown out of traditional print photo journalism, slideshows that combine sound and pictures, public radio,documentary filmmaking and the best of television newsfeatures. It can use clean sound with clear recordedclips used in multimedia.

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ROLE OF EDUCATION IN THE EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN

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Introduction

Women constitute almost half of the population in the world. But the hegemonic masculine ideology made them suffer a lot as they were denied equal opportunities in different parts of the world. The rise of feminist ideas has, however, led to the tremendous improvement of women's condition throughout the world in recent times. Access to education has been one of the most pressing demands of theses women's rights movements. Women education in India has also been a major preoccupation of both the government and civil society as educated women can play a very important role in the development of the country.

India is poised to emerge as one of the most developed nations by 2020, more literate, knowledgeable and economically at the forefront. No doubt, women will play a vital role in contributing to the country's development. Women power is crucial to the economic growth of any country. In India this is yet to meet the requirements despite reforms. Little has been achieved in the area of women empowerment, but for this to happen, this sector must experience a chain of reforms. Though India could well become one of the largest economies in the world, it is being hindered due to a lack of women's participation.

What is Women Empowerment?

In simple words Women Empowerment means creating an environment where women can make independent decisions for their personal development. It is only possible when they are treated equal to men up to extent that if a women rises to the top of her field, it should be acceptable to society in general sense. There is a wrong perception in the male dominated society where term "Women Empowerment" is considered as powering the women against men but it does not mean so. The concept of Women Empowerment only demands equal status for women in society comparable to men.

History of Women Education in India

Although in the Vedic period women had access to education in India, they had gradually lost this right. However, in the British period there was revival of interest in women's education in India. During this period, various socio religious movements led by eminent persons like Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar emphasized on women's education in India. Mahatma Jyotiba Phule, Periyar and Baba Saheb Ambedkar were leaders of the lower castes in India who took various initiatives to make education available to the women of India. However women's education got a fillip after the country got independence in 1947 and the government has taken various measures to provide education to all Indian women.

As a result women's literacy rate has grown over the six decades and the growth of female literacy has in fact been higher than that of male literacy rate. While in 2001 only 54.16% of Indian women were literate, by the end of 2011 65.46% female were literate. The growth of female literacy rate is 11.30% as compared to 6.29 % of that of male literacy rate.

Women's Empowerment

Gender discrimination has been a major obstacle in granting equal opportunity for women in Higher Education. It has been identified as a crucial category and deserves attention in the education-equality paradigm. Today, women's education has become an issue of debate within which it is now necessary to shift the focus from women's intellectual development to women's autonomy in decision-making, freedom of expression and control over resources. Empowerment is the manifestation of a redistribution of power that challenges patriarchal ideology, transforming the institutions that reinforce or perpetuate gender discrimination. The parameters of empowerment have been identified as

1. Developing ability for critical thinking;
2. Fostering decision-making and action through collective processes;
3. Ensuring equal participation in developmental processes;
4. Enhancing self-esteem and self confidence in women.

The time has arrived to realize the relevance, in a rapidly developing country like India, of education for leadership-building, especially for women –something which can be achieved only through Higher Education.

Importance of Women Education in India

Women education in India plays a very important role in the overall development of the country. It not only helps in the development of half of the human resources, but in improving the quality of life at home and outside. Educated women not only tend to promote education of their girl children, but also can provide better guidance to all their children. Moreover educated women can also help in the reduction of infant mortality rate and growth of the population.

Women Empowerment through Education

Women Empowerment is a global issue and discussion on women political right are at the fore front of many formal and informal campaigns worldwide. The concept of women empowerment was introduced at the international women conference at NAROIBI in 1985. Education is milestone of women empowerment because it enables them to responds to the challenges, to confront their traditional role and change their life. So that we can't neglect the importance of education in reference to women empowerment India is poised to becoming superpower, a developed country by 2020. The year 2020 is fast approaching; it is just 7 year away.

This can become reality only when the women of this nation became empowerment.India presently account for the largest number no of illiterates in the world. Literacy rate in India have risen sharply from 18.3% in 1951 to 74.04% in 2011 in which enrolment of women in education have also risen sharply 7% to 65.46%. Within the framework of a democratic polity, our laws, development policies, plan and programmes have aimed at women's advancement in difference spheres. From the fifth five year plan (1974–78) onwards has been a marked shift in the approach to women's issues from welfare to development.

In recent years, the empowerment of women has been recognized as the central issue in determining the status of women. The National Commission of Women was set up by an Act of Parliament in 1990 to safeguard the right and legal entitlements of women. The 73rd and 74th Amendments (1993) to the constitution of India have provided for reservation of seats in the local bodies of panchayats and Municipalities for women, laying a strong foundation for their participation in decision making at the local level.

Importance of Women Empowerment

Human development encompasses elements that contribute critical issues of gender and development. The dignity and culture of a society can be detected from the status of women in that society. According to Rameshwari Pandya (2008) Empowerment has become the key solution to many social problems. Empowerment of women is empowerment of family/household and in turn development of a nation of a country. Empowerment of women leads to benefit not only to the individual woman and to women groups, but also to the families and community as a whole through collective action for development

Purpose of Women Empowerment

Women must define their own needs and goals as well as strategies. A pre- requisite for women‟s participation in development process is their empowerment. Women must exercise full participation in decision making process in all walks of life and fully participate with men in finding equitable and practical solution to issues both in the family and society. It also declared that human rights of women and girl child are inalienable, integral and invisible parts of universal human Rights. In her message to mark the First day of the „year of Empowerment of women‟, the national commission for women chairperson Vibha Partha Sarathi said, „the year to come must see women in apex decision making bodies, enter profession denied to them so far, recognize their contribution on important and legitimate and help them to fight against disease and deprivation, indignity and inequity

Education and Women Empowerment

Various writers highlight the role of education for the empowerment of women According to the International Encyclopedia on women (1999) in the programme of action of the International Conference on population and Development education is considered as one of the most important means to empower women with the knowledge skill and self confidence necessary to participate fully in development process. The National Policy on Education (1986)emphasized the promotion of women‟s education in all areas of learning to eliminate any sex based stereo typing with the guarantee of equality before the law and the emphasize on girl‟s education. Since employment plays a vital role in improving women‟s status in a society education of women is of prime importance in any women empowerment programme.

Suggestions

Here are the some suggestions, if implemented with serious effort in right direction can make the difference

- Create awareness among women toward their rights available to them under law and constitution. More efforts are required in rural areas where literacy rate of women is comparatively on lower side, even if they school or college level education it is not possible for them to get complete knowledge about their rights.
- Proper formal Education must be provided to each and every women of country at least up to graduation level. It will help to boost their confidence level high.
- Women should be provided some type of vocational training so that they can stand on their feet and able to earn their livelihood along with self respect.
- Government should create an environment of security for women so that women can work freely without restriction of time and place.
- Government organisations and NGOs should come together try to bring step by step changes in social attitude especially in minds of male so that they should not feel inferiority complex when they has to work in subordination to a woman..

- Laws and Acts which provides special rights to women must be implemented strictly and if needed, they should be changed from time to time as per need with objective of women welfare and empowerment.
- Crime rate against women must be reduced because it creates an adverse environment where neither women nor nation can develop.
- Women should be provided more economic rights in making decisions at family and social level, it is only possible when they are engaged in those earning activities which are recognised as primary activities at social level such as doing jobs, carrying out own business etc

Educated Women means a Better World

Education clearly changes the lives of girls and young women for the better. It breaks the cycle of poverty, helps creates role models within communities, and provides better employment opportunities and cultivating leaders. In developing countries, education gives girls a reason to think beyond the next day, and in all cases, the chance to help and invest in others. Education levels the playing field between men and women. And universally, education unleashes the power of future generations of women, giving us all the privilege of living in a better world.

Conclusion

According to the Country Report of the Government of India, "Empowerment means moving from a weak position to execute a power." Education of women in the education of women is the most powerful tool of change of position in society. Education also brings a reduction in inequalities and functions as a means of improving their status within the family. To encourage the education of women at all levels and for dilution of gender bias in providing knowledge and education, established schools, colleges and universities even exclusively for women in the state. To bring more girls, especially from marginalized families of BPL, in mainstream education, the government is providing a package of concessions in the form of providing free books, uniform, boarding and lodging, clothing for the hostilities midday meals, scholarships, free circles and so on.

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TEACHER'S PROFESSIONAL ETHICS AND HUMANE TEACHERS

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Introduction

Education uplifts the standards, promotes co-operation and maintains harmony in the society. It makes every individual an intellectual citizen of the nation. Education is the parameter that prepares a man in the true sense of the term. Any country can expect its growth and development on the basis its 'Education', only if the education system is fair and good enough to move the country in the right direction. Education system in India is one of the finest in the world but there are certain impediments that still hinder its move towards perfection. Filtering our education system of these impediments is very much significant in present context. This is a major challenge for the teachers, especially the teacher educators. With humane qualities and professional expertise they will definitely be able to refine and improve the existing educational situation.

Teaching is a very difficult job irrespective of the place where teaching is conducted and the person being taught. But the teaching becomes more difficult when we speak of Indian schools. At home parents know very well how difficult it is to bring up even two children. In a classroom consisting of 40-60 students coming from almost the same number of backgrounds are managed by a single teacher. Many students come from poverty-stricken families and are expected to listen to the teacher, study well and behave in a disciplined way on hungry stomachs. Gifted children need content of study, activity, assignment at par with their level, lack of which make them disinterested and in disciplined in class.

Humane Teachers

Humanity is a quality characterized by tenderness, compassion, and sympathy for people. Teaching is the act, practice, occupation, or profession of a teacher. Creating humane teacher implies preparing teachers who are tender to their students, compassionate to their own peers and have sympathy towards people, society including the whole environment. These qualities for person in any profession that may be doctors, engineers, policymakers, industrialists, teachers, businessmen etc. These qualities are not only desirable but a must in a teacher educator, as it is the mother profession and teachers are the creators of all other profession in the world.

Concept of Human Teachers in National Educational Commissions and Policies

The content of teacher preparation programme should be restructured to ensure its relevance to the changing needs of school education. The emphasis in these programmes should be on enabling the trainees to acquire the ability for self-learning and independent thinking (Yaspal Committee Report,1993). The status of the teacher reflects the social-cultural ethos of a society; it is said that no people can rise above the level of its teachers. Teachers should have the freedom to innovate, to devise appropriate methods of communication and activities relevant to the needs and capabilities of and the concerns of the community.

Teachers are the nation builders and educational institutions are the functional heads of all that goes to make the foundations of a nation strong. It is here teachers undertake the task of giving training to the students. Teachers form an essential aspect of the Indian system of education. Teacher is accepted as a guide and philosopher, the man of higher ideals in moulding the society. Aristotle has said about the teachers "those who educate children well

are more to be honored than even their parents, for these only give them like, those the art of living well". As a person who imbibes, interprets and disseminates the culture and as a maker of future citizens of society, his position and role is unique and second to none. It is he who sets up the standards, builds desirable attitudes and learning climate in the classroom and approves or disapproves the behavior of students. He is the builder of students' character, behavior and the whole personality.

Teaching as a Profession

Teaching is often said to be the noblest profession among all the professions; teachers should realize that the work they are doing is the noblest; they need not be apologetic or feel guilty and small; instead they should have pride and confidence in their worth and work. No service can be better than the service rendered to the individual to enable him to grow to his fullest stature at his optimum speed in all the aspects of his personality to be his best self and the work of rendering such a service can be the highest and the noblest.

Professional Ethics for Teachers

Professional ethics refers to the basic values and conceptions of good practice that constitute guidelines for professional conduct. It refers to the principles, guidelines or norms of morality which a teacher has to follow in teaching profession while dealing with students, parents, community and higher authorities. Every profession has different work culture and work climate and accordingly the professional ethics are decided by the society; it is also the contribution of great exponents of the same profession. It is mainly to provide a guideline and also to judge any professional individual. The definition and parameter of professional ethics varies from society to society and from time to time; it is dynamic in nature; with change in social setup, pattern and dimension of the society, the ethics also change. In fact, the professional ethics differ from place to place and hence there is no distinct line to distinguish ethics. What govern any ethic are social benefit, moral correctness, truth, value and progress of mankind. Without high standards of professional ethics it is doubtful that teaching could ever be regarded as a full-fledged profession.

Need of Professional Ethics for Teachers

1. *For Self-satisfaction:* Self-satisfaction is more related to our inner self, and our feelings. When we follow the ethical code of society and profession we are regarded as hard working, honest, dutiful, righteous etc., all this makes us more respectable and more prominent than others.
2. *For Self-correction:* Man and his thinking keep changing. It is human to tend towards comfort, selfishness, laziness and money. It is difficult to follow and abide by truth, hard work, simple living and honesty etc.
3. *To guide the Conduct and Behaviour:* The behaviour of students is moulded by the teacher and the teacher's behaviour by professional ethics. Professional ethics in education is supported by philosophy and psychology of teaching. By following professional ethics, the teachers conduct and behaviour becomes respectable and socially acceptable.
4. *To shape the Personality:* Professional ethics in teaching profession emphasize the teacher to follow pre-established norms in his thought and in actions, even in one's dressing up, speaking etiquettes etc.,; by following similar ethics, the personality of an individual is reshaped and he becomes a teacher in real sense.

5. ***To setup Ideal for Students:*** If a teacher behaves in a very positive and appropriate manner, the students follow him and want to become like him. Hence by behaving in an ethical manner the teacher becomes an ideal for students.

6. ***Improvement of Human Relations:*** Professional ethics guide the teachers to keep in mind the social betterment, respect for others, sense of brotherhood, tolerance, co-operation etc. An individual who is guided by professional ethics helps others to maximum; by doing so he develops positive feelings, which improve human relations. When human relations improve the school becomes the best place for teachers, students and parents to work and co-ordinate. All this ultimately gives better results and improve overall standards.

7. ***Development of Society:*** If the professional ethics are forgotten the individual as well as the society starts moving in the wrong direction. By following professional ethics the teacher takes the society in the right direction and makes it a better place to live in.

8. ***Professional Excellence:*** The work culture is strengthened when the professionals of the profession act and interact professionally in an ethical manner.

9. ***To improve the Professional Environment:*** Professional environment includes the people, infrastructure, working conditions and working hours. Professional ethics ensure that due place and respect are given to the seniors, to the higher authorities, responsibility and working hours. When the teachers follow such ethical codes of a teaching profession the environment remains calm, congenial and relaxed for effective working.

Conclusion

Professional and humanitarian qualities are essential in teacher education. Professionalism equips teacher for their job and humane qualities help to do their job well. At present teachers are very well aware of API (Academic Performance Indicators) scores. So teachers in-service also conscious about their professional development. Hence teacher educators should take the responsibility of instilling the soft qualities in the young minds. Professional ethics is a means of developing attitude conductive to responsible citizenship and to more orderly personal living. Professional ethics lie not in laws and government but in the honesty and moral responsibility of the teacher.

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KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT: A CATALYST FOR SUSTAINING RESULTS IN ODL IN INDIA

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Introduction

The world's largest democracy needs the biggest strategy to educate its men and women in a systematic and effective mode. Implementation of open and distance learning portals started helping India to reach its goal to make all its citizens literate with the relaxed and regulated educational opportunity to the fellow people. Though it tries to reach the reach it still lags behind the line of access to quality content in all areas of knowledge. So it needs to adopt some intense strategy to accomplish the mission appropriately. Knowledge Management is one of the best and promising strategies incorporate by the business worlds and higher education institutions across the globe. This article suggests some purposeful knowledge management strategies for sustaining results in ODL in India.

ODL in India

Distance learning institutes in India have witnessed a remarkable rise in student enrolment crossing the 10 million mark. While experts in the distance and online education domain agree that this mode is amongst the best to increase the gross enrolment ratio in higher education (30 percent by 2020), it is the quality aspect in offering such courses which is of prime concern. The sole regulating body in the country for distance education, the Distance Education Council (DEC) , has been granting approval to the institutes to offer courses that must follow certain standards and guidelines. Open and distance learning offers a number of advantages to both learners and to providers of opportunities for learning. Problems such as distance and time, which are barriers to conventional learning, are overcome in open and distance learning.

Knowledge Management

Knowledge management (KM) is the process of transforming information and intellectual assets into enduring value. It connects people with the knowledge that they need to take action, when they need it (Kidwell, Vander & Johnson, 2000). Knowledge starts as data – raw facts and numbers – for example, the market value of an institution's endowment. Information is data put into context – in the same example, the endowment per student at a particular institution. Information is readily captured in documents or in databases; even large amount is fairly easy to retrieve with modern information technology system. One might expect higher education, where the discovery and dissemination of new and useful knowledge is vital, to be among the first to implement knowledge management practices. Surprisingly, higher education has been slow to implement knowledge management practices (Townley, 2003). This article describes the efforts to implement knowledge management strategies involving a consortium of higher education institutions starting with teacher education and then expanding to other disciplines. Mahesh and Suresh (2004) defined KM as the strategic management of people and knowledge representations in an organization using specific technologies and processes to optimize knowledge sharing.

KM as Catalyst

Using knowledge management techniques and technologies in higher education is as vital as it is in the corporate sector (Kidwell et al., 2000. p. 31). If done effectively, it can lead to better decision-making capabilities, reduced product development cycle time (for example, curriculum development and research), improved academic and administrative services, and reduced costs. Some key points to be remembered as institutions launch knowledge management are:

- Start with strategy – Before doing anything else, determine what you want to accomplish with knowledge management.
- Organizational infrastructure – human resources, financial measurements of success, and information technology – should support knowledge management.
- Seek a high-level champion for the initiative – someone who believes in its benefits and who can advocate as needed.
- Select a pilot project for knowledge management – ideally one with high impact on the organization but of low to build capability for KM.
- Develop a detailed action plan for the pilot that defines the process, the information technology infrastructure, and the roles and incentives of the pilot project team.
- After the pilot project, assess the results and refine the action plan.

A March 2000 Conference Board Survey report indicated that most knowledge management programmes are still focussed on creating repositories for storing and diffusing best practices, focusing on operational excellence and cost reduction (Hackett, 2000).

Benefits of KM for the organization

Dalkir (2005, p.20) enumerated the benefits of Knowledge Management for the organizations as follows; helps drive strategy, solves problems quickly, diffuses best practices, improves knowledge embedded in products and services, cross-fertilizes ideas and increases opportunities for innovation, enables organization to stay ahead of the competition better, reduces redundancy, reduces research and development costs, improves the internal processes of work, reduces mistakes, enhances the diversity of views in business decisions by engaging workers, builds organizational memory by retaining intellectual capital.

Kidwell, et al (2000) listed the Benefits of the Application of KM for the Research Process, Curriculum Development Process, Student and Alumni Services, Administrative Services and Strategic Planning.

Benefits for the Research Process:

- Increased competitiveness and responsiveness of research grants, contracts, and commercial opportunities.
- Reduced turnaround time for research.
- Minimised devotion of research resources to administrative tasks.
- Facilitation of interdisciplinary research.
- Leveraging of previous research and proposal efforts.
- Improved internal and external services and effectiveness.
- Reduced administrative costs.

Benefits for the Curriculum Development Process:

- Enhanced quality of curriculum and programmes by identifying and leveraging best practices and monitoring outcomes.
- Improved speed of curriculum revision and updating.

- Enhanced faculty development efforts, especially for new faculty.
- Improved administrative services related to teaching and learning with technology.
- Improved responsiveness and monitoring and incorporating lessons learned from the experiences of colleagues, student evaluations, and corporate or other constituent input.
- Interdisciplinary curriculum design facilitated by navigating across departmental boundaries.

Benefits for the Student and Alumni Services:
- Improved services for students (portal for services for both students and for faculty and staff at the institution).
- Improved services for alumni and other external constituents.
- Improved effectiveness and efficiency of advising efforts (to integrate fragmented efforts currently undertaken by faculty, academic support staff, student services staff, and student affairs staff).

Benefits for the Administrative Services:
- Improved effectiveness and efficiency of administrative services.
- Enhanced ability to identify improvement efforts.
- Improved ability to support the trend toward decentralization by providing guidelines for consistency.
- Improved compliance with administrative policies such as procurement, preferred vendors, budgeting procedures, affirmative action guidelines and so forth.
- Improved responsiveness and communication capabilities.

Benefits for the Strategic Planning:
- Improved ability to support the trend toward decentralized strategic planning and decision making. Better information leads to better decisions.
- Improved sharing of internal and external information to minimize redundant efforts and lesson the reporting burden plaguing many institutions today.
- Enhanced ability to develop up-to-date and market-focused strategic plan.

Shared knowledge from a variety of constituents to begin to create a 'learning organization' which is responsive to market trends.

Conclusion

Recommendations of Madhava Menon in his report on ODL in India, 2010.

In order to really meet our ODL challenges in an equitable and accessible manner,:

1. Invest in enabling infrastructure so that digital technology and communications reaches every corner of India in affordable ways.
2. Invest in cutting edge online techniques and research that will help meet our challenges
3. Invest in creating and aggregating Open Content and tools
4. Invest in building talent in Education effectively (maybe an Indian Educational Services without the bureaucratic trappings)
5. Invest in building local, national and global communities and guilds that will build up expertise, generate employability and shape research for India
6. Invest in data and learning analytics

7. Deregulate the entire sector with the power to audit and shut down (if required) low quality providers or by imposing severe penalties of non-performance; regulate empirically rather than by design

8. Focus government (yours and mine) funds in areas and sectors that have inadequate or none private focus (over time build these areas and sectors so that they start becoming self-sufficient)

9. Educate consumers and give them adequate redress mechanisms

10. Become open – don't just solicit opinion from the same people, but actively reach out to community stakeholders and build the network

11. Reward innovation and community contributions

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IMPACT OF CASE STUDIES METHOD ON MANAGEMENT STUDIES IN OPEN AND DISTANCE LEARNING

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Introduction

The management education plays an essential role in today's dynamic business environment. The rapid trend of globalization and technological changes have made difficult for organizations to survive in the competitive world. As a result the importance of management education has been increased many folds. There are more than 2000 B-schools in India where students pay a massive sum hoping to find their dream career after completing their program. Unfortunately these business schools are not even able to place more than 50% of student except few top B schools. This is really an issue for concern and various reasons can be attached to it. These reasons can be explained from institutes imparting education, from student seeking education, and affiliating authorities. Quality has deteriorated from both ends Institutes imparting education and student gaining education. There are fundamental issues of student input quality. In addition, there are fundamental issues of academic delivery quality as most run-of-the-mill colleges spend less than 10 per cent of their revenues on actual academic delivery.

Experts believe this is majorly because of the rising competition in the business sphere. A business school becomes very helpful for students because it has a theoretical as well as practical approach towards the topics and subjects of the student's choice. These management education courses are practical because they include case studies; that is real life business situations that have occurred in major companies, along with how the company resolved the issues to rise to the top again. This is of tremendous help to a beginner manager while he is learning to apply his knowledge in a way that will get maximum benefits for his company.

After studying a number of case studies thoroughly, the students are assigned projects in order to help them develop various managerial skills like those of leadership, decision-making ability, motivational speaking ability, etc. Thus, management education hugely contributes to the overall growth of an aspirant and converts him into a thorough professional who is ready to enter the business field confidently. This is what gives individuals an edge over the others during job interviews. Thus as a result of all this, there are so many people who want to do courses from business schools.

This paper analyse the issues in management education in open and distance learning, What is case study?, Importance of case study method in management education in Open and distance learning and Various ways to develop the case studies.

Suggestive Approach to the MBA Programme

Due to major changes of liberalization, deregulation and modernization, today's mangers face new challenges. Organizations have to adopt necessary steps to coup with a new changing situation.

Mangers of different business organizations are either want to develop their professional skill in the existing workplace or they are interested to go for better job opportunities in other organizations. Non-business graduates working as mangers and key position holders in different organizations are facing problems without management know how. In the objective of the Open MBA Programme the Management Studies mentioned to impart managerial skill. The target group is the mangers of trade and commerce, but the

admission procedure of the first intake has limited this group to 20% only. Even though the brochure indicates that the programme is a combination of both theoretical and practical components, the curriculum and program delivery show that the courses offered are not suitable to meet the new challenges of the national and international environment. While in most of the open learning in the developed world, the courses cover all requisite deficiencies of the target group. The students are assigned work related problems and cases are being solved. It is said that in the Asia-Pacific region, the Distance Learning will face the following challenges: (a) Designing a relevant and appropriate curriculum to meet the demands of the target group; (b) Providing sensitive and sensible student support system; (c) Using technology based instruction to facilitate interaction.

The Management Studies is not an exception in facing such challenges. If, the school tries to develop managerial skill necessary for the target group, the challenges should be shouldered with the utmost care. But it is observed that with the present system the Management Studies is not in a position to face these challenges properly. As because the proposed curriculum does not fit into the demand of the professional group first. Secondly, the program delivery is only printed medium based and it is not supplemented by technology based interactivity system. And finally the printed material is not suitable for Open Learning and the system lacks appropriate student support system. According to an observation, the programme lacks these student supports and technology based learning due to the poor infrastructure of the school and delayed project implementation. It has a plan to introduce need based teaching support through multimedia centre of the school. Still there is a good hope for the programme that the Management Studies is working to supply suitable text material and to supplement by its multimedia service. Senior faculties of the school are trying to have ideas from advanced country and even from better school in the neighbouring country. It is experienced from the Pioneer Open University In India that it has more learner oriented multimedia approach for instruction which includes written material combining both theory and practical components; audio visual material aids; counselling sessions and tele-counselling.

Therefore, Management Studies should have an effective approach to MBA programme to develop managerial skill of its target group at least with this Reputed Open University standard. In this respect the school can go for an effective approach with the following suggestions:

1. A useful admission procedure to be followed to ensure the entrance of the target group students.
2. Need-based courses to be introduced to meet the demand of the professional managers.
3. Deficiency course should be available for the non-business graduate.
4. In absence of technological support more student teacher interaction by using tutorial class and audio visual material aids.
5. Self explanatory reading material with a combination of theory and practical components
6. If possible, multimedia approaches to instruction should be supplemented to the main medium.
7. Continuous evaluation through more work related assignments and case solutions should be introduced.

Issues in Management Education in Open and Distance Learning

Management Institutions are pivotal in developing managerial manpower, but exclusive focus on teaching is not likely to advance management education as an academic

discipline. They need to give adequate emphasis to research and application. Moreover, Management Institutions in India are positioning themselves as placement agencies; securing attractive jobs for future graduates. This has led to increasing criticism that MBAs are overvalued. These are:

- MBA graduates are ill-equipped to cope with or meet the challenges of a dynamic global environment.
- MBA curriculum is largely theoretical.
- Overemphasis on quantitative subjects, while development of people skills is neglected.

It has been argued that the programs offered by some Management Institutions are unaligned to the real problems of business. This is partly attributed to the extensive proliferation of Management Institutions, which is perceived to have resulted in lowering of standards. In Indian context, some of the key issues faced by management education could be summarised as follows:

- Growing unemployment among Business Graduates.
- High cost of management education causing burden on students & parents.
- Unavailability of effective Quality Assurance System.
- Lack of quality faculty members in India.
- Inadequate infrastructure in Management Institutions.
- Negligible attention to research in management.
- Lack of indigenous contents in curriculum.
- Lack of practicum, internship for development of management.
- Management Institutions giving false promises to aspiring students.
- Management Institutions producing graduates more suitable to business & industry not suited to social sectors such as public system, rural development, education system etc.

What is Case Study?

The case study method of teaching used in management education is quite different from most of the methods of teaching used at the school and undergraduate course levels. Unlike traditional lecture-based teaching where student participation in the classroom is minimal, the case method is an active learning method, which requires participation and involvement from the student in the classroom. For students who have been exposed only to the traditional teaching methods, this calls for a major change in their approach to learning.

A case is usually a "description of an actual situation, commonly involving a decision, a challenge, an opportunity, a problem or an issue faced by a person or persons in an organization."[1] In learning with case studies, the student must deal with the situation described in the case, in the role of the manager or decision maker facing the situation.

An important point to be emphasized here is that a case is not a problem. A problem usually has a unique, correct solution. On the other hand, a decision-maker faced with the situation described in a case can choose between several alternative courses of action, and each of these alternatives may plausibly be supported by logical argument. To put it simply, there is no unique, correct answer in the *case study* method.

Evaluating Student Performance in Case Study

The evaluation of a student's performance in a case-driven course can be based on some or all of the following factors:

- Written case analyses (logical flow and structuring of the content, language and presentation, quality of analysis and recommendations, etc.).
- Case presentations (communication skills, logical flow and structuring of the content, quality of analysis and recommendations, etc.).
- Participation in classroom case discussions (quality and extent of participation).
- Case writing assignments or similar projects.
- Case-based examinations.

Use of Case Studies to Develop Key Skills

The case-based approach to be a useful method to develop transferable skills. Key skills we have embedded into our case studies include:

- **Group working.** The benefits of group working are well documented, and we have found that a team case study approach can add to the learning experience. In our Sports and Materials Science course group work has the added benefit of allowing students to share their personal knowledge and experiences of sport (many students on this course play sport to a high level). Care is needed with group working activities e.g. selecting group membership to ensure smooth group operation/training of students in group working skills. This is particularly important for longer case studies.
- **Individual study skills.** Case studies are a good vehicle for encouraging students to carry out independent research outside of the lecture/tutorial environment.
- **Information gathering and analysis.** Many case studies require resource investigation and encourage students to utilise a number of different sources, i.e. Internet, library, laboratory results and contacting experts in industry.
- **Time management.** Longer case studies require students to really consider how best to carry out the work so that it is completed to the set deadline. Interim meetings with academic staff ensure progress is made during the case study rather than all the work being left to the last week.
- **Presentation skills.** Most of our case studies require students to present their work in a variety of formats, these include oral presentations, articles, posters and reports.
- **Practical skills.** Some of our case studies involve practical work on the components that are being studied. Feedback has shown that many students enjoy the hands-on approach.

Benefits from the Case Method

The case benefit has several advantages over traditional teaching methods.

- Cases allow students to learn by doing. They allow students to step into the shoes of decision-makers in real organizations, and deal with the issues managers face, with no risk to themselves or the organization involved.
- Cases improve the students ability to ask the right questions, in a given problem situation. Their ability to identify and understand the underlying problems rather than the symptoms of the problems is also enhanced.
- Case studies expose students to a wide range of industries, organizations, functions and responsibility levels. This provides students the flexibility and confidence to deal with a variety of tasks and responsibilities in their careers. It also helps students to make more informed decisions about their career choices.
- Cases allow students to learn by doing. They allow students to step into the shoes of decision-makers in real organizations, and deal with the issues managers face, with no risk to themselves or the organization involved.

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Conclusion

It may be concluded from the case study approach has much to recommend it. Students benefit from assessing real world problems that engage them with issues they will soon face in their professional life. Additionally, they benefit from an understanding of the dynamics and complexities involved in management. These changes make the course more open ended and interesting, as students struggle to raise issues deal with the conflicting goals, learn about the approaches developed by others in the class and seek effective solutions which best fit themselves. The inclusion of problem solving and creativity in the course adds a depth and challenge of the kind and moves away from the image of a behaviorally centered 'training' course. Cases improve the students ability to ask the right questions, in a given problem situation. Their ability to identify and understand the underlying problems rather than the symptoms of the problems is also enhanced. Further, it may be believed that institutions which incorporate a series of similarly challenging activities throughout their academic programs will be more likely to produce the type of management students required by the management in future.

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PAGE RANKING USING MACHINE LEARNING

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Supervised Learning

Supervised learning starts with "training data". Supervised learning is what we do as children as we learn about the word- 'apple'. Through this process you come to understand what an apple is. Not every apple is exactly the same. Had you only ever seen one apple in your life, you might assume that every apple is *identical*. You recognize the overall features of an apple. You're now able to create this category, or label, of objects in your mind. This is called "generalization" and is a very important concept in supervised learning algorithms.

When we build certain types of ML algorithms we therefore need to be aware of this idea of generalization. Our algorithms should be able to generalize but not *over*-generalize (easier said than done!). Many supervised learning problems are "classification" problems. kNN is one type of many different classification algorithms. This is a great time to introduce another important aspect of ML: Its features. Features are what you break an object down into as you're processing it for ML. If you're looking to determine whether an object is an apple or an orange, for instance, you may want to look at the following features: shape, size, color, waxiness, surface texture, taste etc. It also turns out that sometimes an individual feature ends up not being helpful. Knowing what features to look for is an important skill when designing for ML algorithms.

Machine Learning for Static Ranking

Since the publication of Brin and Page's paper on PageRank, many in the Web community have depended on PageRank for the static (query-independent) ordering of Web pages. We show that we can significantly outperform PageRank using features that are independent of the link structure of the Web. We gain a further boost in accuracy by using data on the frequency at which users visit Web pages. We use RankNet, a ranking machine learning algorithm, to combine these and other static features based on anchor text and domain characteristics. The resulting model achieves a static ranking pairwise accuracy of 67.3% (vs. 56.7% for PageRank or 50% for random).

Over the past decade, the Web has grown exponentially in size. Unfortunately, this growth has not been isolated to good-quality pages. The number of incorrect, spamming, and malicious (e.g., phishing) sites has also grown rapidly. Users rely on search engines not only to return pages related to their search query, but also to separate the good from the bad, and order results so that the best pages are suggested first. A good static ranking algorithm provides numerous benefits:

- *Relevance:* The static rank of a page provides a general indicator to the overall quality of the page. This is a useful input to the dynamic ranking algorithm.
- *Efficiency:* Typically, the search engine's index is ordered by static rank. By traversing the index from high- quality to low-quality pages, the dynamic ranker may abort the search when it determines that no later page will have as high of a dynamic rank as those already found. The more accurate the static rank, the better this early-stopping ability, and hence the quicker the search engine may respond to queries.
- *Crawl Priority:* The Web grows and changes as quickly as search engines can crawl it. Search engines need a way to prioritize their crawl—to determine which pages to re- crawl, how frequently, and how often to seek out new pages. Among other factors,

the static rank of a page is used to determine this prioritization. A better static rank thus provides the engine with a higher quality, more up- to-date index.

Features

To apply RankNet (or other machine learning techniques) to the ranking problem, we needed to extract a set of features from each page. We divided our feature set into four, mutually exclusive, categories: page-level (Page), domain-level (Domain), anchor text and inlinks (Anchor), and popularity (Popularity). We also optionally used the PageRank of a page as a feature. Below, we describe each of these feature categories in more detail.

- *PageRank:* We computed PageRank on a Web graph of 5 billion crawled pages (and 20 billion known URLs linked to by these pages). This represents a significant portion of the Web, and is approximately the same number of pages as are used by Google, Yahoo, and MSN for their search engines. Another source, internal to search engines, are records of which results their users clicked on. Such data was used by the search engine "Direct Hit", and has recently been explored for dynamic ranking purposes.
- *Anchor text and in links:* These features are based on the information associated with links to the page in question. It includes features such as the total amount of text in links pointing to the page ("anchor text"), the number of unique words in that text, etc.
- *Page:* This category consists of features which may be determined by looking at the page (and its URL) alone. We used only eight, simple features such as the number of words in the body, the   frequency of the most common term, etc.
- *Domain:* This category contains features that are computed as averages across all pages in the domain. For example, the average number of outlinks on any page and the average PageRank. Many of these features have been used by others for ranking Web pages, particularly the anchor and page features.

Table 1: Results for individual feature sets

Feature Set	Accuracy (%)
PageRank	56.70
Popularity	60.82
Anchor	59.09
Page	63.93
Domain	59.03
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All Features	67.43

Ranking Methods in Machine Learning

1. Recommendation Systems
2. Information Retrieval
3. Drug Discovery
   Problem : Millions of structures in a chemical library. How do we identify the most promising ones?
4. Bioinformatics

Human genetics is now at a critical juncture. The molecular methods used successfully to identify the genes underlying rare mendelian syndromes are failing to find the numerous genes causing more common, familial, non- mendelian diseases . With the human genome sequence nearing completion, new opportunities are being presented for unravelling

the complex genetic basis of nonmendelian disorders based on large-scale genomewide studies .

Types of Ranking Problems
- Instance Ranking
- Label Ranking
- Subset Ranking
- Rank Aggregation

Theory & Algorithms
- Bipartite Ranking
- k-partite Ranking
- Ranking with Real-Valued Labels
- General Instance Ranking

Applications
- Applications to Bioinformatics
- Applications to Drug Discovery
- Subset Ranking and Applications to Information Retrieval

Page Ranking Reports
- Domain Age Report
- Title tag Report
- Keyword Density Report
- Keyword Meta tag Report
- Description Meta tag Report
- Body Text Report
- In page Link Report
- Link Popularity Report
- Outbound Link Report
- IMG ALT Attribute Report
- Server Speed
- Page Rank Report

Conclusion

A good static ranking is an important component for today's search engines and information retrieval systems. We have demonstrated that PageRank does not provide a very good static ranking; there are many simple features that individually out perform PageRank. By combining many static features, fRank achieves a ranking that has a significantly higher pairwise accuracy than PageRank alone.

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ROLE OF TAMIL NADU OPEN UNIVERSITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION AT PRESENT SCENARIO

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Introduction

Education is a lifelong process, since the time immemorial it plays an important role in moulding human behaviour. In common parlance education is termed as any act or experience which has a constructive effect on the human mind and improves the physical as well as mental ability of a person. In the technical terms education is a process of transmitting knowledge, skill from one to another generation. It is the sum total of our experience and it is unlike our conventional system is not limited to the four walls and a definite stage or age. In this context the concept of Distance and Open Learning was emerged as an alternative of our conventional educational system. The conventional education system is limited to the four walls and covered only those people who are in direct contact of the institution. But the distance or the open learning covers those who are unreached. In the simple term distance learning, is a field of education that focuses on the pedagogy, technology, and instructional system designs that aims to deliver education to those students who are not physically "on site" like in a traditional classroom or campus. It is a flexible form of learning process where a student can study from home, work, on the move or wherever else is convenient.

Although India is the third largest country in the world in terms of higher education, after China and the United States, India still has a current ratio of enrolment in the educational institution below 9 % which is less than the average of lower-middle-income countries in the world.

About Tamil Nadu Open University

The Tamil Nadu Open University was established by an Act (No.27 of 2002) of the Legislative Assembly of the Government of Tamil Nadu to benefit those who have been deprived of and/or denied the access to higher education especially destitute, physically challenged, working men and women, economically weaker sections of the society, and those who discontinued education for various reasons, etc. In the main, it aims to reach the hitherto unreached.

Vision

The Tamil Nadu Open University shall make available innovative, socially relevant educational provisions that are learner centred, seamless and are of high quality by employing appropriate technologies to achieve equity in education, sustainable social transformation and composite national development.

Mission

Towards becoming a Centre of Excellence in Open and Distance Learning (ODL) by offering quality programs to meet the current and emerging needs of the adult population, by widening the access to higher education and by functioning as a catalyst to bridge social, including digital divides and to build a developed India, Tamil Nadu Open University shall:

- Evolve flexible and robust curricula to widen educational access, deepen knowledge frontiers and create entrepreneurial skill sets.
- Reach the rural communities through lifelong learning programmes for livelihood improvement.
- Establish networked environments for quality assurance.
- Foster private-public partnerships.
- Bridge the digital divide and implement 'anywhere, anytime' learning environments.
- Become a digital repository for ODL in the State facilitating Research and Development for new knowledge creation.
- Coordinate and implement standards in ODL.

Programmes Offered

The University offers many programmes in various disciplines for magnification of higher education i.e., 21 Post graduate Programmes, 33 Under Graduate Programme, 14 Post Graduate Diploma Programmes, 3 Diploma Programmes, 7 Certificate Programmes, 2 Bachelor of Education Programmes (General and Special Education) 20 Vocational Programmes conducted through community colleges and 4 Catering and Hotel Management Programmes (Under Graduate and Diploma Programmes) under 13 Schools.

Community Colleges

Tamil Nadu Open University has recognised 185 Community Colleges in Tamil Nadu as per Government Order No-163. More than 22 Academic Programmes are being conducted by Community Colleges from 2005 including Life Coping Skills and Communication Skills.

Community College is nothing but a non-residential junior college offering a curriculum fitted to the needs of the local community. In the developing countries like India the Community College refers to an alternative system of Education, which is aimed at the empowerment of the disadvantaged groups and the underprivileged groups through appropriate skills development leading to gainful employment in collaboration with local industry and local community and achieves skills for employment and self employability of the disadvantaged and underprivileged group of people.

The system is 'of' the community, 'for' the community and 'by' the community to produce responsible citizens. The Community College promotes job-oriented, work related, skill-based and life-coping education. It provides education for a livelihood. It responds to the challenges of exclusion and elimination from the formal system, mismatch between education and employment capability, poverty and problems of unemployment, under-employment, unemployability and school dropouts. So far the following types of Community Colleges have been established by Tamil Nadu Open University; Urban Community College, Rural Community College, Tribal Community College, Community College for Women and Community College for Prisoners.

Instructional System

The current system of instruction at Tamil Nadu Open University comprises the following:
- Printed materials in self-learning format.
- Face-to-face contact classes in the form of counselling/tutoring sessions.
- Continuous assessment of learner progress through assignments.
- Term-end examinations.

Instructional transactions are effected with the help of techniques appropriate to distance learning and enriched by capitalizing on the ones that may maximize the effectiveness of such transactions and are easily available at Tamil Nadu Open University. Didactic interaction is provided by a variety of techniques/means. For example, the self-learning study materials have ample in-text questions and advance organizers, access devices, learner activities and self-check questions, which work as in-built devices for academic interaction, however simulated it may be; carefully created assignment questions, assignment responses and the teaching type tutor-comments thereon constitute another level of academic interaction; tutorials, whether face-to-face, on the network or by correspondence/e-mail/telephone, constitute yet another means of such interaction and a judicious use of appropriate technology contributes to sustain the quality.

Conclusion

Tamil Nadu Open University serving higher education at past thirteen years through open learning and distance education. Technological advances that have made it possible to teach more and more subjects at a distance. Apart from these good infrastructures, leadership and efforts of its all employee, more learner-centred approach, enrichment, higher quality and new ways of interaction makes TNOU a better place for getting not only a higher degree but also knowledge of their desired fields. It is often said that the success of democracy greatly relies on the people's participation level and the way they behave. Utilization of Information and Communication Technology brings revolutionary changes in bringing awareness among the students. Now the concept of digital democracy is well accepted because of its effectiveness and participatory nature. For the proper utilization of digital democratic system there should be someone who takes the leading role. In this context with the one-way information provision the two-way consultation relationship and active enrolment of the students in higher education in distance mode can make TNOU to serve towards sustainable educational growth in our nation.

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AN OVERVIEW OF PERFORMANCE OF THE INSURANCE COMPANIES IN PROMOTING INSURANCE PRODUCTS IN INDIA

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Introduction

The Confederation of Indian Industry states that the insurance sector of the country has been witnessing a consistent growth rate of late and its present worth is 41 billion US dollars. The industry has of late achieved a yearly growth rate within 32 and 34 percent and this makes it the 5th best among emerging economies around the world. The various entities of the industry are also bringing out newer products on a regular basis to attract their customers.

As per rules, the upper limit of foreign direct investment permitted in this sector is 26 percent. However, this has to be done through the automatic route and the investor needs a license from Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority (IRDA). At present there are 22 life insurers in India. The IRDA has recently taken away the tariffs of the interest rates and this has provided insurers greater independence when it comes to deciding the price of their insurance policies. The insurance industry has also become more competitive as a result. Yet another important factor affecting this sector has been the recent financial meltdown.

The Need for Insurance Industry in India

The insurance industry in India has seen an array of changes in the past one decade. The economic scenario which emerged after globalization, privatization and liberalization has thrown a new challenge before the insurance sector. Now it has to be more competitive in order to meet the needs and demands of its customers. The reforms contributed to increase the awareness of the insuring public about the wider range of choice of insurance products and the price offered by the competing insurers in the market. The customers know well about their rights and remedies, availability of various grievance redressal mechanisms, progressive decontrol and de-tariffication of pricing of insurance products, particularly in the non- life insurance segments. The technical know-how, expertise and wide experience of multinationals that have joined with the Indian companies have revolutionized almost all aspects of insurance industry in India.

The insurance industry has an important socio- economic function to discharge and as such it plays a leading role within the financial system in a country. It has a decided advantage over most other financial activities in the present economic world. It provides funds, largely in the long-term, to repair or compensate for the real value and cost of damages, accident and various losses in all fields of material activities, as well as life and health. An evolving insurance sector is of vital importance for economic growth. While encouraging savings habit, it also provides a safety net to both enterprises and individuals.

India's insurance market is still in its infancy

India's rapid growth rate over the decade has been one of the most significant developments in regional markets and also in global economy. Today India is one of the fastest growing economies of the world. It is now Asia's third largest economy and has made inroads into the global top 10 in terms of Gross Domestic Product (GDP). The service sector

has contributed significantly in India's growth story in the recent years. GDP originating from the service sector recorded a growth rate of 11 per cent in 2006-07 (Annual Report of IRDA, 2007). The contours of insurance business have been changing across the globe and the rippling effect of the same can be observed in the Indian market as well. Insurance Industry is a growth-oriented industry. In India too, the industry has started to reveal the potential after liberalization and privatization of the sector.

India is geographically large and has the world's second largest population but it also has one of the lowest penetration rates for general insurance in Asia in terms of premium as a percentage of GDP. This situation reflects the fact that India's insurance market is still in its infancy, meaning good growth potential. Strong economic growth of India in the last decade combined with a population of over a billion makes it one of the potentially largest insurance markets in the future. The increased economic activity coupled with recent reforms in general insurance market, would certainly help to expand the market in the years to come. The reforms and the opening up of the insurance sector invited many Indian and foreign companies to start up their business. It has been estimated that insurance sector growth is more than three times the growth of economy in India. It is the reason that large number of foreign and domestic companies are investing in insurance sector in India.

Changing Scenario of General Insurance Industry

The General Insurance Sector dominated by General Insurance Corporation (GIC) and its four subsidiaries since nationalization of insurance, has started looking different now. The major happenings in the last few years of privatization can be summarized as below:

- Functional autonomy of subsidiaries of GIC has been granted.
- GIC has been instructed to stop writing direct business and act as Indian reinsure.
- IRDA has finalized various guidelines and regulations.
- Competition was reintroduced in 2000 with the licensing of the first private company. Large number of new entrants in the private sector is already operational.
- The intense competition brought about by deregulation has encouraged the industry to innovate in all areas, from underwriting, marketing, policyholder servicing, etc.
- Aggressive marketing strategies by private sector insurers have buoyed consumer awareness of risk and expanded the markets for products.
- Competition in a deregulated environment has allowed market forces to set premiums that are appropriate for exposures and push insurers to differentiate their products and services.
- Innovations in distribution and use of information technology have followed as public and private insurers compete to market their products.
- Allowing insurers to issue their own policy wordings w.e.f. April 1, 2008, and set their own rates w.e.f. Jan. 1, 2007 have enabled insurers to tailor products to meet client needs.

So, the private sector was allowed into insurance business in 2000. However, foreign ownership was restricted not to exceed 26 per cent of foreign investment. Table 1 reveals that six companies from the public sector and 15 companies from the private sector have already entered into general insurance business in India. The increasing demand and novelty of business opportunities in the insurance market lured more and more players to enter into this field.

Spread and Growth of Insurance in India and Global Perspective

The spread of insurance is measured in terms of insurance penetration and measure of density. To see the growth and opportunities in the insurance sector in any country, insurance penetration, insurance density, premium income and growth in premium should be measured. India is geographically large and has the world's second largest population, i.e., 1.13 billion in 2007 (Moody's ICRA Global, 2008). Despite such a huge population, the insurance penetration and density as compared to the world levels is quite insignificant. Tables 2 and 3 explain the life insurance penetration and density respectively.

Table 1

Life Insurance Penetration Country	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
India	2.15	2.59	2.88	2.53	2.53	4.10	4.00	4.00
China	1.34	2.03	2.30	2.21	1.78	1.70	1.80	2.20
Brazil	0.36	1.05	1.28	1.36	1.33	1.30	1.40	1.40
Russia	1.55	0.96	1.12	0.61	0.12	0.10	0.10	0.00
United States	4.40	4.60	4.38	4.22	4.14	4.00	4.20	4.10
United Kingdom	10.73	10.19	8.62	8.92	8.90	13.10	12.60	12.80
Japan	8.85	8.64	8.61	8.26	8.32	8.30	7.50	7.60
South Africa	15.19	15.92	12.96	11.43	10.84	13.00	12.50	12.50
World	4.68	4.76	4.59	4.55	4.34	4.50	4.40	4.10

Source: Compiled from IRDA Annual Reports from 2000-01 to 2008-09.
Note: 1. Insurance penetration is measured as ratio (in per cent) of premium to total GDP.
2. Data relates to calendar years.

Table 1 explains Life Insurance penetration in the global perspective. Life insurance penetration is measured as a ratio (in percentage terms) of the insurance premium to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP). As is evident from Table 2, there is an increasing trend in the life insurance penetration in India and has almost doubled from 2.15 per cent to 4.00 per cent during the period under study. The figures are quite impressive if a comparison is made with other fast developing nations like China, Brazil and Russia but still, India is far behind developed nations like United States, United Kingdom, Japan, South Africa, though stagnation is apparent in the life insurance penetration of these developed nations. The world-wide penetration of life insurance is also stagnant; rather it declined from 4.68 in 2001 to 4.10 in 2008. In the Indian context, no doubt life insurance penetration has increased during the period under study, but it is still very low as compared to the developed nations Table 3 exhibits the life insurance density in the global perspective. Life insurance density is calculated as a ratio (in percentage terms) of premium to total population. The life insurance density in India also shows an increasing trend but still the figures are unimpressive in the global perspective.

Table 2-Life Insurance Density (USD)

Country	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
India	9.1	11.7	12.9	15.7	18.3	33.2	40.4	41.2
China	12.2	19.5	25.1	27.3	30.5	34.1	44.2	71.7
Brazil	10.8	27.2	35.8	45.9	56.8	72.5	95.3	115.4
Russia	33.2	23.1	33.9	24.8	6.3	4.0	6.1	5.4
United States	1602.0	1662.6	1657.5	1692.5	1753.2	1789.5	1900.6	1922.0

Country	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
United Kingdom	2567.9	2679.4	2617.1	3190.4	3287.1	5139.6	5730.5	5582.1
Japan	2806.4	2783.9	3002.9	3044.0	2956.0	2829.3	2583.9	2869.5
South Africa	377.2	360.5	476.5	545.5	558.3	695.6	719.0	707.0
World	235.0	247.3	267.1	291.5	299.5	330.6	358.1	369.7

Source: Compiled from IRDA Annual Reports from 2000-01 to 2008-09.
Note: 1. Insurance density is measured as ratio (in per cent) of premium to total population.
     2. Data relates to calendar years.

Life insurance density has witnessed an impressive growth from 9.1 per cent to 41.20 per cent in the post-reform period, i.e., from 2001 to 2008. The figures related to China also present a similar story, whereas Brazil has improved very fast on this parameter. United Kingdom tops in terms of life insurance density, i.e., 5582.1. World-wide, the life insurance density has shown an increasing trend and it increased from 235.0 to 369.7 during the period under study. As is evident from the table, despite such a massive growth in the life insurance density in India in the post-reform period, still it is disproportionately small and is just one-ninth of the world average.

Table 3
General Insurance Penetration

Country	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
India	0.56	0.67	0.62	0.65	0.61	0.60	0.60	0.60
China	0.86	0.96	1.03	1.05	0.92	1.00	1.10	1.00
Brazil	1.78	1.74	1.68	1.63	1.68	1.60	1.60	1.60
Russia	1.51	1.81	2.13	2.21	2.15	2.30	2.40	2.30
United States	4.57	4.98	5.23	5.14	5.01	4.80	4.70	4.60
United Kingdom	3.45	4.56	4.75	3.68	3.55	3.40	3.00	2.90
Japan	2.21	2.22	2.20	2.25	2.22	2.20	2.10	2.20
South Africa	2.78	2.86	2.92	2.95	3.03	3.00	2.80	2.90
World	3.15	3.38	3.48	3.43	3.18	3.00	3.10	2.90

Table 4 clearly explains that the general insurance density in India has increased from $2.4 in 2001 to $6.2 in 2008, while in the case of United States, it increased from $1664.1 to $2177.4 during the same period. Even the developing countries like China, Brazil and Russia registered an impressive growth in the General Insurance density. A world-wide increasing trend in the general insurance density from $158.2 to $264.20 can be observed from the table, during the period under study. It is clearly evident from the tables 4 & 5 that the General Insurance penetration and Density in India is too low as compared to the world levels. It seems that even the reform process has failed to provide the desired results despite the fact that Indian insurance sector is still unexplored and untapped.

Trends in Gross Direct Premium

Gross Direct Premium is one of the important and main indicators of the performance of the insurance business. The Gross Direct Premium of the public sector general insurance companies for the period 1993-94 to 1999-00 has been presented in Table 5.

Table 4

Gross Direct Premium of Public Sector General Insurance Companies in Pre-Reform Period

(Rs. in crore) Year	1993-94	1994-95	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-00
National	860.1	957.4 (11.31)	1207.3 (26.10)	1456.5 (20.64)	1636.5 (12.35)	1853.5 (13.26)	2042.1 (10.17)
New India	1616.6	1777 (9.92)	2131.9 (19.97)	2433.6 (14.15)	2688.5 (10.47)	3017.6 (12.24)	3306.5 (9.57)
Oriental	1006.4	1098.1 (9.11)	1325.6 (20.71)	1524.2 (14.98)	1709.5 (12.15)	1969.9 (15.23)	2166.5 (9.98)
United India	1151.8	1319.2 (14.53)	1554.8 (17.85)	1798.3 (15.66)	1962.7 (9.14)	2260.8 (15.18)	2390.5 (5.73)
Total	4634.9	5151.7 (11.15)	6219.6 (20.73)	7212.6 (15.96)	7997.2 (10.87)	9101.8 (13.81)	9905.6 (8.83)

Source : Annual Reports of Public Sector General Insurance Companies from 1993-94 to 1999-00.

Note : Figure in parentheses show growth rate in Gross Direct Premium.

The table given above shows the trend in gross direct premium during the period of this study. There is an upward trend in gross direct premium income of the public sector general insurance companies in pre-liberalization period. New India Assurance emerged as the largest public sector general insurance company during all the years of pre-reform period followed by United India Insurance, Oriental Insurance and National Insurance companies. The growth rate of gross direct premium over the previous year has been calculated for all the public sector general insurance companies to evaluate the impact of privatization on the growth of public sector general insurance companies by comparing the growth of the pre- and post- privatization period. Tables 6 exhibit that growth rate of public sector general insurance companies during the pre-reform period is higher than the post-reform period. It clearly shows that the privatization has negatively affected the growth rate of public sector general insurance companies. It is mainly due to the strong competition posed by the private sector, their better marketing strategies and innovative products. The private sector companies have shaken the state owned insurance companies and forced them to act immediately to sustain higher growth rate in the insurance sector.

Conclusion

Thus in this paper an overview of the performance of Insurance companies are discussed more specifically (i) Life Insurance Density (USD), (ii) General Insurance Penetration, and (iii) Gross Direct Premium of Public Sector General Insurance Companies in Pre-Reform Period.

ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS OF RIGHT TO EDUCATION

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Introduction

The right to education is a universal entitlement to education, recognized in the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights as a human right that includes the right to free, compulsory primary education for all, an obligation to develop secondary education accessible to all, in particular by the progressive introduction of free secondary education, as well as an obligation to develop equitable access to higher education, ideally by the progressive introduction of free higher education.

The right to education also includes a responsibility to provide basic education for individuals who have not completed primary education. In addition to these access to education provisions, the right to education encompasses the obligation to rule out discrimination at all levels of the educational system, to set minimum standards and to improve quality of education.

International law does not protect the right to pre-primary education and international documents generally omit references to education at this level. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that everyone has the right to education, hence the right applies to all individuals, although children are understood as the main beneficiaries.

The right to education is separated into three levels:

- Primary (Elemental or Fundamental) Education. This shall be compulsory and free for any child regardless of their nationality, gender, place of birth, or any other discrimination. Upon ratifying the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights States must provide free primary education within two years.
- Secondary (or Elementary, Technical and Professional in the UDHR) Education must be generally available and accessible.
- Higher Education (at the University Level) should be provided according to capacity. That is, anyone who meets the necessary education standards should be able to go to university.

Both secondary and higher education shall be made accessible "by every appropriate means, and in particular by the progressive introduction of free education".

Compulsory Education:

The realisation of the right to education on a national level may be achieved through compulsory education, or more specifically free compulsory primary education, as stated in both the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

The bill was approved by the cabinet on 2 July 2009. Rajya Sabha passed the bill on 20 July 2009 and the Lok Sabha on 4 August 2009. It received Presidential assent and was notified as law on 26 August 2009 as The Children's Right to Free and Compulsory Education Act. The law came into effect in the whole of India except the state of Jammu and Kashmir from 1 April 2010, the first time in the history of India a law was brought into force by a speech by the Prime Minister. In his speech, Manmohan Singh, Prime Minister of India stated that, "We are committed to ensuring that all children, irrespective of gender and social category, have access to education. An education that enables them to acquire the

skills, knowledge, values and attitudes necessary to become responsible and active citizens of India."

The Constitution (Eighty-sixth Amendment) Act, 2002 inserted Article 21-A in the Constitution of India to provide free and compulsory education of all children in the age group of six to fourteen years as a Fundamental Right in such a manner as the State may, by law, determine. The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act, 2009, which represents the consequential legislation envisaged under Article 21-A, means that every child has a right to full time elementary education of satisfactory and equitable quality in a formal school which satisfies certain essential norms and standards.

Article 21-A and the RTE Act came into effect on 1 April 2010. The title of the RTE Act incorporates the words 'free and compulsory'. 'Free education' means that no child, other than a child who has been admitted by his or her parents to a school which is not supported by the appropriate Government, shall be liable to pay any kind of fee or charges or expenses which may prevent him or her from pursuing and completing elementary education. 'Compulsory education' casts an obligation on the appropriate Government and local authorities to provide and ensure admission, attendance and completion of elementary education by all children in the 6-14 age group. With this, India has moved forward to a rights based framework that casts a legal obligation on the Central and State Governments to implement this fundamental child right as enshrined in the Article 21A of the Constitution, in accordance with the provisions of the RTE Act.

The RTE Act provides for the:
- Right of children to free and compulsory education till completion of elementary education in a neighbourhood school.
- It clarifies that 'compulsory education' means obligation of the appropriate government to provide free elementary education and ensure compulsory admission, attendance and completion of elementary education to every child in the six to fourteen age group. 'Free' means that no child shall be liable to pay any kind of fee or charges or expenses which may prevent him or her from pursuing and completing elementary education.
- It makes provisions for a non-admitted child to be admitted to an age appropriate class.
- It specifies the duties and responsibilities of appropriate Governments, local authority and parents in providing free and compulsory education, and sharing of financial and other responsibilities between the Central and State Governments.
- It lays down the norms and standards relating inter alia to Pupil Teacher Ratios (PTRs), buildings and infrastructure, school-working days, teacher-working hours.
- It provides for rational deployment of teachers by ensuring that the specified pupil teacher ratio is maintained for each school, rather than just as an average for the State or District or Block, thus ensuring that there is no urban-rural imbalance in teacher postings. It also provides for prohibition of deployment of teachers for non-educational work, other than decennial census, elections to local authority, state legislatures and parliament, and disaster relief.
- It provides for appointment of appropriately trained teachers, i.e. teachers with the requisite entry and academic qualifications.
- It prohibits (a) physical punishment and mental harassment; (b) screening procedures for admission of children; (c) capitation fee; (d) private tuition by teachers and (e) running of schools without recognition,

- It provides for development of curriculum in consonance with the values enshrined in the Constitution, and which would ensure the all-round development of the child, building on the child's knowledge, potentiality and talent and making the child free of fear, trauma and anxiety through a system of child friendly and child centred learning.

Right to Education Act - Implications for Universalization of Secondary Education

The Right to Education Act, which is still in the Bill stage, gives effect to the 86th amendment to the Constitution. As per this amendment, the new Article 21-A ensures that the State provides free and compulsory education to children in the age group 6-14 years. Also, Article 45 in Part IV of the Directive Principles is modified to enable the State to try and provide early childhood care and education for all children up to 6 years. The major proposals of the Bill, which is yet to be passed by the Parliament at the time of writing, are said to include:

- Free and compulsory education for the 6-14 age group
- Within three years the State shall ensure that there is a school in every child's neighbourhood
- Private schools will admit 25 percent children from among the poor and educate them free of cost
- Parents/guardians shall ensure that children enter school as soon as they are six years old
- The government schools will be managed by school management committees

We are ranked 147th out of 177 countries measured for literacy by UNESCO. In fact, the illiterate population of India exceeds the total combined population of the North American continent and Japan. If the 42 million out-of-schoolchildren are to be enrolled in schools, we need one million additional classrooms and equal number of teachers. This implies the need for thousands of teacher educators to produce one million qualified teachers. Add to this the vacancies in the existing schools and the problem acquires gigantic proportions.

No one question the advantages of a literate nation as education empowers the citizens and awakens the mind from the slumber of ignorance. We have miserably failed to educate the poor in the remote and tribal areas. As for the lack of effort to reduce the dropout rates in the backward and tribal areas, the less said the better. Hardly any effort is made to *prevent* the exploitation of these children who for economic or other reasons are unable to attend school.

The responsibility of bringing children to schools and providing them quality education is the work of the Human Resource Development Ministry. Then again, monitoring implementation of the RTE Act is the responsibility of the child rights commissions in each state, which are under the Women and Child Development Department. As of now, not all states have even notified the RTE rules. It is crucial therefore that the efforts of all these agencies are coordinated for the larger goal of providing education to all children to become a reality.

For quality education to truly reach every child in the country, it is necessary that the following steps are taken:

- Each state should prepare a set of model rules for implementation of the right to education, with the participation of the community and other stakeholders.
- Although the RTE Act puts the applicable age-group at 6-14, it has been left to the states to decide whether they want to widen this group, say from 0-18 as Kerala has done. States should think about including more children under the Act's ambit.

- With the Act coming into effect, it has been found that there is a shortage of 12-13 lakh teachers in schools. The states must take steps to employ more teachers and not rely on para-teachers to provide children with quality education.
- The government should ensure that all government schools are well-equipped to take in students, so that they are not left with the sole choice of going to private schools.
- School management committees should take it upon themselves to spread awareness about the Act at the community level, in panchayats, so that people are encouraged to send their children to school.
- School management committees should be provided the necessary financial and other support by the state to go about their duties.
- For effective implementation of the RTE Act, states should give some sort of judicial power to the education department.
- The public private partnership (PPP) model in primary education should be avoided at all costs so that there is no commercialisation of education.
- There is a conflict between the child labour law and the Right to Education Act, although both deal with related issues and promote the overall development of children. It is important to bring them in step, to avoid confusion.
- To effectively implement the RTE Act, the Human Resource Development Ministry, Labour Ministry, Women and Child Development Ministry, Panchayat Raj Ministry and Rural Development Ministry have to work together. There should be an umbrella body that brings all these agencies together to work towards a common goal.
- The government must make every effort to become self-sufficient by using the education cess and other taxes to effectively implement the RTE Act. It must not always beg from the private sector

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EXPLORING THE ROLE OF VILLAGE PANCHAYATS TO ENHANCE THE OUTREACH IN RURAL AREAS: IGNOU'S INITIATIVES IN DISTRICT KHANDWA (MADHYA PRADESH)

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Background:

It has long been a major challenge to create mechanisms for sensitising, motivating and involving the disadvantaged communities to effectively participate in the welfare schemes of the Government [1]. There have been different initiatives from various ministries and other promotional and regulatory institutions like RBI and NABARD to create an interface for the information and guidance for the rural poor in context of livelihoods and microfinance. Department of Information Technology, Government of India has proposed to set up a network of more than 100000 internet enabled ICT access points termed as Common Service Centres (CSC), RBI and NABARD proposed for setting of financial literacy and credit counselling centres [2] and simultaneously there are a range of initiatives taken by NGOs and other welfare organisations for giving information and guidance to the rural poor. However in spite of various initiatives of information centres taken up by ministry and other institutions, there found to be a vacuum of information for the rural poor.

Relevance of our interventions in Khandwa and way forward

Khandwa is of special interest particularly due to its disadvantaged status in the women and child health. New mothers especially teenager mothers are vulnerable because many are malnourished and anaemic when they get pregnant. Low education levels, also contribute to the high mortality rates. The status of malnutrition in Khandwa came under sharp criticism by the development practitioners with certain NGOs claiming the death of several children due to Malnutrition thereby putting the Government badly in to defensive. The Asian Human Rights Commission (AHRC) claimed that sixty-two children belonging to Korku tribe have died of "malnutrition" in Khandwa district of Madhya Pradesh between 2008-09.It was highlighted by the AHRC, a Hong Kong-based NGO which monitors human rights issues in Asia that "all sixty two children were from Korku community, a tribe inhabiting Khandwa district[9] . Poor awareness about the health and nutrition is understandably the major reason for the burning issue of malnutrition. Needless to add that there is an immediate need to empower the community on these lines. Existing anganwari centres have to be strengthened and the community as a whole need to be capacitated to have better understanding of the child health and nutrition.

IGNOU's interventions in Khandwa

This paper could be an eye opener for all the Open and Distance Learning systems that have a mandate to reach out to the disadvantaged people. We present here a case study of the IGNOU Special Study Centre Khandwa describing, how it was able to generate a sizeable enrolment from rural areas by way of involving Gram Panchayats and turned in to an

economically viable "special study centre" within a span of just two months. Situation was altogether different till the beginning of January 2013 when this centre was struggling to generate even the basic minimum enrolment to be officially functional, however today it has the distinction of having sizeable enrolment for CFN/DNHE programmes.

IGNOU has a scheme of Special Study Centres which is specially meant for meeting the focussed needs of special disadvantaged groups. Under the scheme the special Study Centers are identified in collaboration with those organizations which have long experience of dealing with such communities. Academic programmes to be launched in such centers are identified keeping view the requirements of local community and the academic expertise is drawn from concerned organisation.

IGNOU started a Special Study Centre in Khandwa few years back and specially activated this centre for "Certificate in Food and Nutrition (CFN)" and "Diploma in Nutrition and Health Education (DNHE)"two major capacity building and awareness level programmes on Health and Nutrition. The Centre was opened targeting the rural population as rural communities constitute one of the major target group for IGNOU's academic programmes.

Need Assessment for involving Village Panchayats

Conventionally the Study Centre Khandwa used to act as fixed point of academic delivery and the pro activeness in the support services was nearly absent. After a round of meetings between the officials of Regional Centre and Study Centre it was realized that rural population cannot be served if we just expect them to approach our Study Centre on their own. Rural communities surrounding Khandwa are too vulnerable and would need a lot of handholding for taking decisions regarding their educational pursuits. It was difficult for the study centre officials to make them realize that how important are the academic programmes on Food and Nutrition can prove to be useful for them.It was therefore realized that study centre should develop a layer of trusted community members, well versed with local dialects who can act as conduit between local population and the outside organisation.Involving Village Panchayats was the key initiative planned by the Study Centre in consultation with Regional Centre Bhopal. We come to a conclusion that stakeholder consultation is necessary to take the people in to confidence. The Village Panchayats are the ideal places to initiate these confidence building exercises.

Enrolment of Students

The coordinator did extensive sensitization exercise in the villages thereby motivating the panchayat members at various places and through them community members were sensitized. The panchayat functionaries were also assured that in case the panchayat supports IGNOU's initiatives then services for the admitted students will be arranged in the villages. During the discussions for promoting the programmes in the district of Khandwa, our coordinator organized community meetings with village communities and different target groups. Such meetings were mostly organized in informal ways primarily aimed at taking the people in to confidence. Efforts were focused in 3 villages of Khandwa. However, the result was quite encouraging in one of the village called Singot.The students who took admissions from Singot village for the academic cycle July 2013 were all females. It was a difficult job for the coordinator to attract the students in the awareness level programmes on Food and Nutrition which has apparently a low employment potential. The enrollment could be generated to a much greater extent for job oriented programmes. The second important hurdle was observed to be financial constraints if we could arrange for some sponsorships for reserve categories and BPL candidates. Villagers showed a greater interest for career oriented programmes which could make them better qualified for govt. and other jobs. Their

expectation was low cost accessible education. More than 150 villagers and candidates enquired for the IGNOU programmes.

Hence the first exercise which was done is to find out suitable clusters which are connected by the transport networks and which is accessible to at least 50 students. Though the students come from deep rural interiors, it was observed that only few specific locations are accessible to them from the point of view of transport. Hence only Singot could be identified as the only accessible point for most of them. For the purpose of holding counseling services the Village Singot was selected as counseling centre. The Gram Sabha of the Village Singot passed a resolution that they will provide all possible facilities to IGNOU's officials in the village.

Impact of the Mobile Study Centre Operations

We have discussed above the consequences in which IGNOU tried to provide support services in village Singot through Gram Panchayet. Here, through the table 2 we present a comparative status of all the CFN students of July 2013 sessions to study the actual impact in terms of active and successful participation in the programme.

There were total 175 students of CFN programme were attached in Khandwa 15158 study center of IGNOU. These students can further be divided into two classes, i.e. first those who were getting Support Services at Village Singot through Gram Panchayet and MSC (53 Students we will call them Singot students), and second those who were attached at the urban area main study center 15158, Poonam Chand Gupta College of Vocational Studies, Khandwa (122 students - we will call them Khandwa students).

It has been observed that the delivery of services near the place of residence has resulted in significant enhancement in utilization of services and subsequent pass out rates.We find that 100% students covered under Mobile Study Centre Scheme were able to submit assignments and also filled exam forms. Whereas this figure was 48% in case of those students who had to come to Khandwa District HQs for availing services. The percentage of students who appeared for Term end Examinations was also observed to be significantly higher for those, who were covered under Mobile Study Centre. 79% Singot Students were able to give TEE, whereas for others this figure was just 34%.

The impact of Service delivery at village level through Gram Panchayet and Mobile Study Center at village Singot can clearly be judged through the results of the experiment. While only 30 out of 122 (24%) students, who were studying through conventional approach of IGNOU as Khandwa Students were able to complete the programme, on the other hand 32 out of 53 (60%) Singot students were able to complete the programme.

Lessons Learnt through our interventions in Khandwa

The interventions in the villages of Khandwa (Madhya Pradesh) through village panchayat have unfolded the new possibilities. The response in the pilot experiment has shown that if properly sensitized, the village panchayats can prove to be powerful instrument to sensitize the people. The villagers have much greater trust on panchayat members rather than any outside agency persuading them to take admission. They are more receptive to them as they meet them on day to day basis, speak the same language and are drawn from same community setting. Our pilot experiment with the Panchayat Functionaries of the village Singot has proved that our information services in rural areas have to be proactive. Traditionally the Study Centre at Khandwa could not attract the enrolment from villages due to the reason that it was rigidly located at the District Khandwa. Only those people who used to travel long distances to seek information could avail information as a result of which the enrolment could never pick up to desired level. The success of our changed approach

involving Panchayat Functionaries , lies in the fact that it was a proactive supply driven approach.It shows that our approach to sensitize the rural folks has to be paradigmatically different from what we have been following in urban areas.There have to be a strong layer of people drawn from rural community who are specially sensitised and motivated to pass on the information to our target groups in villages.Our information providers should be those people who are trusted by the local communities and should be perceived by them as their own. Village panchayat functionaries, teachers and parents are ideally positioned to provide them information.It will require a major shift in our strategy to take the grass root level institutions & community leaders in to confidence and assure the people services right in the villages. If carefully implemented, our sensitization operations can become a people's movement.

Our decision to hold counselling sessions in the villages had far reaching impact in these villages in long term.It creates a psychological atmosphere in favour of University in the villages and makes the people feel that University is somewhere amongst them. Face to Face component of our services are most suitable and important for the villagers. Hence they feel motivated to participate in our F2F services being organized in their community setting. It was observed that the attendance in counseling sessions got significantly enhanced in the villages. All the 53 students of Singot cluster filled up examinations and out of them 32 students passed examinations in first attempt. The all of the students of Singot were female students who otherwise would not have availed our counseling services at district HQs at Khandwa. The University's presence in the form of F2F counseling services in the villages obviously triggers a deal of excitement in the villages. It develops the trust in their minds as they find the academic counselors visiting them regularly as the University's representative. It helps to build an atmosphere of trust in the villages in favour of IGNOU.

The Panchayat Functionaries of nearby villages were invited during the inauguration ceremony of the Mobile Study Centre operations at Singot and an informal meeting was organised with them. It was observed that most of those functionaries were interested in having such activities in their villages.It shows that our activities in Singot will have spill over effect in nearby areas which will help to expand our enrolment base in these rural areas. Our approach therefore indicates that it has potential for replication.

Conclusion and Road ahead:

The new initiatives at Khandwa have proved beyond doubt that if the information services are strengthened at the level of the villages then it has direct positive impact on the enrolment generation. Though the Local Study Center started its preadmission information and guidance activities a little late, the response was overwhelming. The participation of people in our awareness level courses on nutrition was raised to the level of 50 from one such village where the Panchayat Functionaries took a greater interest.

The future endeavors of the Regional Centre in these areas need to be more intensified and should be conducted with the effective involvement of Village Panchayats.The collaborative activities undertaken by the village panchayat of Sangot area is praiseworthy and has opened up new avenues for involving the panchayats for educational activities in the villages. It is expected to motivate other neighboring Village Panchayats to give a helping hand to IGNOU. It underscores the importance of involving Village Panchayats in the sensitization drive of IGNOU. However these efforts should be continued round the year through specially appointed persons who can be available in the villages round the year. It is felt that the newly launched scheme of the Distance Learning Facilitators has also immense potential to link up with Mobile Study Centre Operations in rural areas. IGNOU's initiatives has also opened new possibilities for motivating the Anganwari workers, Shayikas and ASHAs to take admissions in IGNOU's academic programmes right in the villages. The new initiatives at

Khandwa has the potential to transform educational scenario in the villages and the future activities of IGNOU in this area will be focused around these initiatives suitably combined with Distance Learning Facilitators' scheme.

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SOCIAL MEDIA STRATEGY FRAMEWORK

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Introduction

Over the last few years, we have been developing our own approach to developing social media strategies. First individually at our former agencies and jobs, and then through the last 1.5 years together, this framework has been iterated numerous times and has grown a bit more mature with every client we've worked with. It has been informed by countless insights and inspirations from all kinds of folks in the industry and beyond. We now feel it's time to publish our approach to give back and open it up for more people to improve and advance it. Overview The framework is meant as a guide, which helps us work through a process with our clients in a structured way. It tackles the questions, which help us define the answers that turn make up the strategy.

Social Media Strategy Framework

Goals should always be connected to the business side of things. That's why we labeled this element of the framework 'business objectives.' That doesn't mean that the social media strategy should have to 'sell product' right from the start. It nevertheless should be connected to that goal in the long-term. A strategy that doesn't help the long-term growth of the business is a hobby. And we think it's time that social media turns from a hobby into a viable part of the business strategy. We've seen good results emerge from working with the management to understand the business challenges they are facing and then connecting the social media strategy to one or more of them. From establishing a new distribution channel to gaining more insight into target-group; from getting up to speed with digital communication to getting more customer involvement in product development, the possibilities are endless and social media can help with a lot of these.

Social Media as an Integral Part of Communications

We think that it's not only important to choose the platforms according to the strategy but also to integrate them into the overall communication efforts of a company from the start. Social media should never happen in isolation, in a sandbox without context and connection to other campaigns and service initiatives. The customer is not distinguishing between the different types and formats and neither should we. Only when social media has its place in the combined efforts of a company can it find its purpose and special role for a company. To work out how all the different entities should work together, we've seen the best results from working with the Bought-Owned-Earned media model. No doubt, there will we be contexts where a different model will be more appropriate. And there will come a time soon, when this model is outdated, no doubt about it. But until then, this model remains one of the most accurate for us.

Iterative Strategy Development

Digital communications are complex. So your strategies, actions, tools and campaigns should be permanently tested, analyzed and adapted. The traditional model was to work from one big strategy through a test with a consumer focus group, and after some little adjustments to launch a big campaign. You'd measure the results and then start over. It's a powerful process, but a slow, sluggish one. If it fails, it fails big. Chances are, it will. Instead, we recommend working from more and smaller ideas. "Little Strategy", David Armano calls it.

You take this little strategy into an iterative cycle of planning, launch, constant measuring. The insights you generate along the way help you adjust while you keep going. It's much more agile, in the sense that software developers use the word. You get to results faster, and if you fail it won't hurt but rather strengthen you. At the core of this is constant analysis.

Organizing for Social Media

The key task in this part of implementing the social media strategy is to create an internal structure that can bring all the involved departments and stakeholders – and that can mean most of the company's teams – together to speak with one voice on the social web7. It means to find a way to coordinate all the different social media engagements of a company to work with each other. What this structure could look like is highly individual for every company. But there are a few best practices that can be a starting point.

Social Media Committee

To really push the point: social media has to be a joined effort. It must not be owned by one department! This will clash with the usual hierarchical structure of most traditional companies. So we have to find a way to get interdepartmental cooperation, usually with a project group or committee that each department sends a participant to. This committee will steer the social media effort of the whole company. It will help coordinate and synchronize all individual engagements and make sure that the company speaks with one voice. This committee is responsible for creating, implementing and iterating the social media strategy of the company. The more each participant buys into a shared vision of the company's social media engagement, the better it will work.

Social Media Manager

The social media committee appoints a social media manager. Her role is to be the internal expert and manager for everything in social media. She knows about all the individual social media efforts and works with each department to help with knowledge and insight. She's not the one creating content for Facebook pages, etc. But if a department needs some help with that she will find someone. This person should be someone who is well connected inside the company and can handle the internal politics properly. Each department might appoint its own social media manager. The company's social media manager will lead those and coordinate between them.

Relevant Theories Related to Social Media

This section reviews major theoretical frameworks which may be applicable to the study and understanding of social media. One can separate these theories into three schools: micro-theories deal with those frameworks studying the dynamics of contribution of information online and communication of individual social actors; macro theories are those theories looking at the structure and dynamics of social actors and social media content through global or abstract views; pseudo-theories include the recent conceptual frameworks in marketing and social media proposed mostly by nonacademic. Pseudo-theories may make sense intuitively, but have yet to be tested empirically and rigorously with scientific methods. All schools of theories and frameworks might contribute to our understanding of the nature of social media, why people contribute, how they form relationships, and how one can discover the opinion of leaders and valuable social media content.

Social Exchange

Theory given that all social media are dependent on users providing content, an understanding of the motives of why individuals participate appears fundamental. Social exchange theory was originated from sociology studies exploring exchange between individuals or small groups (Emerson 1976). The theory mainly uses cost-benefit framework and comparison of alternatives to explain how human beings communicate with each other, how they form relationships and bonds, and how communities are formed through communication exchanges (Homans 1958). The theory states that individuals engage in behaviors they find rewarding and avoid behaviors that have too high a cost. In other words, all social behavior is based on each actor's subjective assessment of the cost-benefit of contributing to a social exchange.

Social Penetration Theory

Similar to social exchange theory, social penetration theory explains how human exchange forms relationships (Altman and Taylor 1973). However, the latter focuses more on the individual and dyadic levels while the former could explain behavior at aggregated and organizational levels. Social exchange theory states that human beings form close relationships through self-disclosure. Using an analogy of peeling of the layers in an onion, one must disclose him or herself through the continuing process of expose one's inner self and identity. It starts with public, visible, and superficial information, such as gender, clothing preferences, and ethnicity; slowly, as the relationship progresses, one starts to share his or her feelings; in the deepest level, one will expose his or her goals, ambition, and beliefs (Altman et al. 1981).

McLuhan's Media Theory

McLuhan is a Canadian philosopher and educator, the author of the famous quote "the media is the message" (McLuhan 1995). He argued that the media itself, rather than the actual content of the media, will transform people and society. The actual message people are communicating won't be any different on the new media; the interactivity and frequency of new communication pattern will change our behavior forever. Thus, the media's effects on society are much greater than the content of the media. He separates media into "cool" media and "hot" media. The former one requires a viewer to exert.

An Integrated Meta-Framework

The aforementioned theories look at social media and social actors through either individual, global, or marketing or business perspectives. An integrated framework needs to be reductionist, quantifiable, and applicable to business and marketing settings. Social network analysis, especially the multi-dimensional social network analysis, with rigorous methodology and measurements, seems to be an overall framework for studying the interaction between information artifacts, human actors, and the interaction and evolution of the two. Thus, multidimensional network is at the center of the framework. On one hand, the macro and micro theories, such as McLuhan's media theory, social exchange and social penetration theory, could inform the analysis and modeling of social network analysis

much effort and participation in understanding the content, such as television, seminars, or cartoons; the latter refers to those media that enhance one sense, so the viewers do not need to exert much effort, such as films, radio, and photography (McLuhan 1995).

Conclusion

A few major theoretical and behavioral frameworks are reviewed in this chapter, including word-of-mouth research, social exchange theory, social network analysis, McLuhan's media theory, social graphics, and purchase funnel and social media. Social network analysis, especially the multi-dimensional social network analysis, could be the general framework to investigate social network, information artifact networks, and the dynamic evolution between the two. On one hand, the behavioral frameworks could inform the development and directions of multidimensional networks; on the other hand, the methodologies of multidimensional social network could be used to inform and validate other general theories and frameworks; more importantly, the quantifiable nature of the methodology and the ease of capturing behavioral data online could finally validate the social graphic framework and quantify different stages of the decision making process and inform the marketers of the ways to influence their customers from social feedback loop. For future research efforts, more specifically, we need more studies combining data mining and data modeling on the web with behavioral frameworks. For example, we need to capture the social generated media and metadata existing on current social media websites, such as Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter. Adopting multidimensional social network analysis in studying online social networks and knowledge networks could result in more in-depth understanding of the phenomena and inform social media marketing practices for hospitality and tourism businesses (Contractor 2009).

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ICT: NEW PERSPECTIVESUSE OF NEW TECHNOLOGIES

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Introduction

ICT (information and communications technology - or technologies) is an umbrella term that includes any communication device or application, encompassing: radio, television, cellular phones, computer and network hardware and software, satellite systems and so on, as well as the various services and applications associated with them, such as videoconferencing and distance learning.

Technological progress is a considerable driving force behind economic growth, citizen engagement and job creation. Information and communication technologies (ICTs), in particular, are reshaping many aspects of the world's economies, governments and societies.

In developing countries, public officials, businesses and citizens are working together to harness the transformative power of ICTs to make services more efficient, catalyze economic development and strengthen social networks. More than 75 percent of people around the world now have access to a cell phone, with the number of global mobile-cellular subscriptions quickly approaching 7 billion. In addition, new services and industries are rapidly emerging.

At the same time, access to mobile and fixed broadband remains prohibitively expensive in some countries where lack of ICT infrastructure and regulatory bottlenecks still hamper broadband development. Residential fixed-broadband services cost about 30 percent of average monthly Gross National Income (GNI) per capita in developing countries – compared to just 1.7 percent of average national income in wealthy countries. This average masks vast discrepancies between and within countries, affecting opportunities available to citizens. In Djibouti, for example, a mobile broadband package costs more than the income of the country's poorest 60 percent of the population.

When done right, ICT infrastructure investment and policy reform can empower poverty reduction and shared prosperity. A 10 percent increase in high-speed internet connections leverages a 1.4 percent increase in economic growth (on average) in developing countries.

The Indian information and communication technology (ICT) industry has witnessed excellent growth in the past two decades. Capitalising on its advantages of talent pool, lower cost of operation and the innovative remote delivery model, India has established itself as a global leader in the ICT sector. ICT can be broadly viewed under two sectors, information technology (IT) and Communication. India is one of the fastest-growing IT markets in the world. The rapid emergence of Indian IT sector has played a significant role in transforming India's image from a slow moving bureaucratic economy to a land of innovative entrepreneurs. More recently, online retailing, cloud computing and e-commerce are emerged as the major growth drivers in the sector.

The quality of teachers and their continuing professional education and training remain central to the achievement of quality education. Yet today, the number and quality of teachers, teaching practice and teacher education are facing serious systemic challenges across the world. The situation must be redressed at a time when the world needs an estimated 9.1 million new teachers to reach internationally-agreed education targets by 2015. UNESCO believes that these challenges can be addressed through a holistic, systemic approach to education and teacher development systems in ways that also incorporate the enabling role of ICT. UNESCO facilitates initiatives related to the integration of ICT in

teacher education by supporting existing teacher development communities of practice, multi-stakeholder partnerships, capacity building of policy-makers and the development of international standards on ICT competencies for teachers.

The two major trends that have developed in the process of educational technology are: (1) technology for mass instruction and (ii) technology for individual instruction. Included in the first type are instructional broadcasting, television filmed lectures, CCTV, motion pictures etc. Under technology for individual instruction, there are equipments and materials designed for individual operation such as teaching machines, programmed instruction, auto-tutorial system, computer-assisted instruction, language laboratories, learning modules etc. Programmed Instruction In a fast developing world, the teacher cannot and ought not to be left alone to depend upon his own resources and talents to disseminate knowledge to the pupils. The classroom teacher should be supplied with reliable instructional material based upon the dependable findings of educational technology.

(i) a clear-cut statement of the objectives; (ii) the material to be learned is itemized and presented serially; (iii) frequent and unambiguous responses from every student are required throughout the whole sequence. Unless the learner makes some responses which are relevant to the learning task, no learning will occur; (iv) feedback of information about the correctness or otherwise of the responses is given to the pupil before the next frame or item is presented. Modular Scheduling A module is a short unit of instruction dealing with a single conceptual unit of subject matter.

Each course is built in the "bank" of a number of modules and each module is designed around a list of objectives and student projects. A variety of learning activities centredaround the learner and incorporating a multi-media approach is provided. The components of modules include modular 44 lecture unit, laboratory unit, programmed instruction unit, workshop unit, individual study unit, film unit, audio-tape unit, video-tape unit etc. Multi-media Approach For effective and efficient learning, it is now accepted that there should be a multi-media approach. Edgar Dale (1969) through his "Cone of Experience" has demonstrated that in any learning situation, the more the senses are stimulated, the more the person learns and the longer he retains. Dale describes how the different types of aids, starting from verbal symbols up to direct purposeful experiences, are interrelated and effective in the learning process. The different materials of the experiences presented in the cone may be classified into three: (i) non-projected aids; (ii) projected aids; and (iii) activity aids. The following are some specific applications of instructional technology in imparting formal education: 1. Use films, television, slide-tape presentation and so forth as an alternative to a lecture for presentation of information. 2. Buy, borrow or produce 2" x 2" colour slides, showing the steps in a process to be demonstrated. 3. Use an opaque projection to show a printed diagramme. 4. Make a transparency from a cartoon or drawing in a few seconds on a thermographic copier and show it to the class using an overhead projector (OHP). 5. Draw chalkboard diagrams once on transparency masters; then project the transparencies made from these masters on OHP, thus saving the time wasted in re-wording them each year

Education should offer conditions needed to optimize learning and promote the transfer of knowledge and skills. Authenticity is an important issue which should be addressed in the design and development of learning environments. Learning environments need to reflect the potential uses of knowledge that pupils are expected to master, in order to prevent the acquired knowledge from becoming inert. Rich contexts and tasks that are as authentic as possible should be provided by presenting links to the world outside school. In addition, teachers should stimulate pupils to engage in active knowledge construction. This calls for open-ended learning environments instead of learning environments which focus on

a mere transmission of facts Co-operation and interaction in the classroom environment are important in order to foster the acquisition of learning skills, problem solving skills, and social relations. Finally, since classes are of mixed ability, differentiation is considered to be one of the key criteria for effective classroom practice. Teachers are expected to adapt the educational setting to the needs and capabilities of the individual pupils. Powerful learning environments foster optimal learning processes by reflecting the key aspects outlined above. In conclusion, the following four main characteristics of powerful learning environments are distinguished: rich contexts and tasks that are as authentic as possible are provided to present links to the world outside school; active and independent learning is stimulated; 52 co-operative learning is stimulated; the curriculum is adapted to the needs and capabilities of the individual pupils.

It can be considered that learning is an activity. The first way that computers had been used in education were in *drill and practice* programs, allowing students to exercise the development of very specific abilities. They include some gaming to encourage participation and questioning for the assessment of their acquired knowledge. These types of computer-based activities are usually used in an after-class context for personal development and training and are unfortunately not integrated in the classroom.

Another example of an associative model approach is the tutorial design of courses. In this design, learning comes from reinforcement and association with an assessment of performance. This assessment can be formative where feedback is used for identifying processing errors and a recast of the instruction. Again, the use in the classroom is limited since it is not a tool to help students in their work, but a tool that can somehow substitute a teacher.

Conclusion

What we must remember is that when schools adopt new technology and services, they must be evaluated. This way, as a school, you know if they are successful and what improvements are needed. Staff will also need training, you can't expect staff to use new technology if it they are not confident users or creators. Any initiative is doomed to failure without well trained, confident staff that can see how technology can support and benefit teaching and learning.

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DISTANCE EDUCATION THE INDIAN SCENARIO - PERSPECTIVES AND PRACTICES

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Prelude

Indian has more than 415 Universities and 20700 colleges with more than 5.5 lakhs teachers' catering to 11.5 million students it caters to only nine percent of relevant age group. Bu in the larger context it is found that there is no alternative device to ensure in higher education. The distance education has now been traced back to the history of more than a quarter century. As of now, there are 103 countries, 829 Distance Education Institutions offering nearly 35,000 courses in the world. India is having at present one .national and 15 State Open Universities. There are more than 105 Conventional Universities offering correspondence education programmes. Government of India has adopted a policy on establishing one state open university in each major state, With the enrollment of three lakh students in open universities and nearly 7 lakh in 105 correspondence course institution, offering; nearly 20 per cent of the total enrollment. The open and distance education system has already acquired a major size and role in the university education.

At the starting of new millennium, we realise that it is easier to more knowledge to the place of people rather than move people to the place of knowledge. The distance education is a by-product or result of this development. Even if distance education offers the same programme like BA, B.Com as the conventional system, offers it does to meet the needs of different target groups. The programmes may be the same but the learners are different. The new millennium demands the use of distance education system in several ways. They are (1) Education for all; (2) Continuing Education; (3) Equity in Educational opportunities.

Education for all is essentially a 21st century phenomenon. This will need enormous numbers to be handled. You need a system with higher productivity. Persons already employed have to be re-educated or retrained. In the modern world, re-education of employed persons is as important as new education of regular students.

Among the many demands that are now made, social justice is the foremost, this we see not only in India, but also in advanced countries. Opportunities for education must not only be made available. But they must be made accessible for all. Education cannot be made accessible to the economically, socially and geographically disadvantaged persons with the present system which is rigid and limited in its capacity is needed for adjustment and accommodation. A more flexible system is needed than the conventional system of rigid structure. Distance education has the advantage of high productivity and great flexibility. The universities that offer correspondence courses should soon transform them into distance education mode. The image of the correspondence programmes is not very favorable in the eyes of live public. The universities are of the view that the correspondence courses as of income generating proposition. The conventional universities many of those that offer correspondence courses must search their conscience and see whether this culture should be allowed to continue. Formal system of education covers only a limited educational are training requirement. It is only the non-formal system then has to take over those needs not attended to by the conventional system. Distance learning constitutes a major component in the non-formal system.

Distance education has to use multi-media. Otherwise, it will not be able to compensate for the absence of interaction between the teacher and the learner that takes place or supposed to take place between the teacher and the learner in the class room in the conventional

system. Therefore, it is imminent need to make use of three benefits of communicational technology. To grab these benefits, we must develop programmes for communication through Radio and Television. Since for a long time the Government of India have been promising and longing to promote educational channel. Therefore, as of now, we have time to popularise education through Television, which us an off-shoot of the development of the modern technology and communication network. Despite, there is no evidence of the use of communication technology. Most of the distances educations institutions do not use TV and even may do not use Radio. It is mainly became time is not made available in these channels. By and large, moreover the distance education depends only on print media.

The correspondence courses in many of our universities are being offered by a separate directorate or schools. However, they do not enjoy much of autonomy. Mostly they offer only these programmes, available in the conventional system and that imposes constraints. There is an urgent need for reorganisation of distance education as traditional component like school or directorate. For nearly three centuries, education has not seen any major change. There are .many instances in history, where teachers have become social, political and economic leaders and brought about changes and revolutions. But, teachers unfortunately have not brought out any change, much less a revolution in the class room. The communication revolution has invaded all sectors. But has not entered (introduced) the class room. A society which avoids mini-revolutions must face a major revolution. As we stand at the 21st century, (new millennium) we see an educational revolution on the horizon. We must be prepared for the change. As distance education is a new tool, it has come to stay. How to shape it to meet the growing societal needs is a big challenge before it.

Distance Education in India is gradually assuming the dimension of revolution in education. It has the potential to reach those sections of the society who have not, so far been able to have access to higher education because of various constraints. In any educational system the relationship between the learner and the institute is important, this is more so in distance education system. In conventional system, the student is identified with the college, whereas in distance education the student is identifier -with the university. The study centers play a key role in distance education system.

Distance mode as a Substitute

The population in India is growing enormously with the result that the conventional system 15% not able to fulfill the educational demand. As such, the conventional educations systems have paved the way for the innovation of distance mode of education. Distance education is more flexible in terms of attendance and course duration; it involves less investment for education. Distance education and upgrade their education at their own pace and ultimately it leads to self-study and study with earning. Therefore, distance education is a good substitute for higher education for learner. The mode of distance learning is crucial in both to its system and status. The nature and provision of self-learning academic support services for its learners are vital role.

Distance Education has emerged as an effective and viable alternative to the conventional educational system. Distance education caters to the varied needs of a wide-ranging learner clientele. Since distance education is a teaching - learning system, the institution has to device varied teaching - learning programmes. Under distance education system, one can find a hiatus between the learner and the institution. The quality of distance education is linked to the organisational structure of the institute while providing adequate student support services.

Since 1962, correspondence /distance education has been and still continues to play a significant role in the Indian higher educational scenario. Despite the socio-academic

predilections against this mode of teaching and learning, one reason might be for looking at correspondence/distance education with disfavor is its inherent near - omission of student - teacher physical contiguity during dissemination of knowledge which is otherwise widely considered indispensable. Distance education, a term which imparted at a distance, operates on the philosophy of providing higher education to all those who aspire for it. Student - Teacher apartness in distance education thus is born out of the social demand for education. This does not, however, answer the question of its academic credibility. Some feel that quality of education suffers consequent on the non-contiguous nature of the teaching/learning process in distance education. In distance mode of education, there is a dire need of support services because students are separated from teachers and the learners groups are heterogeneous spread across the country or continent.

In India, the distance education is of recent origin and was introduced six decades ago. However, the Indian higher education system is under tremendous stress and strain. For a developing country like India with its demographic and economic conditions the distance education system has the potential to fulfill the enormous responsibility of universalisation and democratization of education. The mind of globalisation is also affecting the higher education system and the concept of providing education by distance education is gaining strength. The higher education system is expected to give high quality education. The learner performance indicators that could be used for monitoring the quality education being offered by open/distance education universities. The student support service is one at the most important component of the distance education system.

In the evaluation process of higher education in India, the open university system / distance learning programme has become an integral part and it has become a substitute rather than supplementary to the regular learning system. In any systems the qualitative increase will certainly erode the quality, unless due attention is given to maintain quality. If the quality is not considered in the open/distance learning programmes, it will be considered an advanced mode of adult education programme in the open university/distance learning programme, the students/learners come from different environment. Hence, the learning materials should be prepared in such a way as motivate the learners.

Distance education is not new to India. We can trace its roots in the Mahabharata where Yekalavya learned archery. In the recent past especially since 1962, the conventional universities have also been offering correspondence education. In particular from eighties, "Distance Education" has come to stay in front along with the traditional mode of education. With, its introduction educational opportunities which were hitherto unthinkable were thrown open to all. As in sequel to this scenario, the Dr. B. R. Ambedkar Open University was established in 1982 in the state of Andhra Pradesh. Since then, this University has been functioning effectively. The effectiveness and efficacy of this University can be attributed to its roots while establishing which were powerful with distance education principles.

Conclusion

In India the concept of distance education relatively very young when compared with the conventional system. The number of universities offering distance education are also very less as and when compared to the number of conventional universities and yet the enrollment is more in those institutions which shows the popularity of the system. It is widely accepted fact that the conventional system of education cannot meet the educational needs of the people. Thus, there has been a transformation in this way, where people can learn and in the process of transformation, mode of delivery of information with the emergence of distance education institutions is very much immense.

The formal system of education in India has been under tremendous pressure. This has led the government and universities to take up new responsibilities. The pressure is from two sides. One from young students who seek higher education and who are not able to get admission in formal system; another from those who are not able to be full time students in the formal system for higher education and are now employed. It is a fact that the rapid strides of distance education in India are due to partly to the failure of the formal system, in order to meet out the growing demand and responsibilities, the formal educational institutions have started offering correspondence/distance education and Open University systems of education. One of the main objectives of distance education system is to realise equal educational opportunities for higher education for a larger segment of the population. Another main objective of distance education is to provide education at the door steps of the needy and less privileged sections of our society.

The entire field of education is in the process of change. In a developing country like India, the growing interest is to switch over from traditional methods of teaching to modern methods originating from educational technology. It is generally accepted that the overall goal of educational technology is to facilitate distance learning through a variety of means. In a developing country like India, advances in educational technology create two problems - quantitative expansion and qualitative improvement. The distance education system has great potential for integrating new communicating technology in the teaching - learning process. The recent developments in communication technology provide a wide choice to integrate new media into distance education and make the teaching process more effective. A number of developed as well as developing countries have adopted multi-media approach m their delivery system. Distance education as a movement throughout the world has come to stay. The pressure mounting on higher education gets relieved through this system which removes the constraints of entry, upward mobility and multiple exit for a learner. Further, the Open University system is not bound by the constraints of time and space.

The success of the Open University in UK encouraged Indian Universities to adopt the concept of openness to education. In distance education, as the name itself suggests there is a distance between the learner and the institution. Distance education system adopts flexible mode in admissions, methods of learning, conduct of courses, examinations, evaluations etc. Thus, the distance education system provides more independence to the learner by providing opportunities of flexible entry, upward mobility and multiple exits to the process of learning. Further, in the distance education system the knowledge is acquired through variety of means.

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DISTANCE EDUCATION - A POSITIVE INTERVENTIONIST ROLE IN THE EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN

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Introduction

To promote enrolment of girl child in the age group of 14-20, especially those who passed class VIII and to encourage the secondary and higher education of such girls, the distance and open learning are very much helpful. The removal of women's illiteracy and obstacles inhibiting their access to and retention in higher education will receive top priority, through provision of distance education services. Major emphasis will be laid on women's participation in vocational, technical, and professional education at different levels. The policy of non-discrimination will be pursued vigorously to eliminate sex stereotyping in vocational and professional courses and to promote women's participation in non-traditional occupations as well as in existing and emerging technologies.

Distance Education

The special characteristic of distance education is that it is endowed with high flexibility and can meet the demands of education for all and `continuing education' which the conventional education system is unable to meet. Further, distance education takes education to places and people hitherto unreached, transcending social, economic and geographical equality and thereby opens a new vista in our striving towards breaking the barriers of `opportunity and equity'. Through distance education it is easier to transport knowledge to people than transport people to the people of knowledge. Because of these special features of distance education, it benefits certain categories of people who for various reasons are unable to avail of the formal education system. These include persons without formal qualifications, persons belonging to different age groups, disadvantages groups, and employed persons. There are large percentages of women in all the above categories. Thus women as a category could really take advantage of the provision of distance education in a large measure.

Objectives of Distance Education for Women Learners

- Decision making ability: the ability to weigh and to arrive at a valid and honest personal judgment.
- Truth Seeking: a respect for and reliance upon observable evidence vouched for by reliable groups.
- Skills of living: ability to use those tools and machines which have wide application in one's society.
- Communication: the ability to convey to others orally in writing, graphically, or otherwise, information, opinions and conclusion.
- Adaptation to change: awareness that knowledge, society and social values are all changing and ability to change oneself to maintain harmony with the environment.
- Aesthetic awareness: recognition of beauty in the natural world, in the arts and in human relationships.
- Commitment to society: knowledge of the different elements of social relationship and the ability to practice social skills, enabling individuals to interact in a mature way with one another and with the environment.

Attitudes and Beliefs that Blocked Women from participating in Higher Education
- Pre-school children suffer when their mothers work.
- Working mothers cannot have relationships with their children.
- It is more important for a wife to help her husband's career.
- It is better for everyone if the men are the achievers and the women take care of the home.

Changing Attitudes

Given the opportunities, women in India, like their counterparts elsewhere, are keen to embark on self-development initiatives without being hampered significantly by the social or cultural inhibitions imposed on them. Better and easily accessible educational opportunities and the impact of communication technologies on the social and cultural environment are making substantial differences to the attitudes, values and concerns of Indian women. In this changing scenario, Indian women are likely to benefit much more from improved access to education. They have the confidence, the will and the motivation.

Distance Education will be an Affective tool for Women's Empowerment, the parameters of which are:
- Enhancing self-esteem and self-confidence of women.
- Building a positive image of women by recognizing their contribution to the society, policy and the economy.
- Developing ability to think critically.
- Fostering decision making and action through collective process.
- Enabling women to make informed choices in areas like education, employment and health. (Especially reproductive health).
- Ensuring equal participation in development process.
- Providing information, knowledge and skill for economic independence.
- Enhancing access to legal literacy and information relating to their rights and entitlements in society with a view to enhance their participation on an equal fooling in all areas.

Conclusion

The modern educated Indian woman is neither happy nor socially useful. She is a misfit in life. She is highly suppressed and needs opportunities for self-expression. The distance education must provide this opportunity to women.

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E-LEARNING THROUGH ODL: A STUDY OF Dr. BRAOU

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Introduction

The conventional education system alone cannot cater to the needs and demand for Higher Education in developing countries like India. The people's thrust for knowledge had paved way for the establishment of Open and Distance Learning (ODL) institutions in many countries. There has been visible change in the recent past in usage of technologies in education, all over the country, to provide services of quality. Especially ODL system has to use technologies to the extent possible to reach the unreached as they are scattered over different places. The revolution brought in the Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) and the Internet has tremendously influenced the methods of dissemination of knowledge. This in turn facilitated for the development of e-learning. It is a Universal phenomenon, that Open Universities employ multimedia packages to impart knowledge to its learners. In this context, it is well known that Dr. B.R.Ambedkar Open University adopted multimedia learning packages besides self-instructional printed course materials. As advancement in learning packages, the University launched online MBA programme in collaboration with Schoolguru Eduserve private limited. Much before the introduction of online MBA, the university resorted to online admissions to various programmes and also registration for examinations.

The growth and development of the ODL depends on the services rendered to its customers which include both academic and non-academic. In this connection, the emphasis is laid mainly on academic services being provided through different media. Supply of study material, conducting face to face counselling cum contact classes, organizing summer schools and winter classes are some of the prominent academic services provided by the university. E-learning is one of the powerful modes to design, develop and deliver the instructional materials electronically. It facilitates the interaction between the teacher and the taught through internet. Information and Communication Technology (ICT) brought the learners, to be friendly with learning devices, which can even be carried from one place to another. For instance palmtop, laptop etc. Implementing e-learning in Open and Distance Learning (ODL) necessitates the study of environment according to the learner's needs. In fact the available modern ICT has changed the society in general and the whole educational delivery system in particular. The Governments are very keen in implementing the E-Learning system in the high school level. Many of the States are progressing towards E-learning to sensitize the students. The teachers are showing pictures, animations and drawings by using computers in the class rooms. Providing instruction formats through ICT might increase flexibility in the learning process. The strength of ODL lies only in making use of the latest technologies.

In this paper an attempt is made to study the extent of E-learning mode available in Dr. B.R.Ambedkar Open University and the perception of learners about E-learning.

Objectives

The objectives of the study include:
1. to find out how far the services of E-Learning currently available in Dr.B.R.Ambedkar Open University and
2. to obtain the feedback from the learners about E-Learning and the facilities available to learn through E-learning mode.

Methodology

The study is importantly based on primary data collected from a sample of 200 students chosen at random, studying at Dr. BRAOU Study Centres. The information was collected through interview method. First, the courses offered by the University have been stratified into Under Graduate (UG) and Post Graduate (PG) programmes. From each stratum a programme with a maximum enrolment was identified. Students of Post Graduation, Diploma and Certificate programmes were excluded from the purview of the study as they constitute a small percentage of total learners enrolled. Therefore, the learners who were selected are from U.G programmes only. The numbers of study centres chosen are five and they were also chosen at random, covering students of 2013-14 and 2014-15 batches.

E-Learning at Dr. BRAOU

Dr.B.R.Ambedkar Open University is in the path of e-learning. The university launched a two year online M.B.A. programme from the academic year 2014-15. It is totally an online programme. Right from admission to assessment, everything is through online only. Learners are given user ID and password to get the study material on net.

The University began online registration for admissions and examinations of all the programmes in the year 2013. The system is yielding acceptable results. The University is mailing information about fee payment, registration for examinations, dates of examinations etc. to the mobiles of students through SMS. It also allow the students to get printouts of their marks statement from the university website.

Challenges of the University

There are many problems in the University to go for e-learning. Before the launch of e-learning the university has to look at various issues. They are:

1. *Equipment for E-Learning:* Providing electronic infrastructure at headquarters and study centers such as air conditioned halls, computers, internet facility, power backups etc. is a difficult task as it requires huge investment and also to incur recurring expenditure.
2. *Technology support:* University has to develop software, procure server, 60 GB RAM, 2 TB storage space, 100 mbps speed internet etc. which is also a challenging task.
3. *Man Power:* At present the employees working in the University, to a substantial extent, fall in the age group of 50 to 60 years. It is difficult for the university to make them conversant with the current electronic operating systems and also for the teachers to equip themselves with the preparation of E-content.
4. *Learners aspect:* Dr. B.R.Ambedkar Open University provides a second chance to enrich knowledge to all those who were not be able to pursue higher studies in normal course due to socio-economic and other reasons. Thus, most of the students are getting enrolled from rural and tribal areas. They have many problems to use computers and internet due to their own constraints. For instance, if we take the data of I year U.G students of 2014-15, out of 66323 enrolled, 40,922 (61.71%) are from rural, 1608 (2.42%) are from tribal area and the rest i.e 23793 (35.87%) are from urban and semi urban regions. Many students from rural, semi urban and tribal area are not accessible to electronic devices like computers.

In this context, what the university has to do for the effectiveness of e-learning in general or the initiatives to be taken to make e-learning acceptable assumes importance.

A) *Awareness:* Generally there is lack of awareness on the part of the parents about the effectiveness of e-learning. Many parents feel that the traditional learning mode is effective. Therefore, there is a need to enlighten them on the advantages of e-learning.

B) *Low Adoption:* Many people follow traditional methods. In this context, issues like lack of e-content, inadequate infrastructure coupled with the problem of digital divide, has resulted in a relatively low adoption rate.

C) *Bandwidth Issue:* Content requires a rich combination of multimedia components for e-learning. However, due to bandwidth and connectivity limitations, downloading of given content by the learners will be slow especially in rural and tribal areas. This creates frustration and boredom among learners and affects the ease of learning.

D) *Computer Literacy:* In Dr. B.R.Ambedkar Open University, most of the learners are from rural area and non formal sector. This large segment of population is computer illiterates. It is this aspect that hinders the introduction and implementation of e-learning. As a result, most of the e-learning content has low interactivity and moderate impact on learners.

Methodology

A survey has been conducted to know the student understanding about e-learning. An interactive method consisting of 8 questions were posed on e-learning to the U.G. students at 5 Study Centres. All the 200 students have responded. The responses of the students have been analysed hereunder:

Data Analysis

1. When a question was posed to the students whether they knew e-learning? Out of 200 students, 80 students (40 per cent) said that they were aware of e-learning and the remaining 120 students (60 per cent) expressed that they did not know it.

2. In response to the difficulty involved in e-learning, 30 per cent of the learners stated that it is difficult, 10 per cent of them said easy and the remaining 60 per cent expressed 'no idea'.

3. When a question was asked about learning the lesson on web, 20 per cent of the learners expressed that it is possible and remaining 80 per cent said it is not possible. The reason for expressing such a huge number of students learning on web being difficult is, the low level of learning skills in them.

4. In response to the owning of computer by the learners only 18 per cent computers and the rest stated that they did not have computers. It indicates that majority of the learners pursuing higher studies in the university are not financially sound to acquire computers.

5. As far as the internet connection is concerned, only 13 per cent of the students said that they had internet facility and others said no. This shows that the bandwidth facility is yet to extend to many of the remote areas with reasonable cost.

6. When a question was posed as to the ability to learn from internet centers, only 10 per cent of the students said they had the affordability to learn through internet centers. It means that this facility is far away from many people due to its recurring cost.

7. In regard to E-mail IDs to the students only 31.5 per cent expressed that they had E-mail IDs. This is a clear indication that majority of the students are not familiar with ICT.

8. In response to the learning through electronically, only 22 per cent of the students expressed in favour of learning electronically. It is a clear hint that the university has to launch short duration courses to bring awareness among the learners to learn on electronic mode as the order of the day all over the world is e-learning.

Conclusion and Suggestions

1. In view of poor background of majority of students pursuing higher education scattered over different regions vig. Rural, tribal and semi-urban, even after three decades of existence, the University could not go for e-learning. Accessibility, affordability, and low skills of learning came in the way of starting e-learning at the university.

2. It is common to say that any new system introduced in any sphere of life takes longer time to accept it. In the same way, e-learning also takes some time to become a popular mode of learning in the ODL system. For this purpose the institutions of ODL shall focus on the accessibility of technology and equipment, availability of qualified trainers and creation of congenial atmosphere for e-leaning so that it becomes a popular mode of learning soon.

3. There is need to change the attitude of the of the staff working in the University so that new technology may be adopted by them.

4. University has to Improve Accessibility and Connectivity, this can be achieved through the upgrading of technological infrastructure as well as the lowering of the access fees to a more affordable level.

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LEARNER AUTONOMY IN DISTANCE EDUCATION

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Introduction

"Give a man a fish, he eats it one day; teach him how to fish and he will never go hungry".
(An old Chinese proverb)

Every learner has his/her own approach to the language, based on his previous experiences, educational background, age, level, learning context, learning style. The teacher has to engage more in training the learners to develop strategies suitable for them in according to their interests so as to enable the learners become autonomous.

Research Problem

The role of a teacher is very important in any teaching-learning process. This role becomes more crucial when it comes to teaching English in a distance education context because the learners are heterogeneous. Most of the English language teachers' are from literature background with very little or no training in teaching English. Even if they have some training also they may not be trained in teaching English to distance learners.

It is strange that the same teachers are employed as Academic Counsellors in Dr.B.R.Ambedkar Open University on part-time basis. In order to help the learners cope with the problems contact-cum-counselling classes are conducted. Though contact-cum-counselling sessions are peripheral however they assume significance in distance education because they have to interact with the learners and build a rapport with them, win their confidence and slowly develop their confidence by changing and set them on the path of self study (Kumar Kishore R, 1999). Therefore the counsellors have to provide the necessary support required to the learners to study on their own. In addition, he/she has to make the learners aware of their own styles and strategies in order to improve their learning. In other words, the role of the counsellors is to train the learners to develop learner autonomy. But it is doubtful whether the academic counsellors are capable and confident of making the learners independent of them.

Research questions

- How far are the conventional teachers successful in making the distance learners' teacher independent?
- What are the methods used by the counsellors to teach distance learners? To what extent are these helpful in making the learners independent?
- Are the distance learners aware of their role in distant learning?

Theoretical Background

Learner Autonomy

Autonomy involves raising students' awareness of their responsibility as language learners as well as knowing to themselves the strategies which can help them in learning better in order to achieve their goal. Learner training is a tool to achieve autonomy. In addition, autonomy is directly linked to learning and learning strategies. Those students who involve themselves in the learning process learn effectively (Oxford, 1990). According to (Hurd, Beaven and Ortega)"…… in order to complete a distance learning programme successfully learners need to develop a series of strategies and skills that will enable them to work individually".

In order to help learners become independent teachers have to provide learner training i.e., to help learners develop their learning potential so that they can learn on their own. The benefits obtained through learner training are life-long and cannot only be applied to language learning alone but to all kinds of learning. According to Hedge T (2000:76) "self-directed learners know their needs and work productively with their teacher towards achieving their objectives". However, it cannot be taken for granted that the learners will always know how to engage actively in their own learning. It has been suggested by some researchers that learner training in learning strategies would empower the learner to learn at his/her own place, pace and time and thus be self-directed in managing his/her own learning outside the classroom

Sample for the study

Five English Academic counsellors and 25 distance learners from two study centres of Dr.B.R.Ambedkar Open University in Hyderabad formed the sample of the study. The sampling method used was random sampling. Teachers and distance learners were selected randomly from two study centres in Hyderabad. The learners were first year undergraduate students of B.A, B.Com and B.Sc.

Research Methodology

The researcher had an informal discussion with the teachers and the learners before drafting the questionnaires in order to have an understanding about the distance learners and the English counsellors. Two sets of questionnaires were drafted and administered – one to the teachers and other to the first year undergraduate learners. A comprehensive questionnaire was prepared so that the researcher gets to know all the details from the teachers and the learners. Both close-ended and open-ended questions were included. The close-ended questions included different items like yes/no, multiple-choice and rank order. Open-ended questions were asked to give the respondents greater freedom of expressing their thoughts and opinions. The objective of administering the questionnaire was to elicit information about the teaching/learning process. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with the English language teachers to explore the methods used by teachers to make the learners autonomous. Similarly, semi- structured interviews were carried out with the learners to explore the methods followed by them for self study. The information elicited from the semi-structured interviews served as reinforcement and supplemented the information obtained through the questionnaires. The researcher had used mixed-methods to investigate different aspects of the same phenomenon for sound conclusions. Triangulation was done to increase the credibility and validity of the results.

Findings and interpretation of the study

A brief discussion of the responses obtained are summarised below: The average age of an English counsellor is 44 years. Except one teacher (T4) the remaining four teachers were well experienced in teaching. All of them have a minimum qualification of post-graduation. In addition, teacher (T4) has M.Phil degree and teacher (T1) has a professional qualification of M.Ed. The counsellors joined the Open University for: gaining experience in teaching English, self-improvement, fulfilling their interest in teaching distance learners, and earning money. Only one teacher (T1) has attended both a one day orientation programme and three months training in teaching English.

From the discussions with the counsellors it was evident that most of them have neither attended any orientation programmes nor workshops as academic counsellors. They are teachers from the regular mode and are not oriented on distance education.

Findings of semi structured interview with teachers

In the first place, the teachers stated that more than 80 per cent of the learners do not make an attempt to read the self instructional materials and even bright ones do not read and depend on model papers. So the teacher (T5) resorted to teaching only what is important from the examination point of view in order to complete the portion. Regarding assignments the teachers opined that assignments were not mandatory. Teacher (T5) opined that even if assignments are given there was no guarantee that the learners would do the assignments on their own, since most of the face to face themselves do not do the assignments on their own. They opined that oral feedback was given once in a while. Regarding usage of additional materials the teachers affirmed that they do not supplement teaching/learning materials because of the time constraint as each unit has to be completed in a class.

Findings of semi structured interview with the learners

From the learners interaction it was found that the English counsellor stand in front of the class and the teaching is in a teacher centred manner similar to a conventional classroom. Most of the learners were dependent on the contact classes. On being asked why they do not read the self instructional materials before coming to the class, 8 out of the 10 learners said that it was difficult to understand and interpret the activities in the book and 2 learners do not find time to read. Regarding assignments the learners said that the teacher instructed them to read the lesson before coming to the class and in some instances gave some questions based on the class and asked them to come prepared for the next class. The teachers never gave written feedback and once in a while they gave oral feedback.

Conclusions

We began this study with an aim to determine whether the English language teachers teaching the distance learners are successful in making the learners' independent and preparing them for self study. Most of the counsellors are from traditional teaching background, their perceptions of counselling in distance education are not very clear. The conventional style of teaching dominates even in the distance education class. They try to help the learners pass the exam but not much help is provided to make the learners independent of them. The contact classes, which are meant for supporting self-study to the learners, are conducted upon the lines of conventional teaching, thereby defeating the purpose of student support facility. The teachers are not properly trained to face the challenges of teaching English in the distance education system. Teachers do not supplement self instructional materials and feel that the syllabus of the course is self sufficient for the learners. Moreover, the teachers are constrained for time to complete the syllabus. The fact that a teacher is built-in in the self instructional materials is not known to most of the teachers.

The findings have shown that the task of teaching English becomes challenging because the learners usually have a negative self image about them and are passive in the classroom. Moreover, they lack the minimum language proficiency in English. They do not believe in the need for learning how to learn and expect the teacher to explain, give notes and also tell them the important questions from the examination point of view so that they can resort to rote memorisation of those answers. They can cope with the other subjects as they study these subjects in the regional language. Our "data" showed that the learners are unable to write grammatically correct sentences. A majority of the learners neither know the rules nor can they express themselves in English. Moreover, they have inhibitions, lack confidence and are afraid of using the language which makes the counsellors' job even more difficult. Most of

the learners have no idea about the nature of the learning demanded in distance education and are heavily dependent on the counsellors' support in the course of learning. The teachers fall short in training the learners to become autonomous and independent in their learning.

By and large the distance learners are not taught how to learn during the contact classes as a majority of the teachers are examination conscious and teach only what is expected in the examinations and fail to make the learners autonomous. Most of the learners are also of the same view and their only target is to pass the examinations and obtain a degree.

Suggestions

- **Need to organise a workshop for the teachers.** As most of the teachers have limited knowledge of English language teaching and distance education, a workshop should be organised to the teachers.
- **Need to organise a workshop/orientation for the teachers on language learning strategies.** Either on-line or off-line training should be provided to the counsellors on the language learning strategies so that they could train the learners this will enable them to perform better as academic counsellors.
- **Provide a bridge course for low proficiency learners.** A majority of learners' from regional medium background find it difficult to cope with the demands made on them by the self instructional materials. Hence, a bridge course should be offered to such learners before attending the contact classes.
- **Increase the number of English classes.** In order to teach and give extensive practice in the language skills, enough time should be given to the teaching of English on the timetable. At present, the number of classes is inadequate.

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METHODOLOGIES AND STRATEGIES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF QUALITY EDUCATION THROUGH OPEN AND DISTANT EDUCATION SYSTEM

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Introduction

In the World today, Open and Distance Education (ODE) system has been gaining widespread popularity over the years. The explosive growth of Open and Distance Learning (ODL) institutions and their scale of operations have been facilitated by continuous experiments and technological innovation in the field of ODE. The flexible and innovative characteristic features of the ODL systems allow for meeting the educational requirements of heterogeneous groups of learners at low costs. ODL institutions are therefore offering all types and levels of courses for self-motivated students through independent study programs.In designing new courses and developing instruments for assessment and examinations, resourcefulness of teachers is called upon to evolve innovative and creative approaches for effective, diverse teaching and learning and their evaluation. Appropriate teaching and learning strategies are accordingly adopted by the teachers and counselors who impart education to heterogeneous groups of learners, using a variety of educational technologies.

Methods and Strategies

The methods of teaching and learning under distant mode require that the teachers should be thoroughly familiar with the instructional design and delivery process. And for this, teachers need training in instructional message design, strategies for delivering instruction, diverse methods of presentation, selecting various mixes of student-teacher activities and interactions, and assessing the level of learning by students.

Criteria to maintain quality in Distance Education

1. *Admissions:* The degree of openness is in the case of admission only. According to set of norms recommend by the NCTE for the B. Ed., Program, and the AICTE for MBA and MCA programs and remaining programs by the UGC. Open Universities prefer their own rules. To maintain standards there is no compromise in the case CCIs to maintain standards and norms prescribed by the respective authorities.

2. *Academic Standards:* Concern for quality is of recent origin. So far, it was accepted that the quality and standards of educational programs are to be judged and decided by the academic community in the University. In order to maintain the academic standards at university level board of studies play an important role in maintaining the standards and safe guard the prescribed instructions from various academic bodies from time to time. After approving the syllabi, these institutions prepare guidelines for the course/program to suit the heterogeneous learners.

3. *Quality of Teaching:* Quality of teaching in distance education plays a pivotal role. The learner is more attracted by the teaching methods adopted by the Open Universities.

    a. *Medium of Instruction:* Learner can choose his/her choice to learn in his own medium of instruction. One of the important recommendations of the Education Commission (1964-66) was that regional languages be used as media of instruction in universities and colleges instead of English. State Open

Universities follow the regional languages as medium of instruction in various Courses.

b. *Learning Material:* Self-Learning Material is specially prepared for learners. This material is inbuilt lecturer.

c. *Multimedia Approach in Teaching and Learning:* Distance learner can choose his choice to learn Print Material, audio, video, radio, television and computer aided instruction through e-mail, www and online education.

d. *Learner-Centered Teaching:* Open and Distance education institutions are different from that of the conventional Universities in Teaching – Learning process. This system is more learner-centered and the learner is an active participant in the process. Interaction between students and teachers is critical for effective learning. Student support services are therefore suitably designed to overcome the negative aspects of isolation and lack of regular contact between the distance learner and the teacher. And in doing so, different forms and channels of interaction are created.

e. *Self-Instructional Materials (SIMs):* The printed study materials (written in teacher in-built style)

f. *Counseling sessions:* At the institutional level, pre-entry counseling is provided to the students at the university campus and at various study centres.The students admitted to various courses are also provided a detailed counseling schedule, which contain such information as the venue for their counseling and the names of the counselors. The academic counselors are provided training to orient them in subject specialization as well as the methods of teaching –learning process in ODL systems.

g. *Assignments and students feedback:* A large number of students are involved in distant teaching which poses difficulties in providing feedback to students through tutor comments on assignments. Yet many ODL institutions are in the process of making assignments compulsory in select programs so as to ensure necessary feedback to students.

h. *Contact programs:* Face –to face counseling sessions are organized, especially on holidays. The advanced technologies are also utilized for teleconferencing and interactive radio counseling. Some Open universities provide toll free numbers for rural students and other disadvantaged groups. Thus the institutions are making efforts to improve various forms of interactivity and support to students .

i. *Library services:* Library services are provided at most study centres. The quality of such centres, however, depends on the facilities available with the host institutions. Most libraries established at the study centres issue books to students. Some universities provide mobile practical facilities for programs in rural technologies and management.

4. ***Quality of Educational inputs:*** Quality Educational inputs such as Self Learning Material, Audio, Video, Radio, Television and Computers i.e., W.W.W. e-mail, and e-learning, Virtual Education through virtual class rooms etc., IGNOU has attained an international stature due to the high quality of its course materials, the University today had an enrollment of 2 million spread over 33 countries in the world. (IGNOU at a glance). Quality education through television programs plays an important role in distance education. In the education sector GyanDharsan (GD) is India's first truly educational channel with a mission to carry knowledge to households of students, teachers and public, to bridge the knowledge and information gap and to provide the

same quality of higher education to all. Of the four channels the third channel is Eklavya (The technology channel) brings quality education to students pursuing engineering education throughout the country and the fourth channel i.e., Vyas (the higher education channel) brings quality education to the students pursuing higher education throughout the country. eGyankosh: a national digital repository to store, index , preserve, distribute and share the digital learning resources developed by the ODL institutions in India.

5. *Quality of Student Support Services:* The image and reputation of the distance education institutions largely depend upon the quality of student support services.
   - To establish the missing link of direct contact between teacher and pupil
   - Efficient and well experienced teachers' participation in the above programmers.
   - In the case of Science and Engineering and Computer courses practical were imparted during the Personal Contact Programmed Cum Practical**.**

Learners' Need Based Education

Any learner who would like to pursue a career in Open and Distance Institution can join the programmed of his choice. Learners explore the knowledge and skills required for success in the changing economic situation. Distance Education Institutions enable learners to specialize in a particular area of their interest through counseling. It provides for learner-centered education creating interest to pursue further studies by way of new Information Technology. With a view to increase the opportunities for higher education to a wider section of the community, the CCIs and Open Universities introduced the job-oriented courses besides various other courses to suit the ever-changing needs of the Society. This is related to interaction with the community, linkages with industry, educational extension and innovations and other welfare activities.

Learning Environment

To develop the individual's ability to manage his own learning needs. With the tremendous speed at which latest knowledge is replacing the old one, it is impossible for standardize courses to cater to mass individual needs. The large-scale expansion in the number of ODL institutions offering Open and Distance Mode at various levels has been of varying quality during the last century. In the 21st century assuring the quality in higher education has become an integral part of the development of this type of education in India. The need of the hour is to ensure quality of education in the country for the cause of credibility of the entire system of Open and distance Mode. The huge quantitative expansion has taken place at the cost of quality, especially, during the 20th century. The period might be described literally as the" Era of Open and Distance Education" in the history of education in India.

Since distance education is 'learner centered', the institutions mainly focus its attention on every strategy and practice that promote quality and excellence in relation to the intuitional performance. Quality Assurance has been defined in the literature of distance education as continuing, active and integrative process for maintaining and enhancing quality.

Empowering the Teaching – Learning talents

The Teaching – Learning talents for imparting education to learner as chosen by Open Universities vary from institutions to institutions. The print material is the master media, which is supplemented and complemented by audio, video lessons, Radio and Television programs. To provide education to the heterogeneous learners, the multi-media is inevitable in distance learning. Globalization and today's Information and Communication Technology

have given a new expression to Open and Distance Learning. In order to strengthen the Distance Mode sharing of information among the Open and Distance Learning institutions and maintenance of the quality study ,material and quality audio/video programs is in vogue among the institutions.

In a competitive environment, to provide access to education through innovations ,flexibility in pace and place and multimedia technolgocial support to all sections of the community, to provide quality education,to ensure learners satisfaction, and the performance of the learning resource centers (study centres)is crucial besides, instructional activities and learning program.In the emerging knowledge society ODL institutions well equipped to use new innovative teaching- learning methods, process the materials with the new ICT tools for learning. Learners will be exposed to knowledge based society, which prepares them for the competitive employment market besides ensuring lifelong learning environment.

Conclusion

The record of performance of ODL system, as reflected from the growing size of enrolment, a large number of programs on offer and improved access to deprived groups is attributed to healthy practices that have stimulated growth of ODL in India.The system has endeavored to respond to the growing and diverse educational needs of heterogeneous groups of learners.The use of communication technology have not only contributed to distance learning but also facilitated the dissemination of good practices across the institutions. The extent to which the interactivity between the teacher and student is improved, through two-way communication for effective teaching and learning, would determine the contributions of the ODL systems in human capital formation; which, in turn, would pave the way for the universalization of higher education and for making the economy globally competitive.

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ROLE OF ICT FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING

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Introduction

The advent of the information society has called into question many of our assumption about education. New Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) are changing the world we live in and the way we learn to live. ICT changes teaching and learning through its potential as a source of knowledge, a medium to transmit content, a means of interaction and dialogue. Thus, ICT is both a cause of changes and a means of achieving it.

As ICT enters every class room, what is the impact of teachers? Does it give them? More work or less? Is it a tool that helps them to teach curriculum or does it and extra curriculum content? Does it change what they teach and how they teach it? It is beginning to look as through ICT and, in particular, connection to the Internet will have profound effects on schools. It is too early to draw firm conclusion about what those effects will be. The advance of the most significant new application, the Internet has been both recent and rapid the World Wide Web started its exponential in 1994. But we can identify pointers for teaching in the connected classroom. This paper does so by addressing two basic questions: What difference to communicate technologies make to school? How does ICT enrich learning?

Communication

New application for information and communication technologies, such as e-mail, internet, the World-Wide -Web and video- conferences, has created many new communication possibilities for school. In a classroom connected to the Internet, communication over distance is simpler than ever before. Communication outside the closed culture of a school can extend cultural understanding beyond the immediate 1 of 5 EDEN 1999 Open Classroom Conference-Balatonfured social environment. Pupils in one country, for example, can exchange experiences with pupils in another using e-mail or a video-conference. In one case, pupils linked up with an expedition on its way to the North Pole, demonstrating the dramatic possibilities for on-online interaction, when pupils work with ICT. They often work collaboratively in groups or teams. Originating often as a solution to shortage of computers, the experience of group work brings new benefits, by stimulating pupils to develop the interpersonal skills necessary for life after school. The ethos is one of working together to solve problems and achieve goal. Each people have a distinctive role but fully involved in a common task.

ICT gives those means to communicate and to control their communication. The channel boots that self –esteem and gives them a sense of power. Relation between teachers and pupils tend, in consequences, to change. On –line communication-when a computer is connected to the Internet –inevitably gives control to the uses, in this case of the pupil. In the connected classroom the teachers no longer controls what happens and losses the monopoly of authority. The teachers become leader, helper, partner and evaluator, combining the traditional role of subject expects with that of the manager.

Through engaging pupils in joint endeavor, ICT can help to make the classroom a more inclusive environment. ICT has something to offer most pupils, whatever their individual capabilities. Email, for example, offers "virtual mobility" to those who lack physical mobility. But communication technologies can also be a force for exclusion. Pupils

are disappointed or frustrated when they encounter language barriers on the World Wide Web, for example. Sometime enthusiastic pupils exclude those who are more school work and- or less- with their school work and –once the techniques are mastered-make it mostly enjoyable, sometimes frustrating For teacher in provides a different challenge that of becoming facilitators of learning – organize timework, enduring inclusion, and managing classroom activity. More of their time is likely to be spent supporting individuals, less on whole class teaching. Nicolas Negroponte has suggested that:

"We may be a society with far fewer learning-disabled children and far more teaching –disabled environments that currently perceived. The computer changes this…" the creation of teaching-enabled environments through effective use of ICT in the classroom may indeed have the effect of releasing hidden potential amongst pupils.

Enriching Learning

The school curriculum is under review. The learning necessary top fact the future goes beyond the knowledge- based learning of traditional schools in the search for new agenda. One framework for educational reform for new environment was proposed by the International Commission of education for twenty first century. Its forms a good basis for discussing the relation between ICT and learning. The key idea of the report is a powerful one- a framework for learning of four pillars:

I.   Learning to know
II.   Learning to do
III.   Learning to live together
IV.   Learning to be

The vision of the four pillars introduces a new and different balance between knowledge and other learning type of learning. The first element, learning to know, is the basis of most traditional education, but in the new framework also comprises "learning to learn". The second is conceived broadly, including "the competence to deal with many situations and work in terms". Learning to live together refers to family and community as well as global context: "developing an understanding of other people and an appreciation of inter- dependence in a spirit of respect for the values of pluralism, mutual understanding and peace. Finally, "Learning to be "relates to the development of individual potential.

Experience suggests that it has an important role in stimulating interaction and discouraging passivity. Perhaps ICT will help to liberate teaching and learning from the constraints of the linear curriculum. It can provide a bridge between learning at school and learning outside, at home or farther afield, giving substance to the notion of learning to live together.

Some of the themes identify above are very close to these qualities and capabilities. Traditional school tends to neglect what the commission calls "the treasure within", the talents hidden like buried treasure in every person. There are many other ways in which ICT enriches learning. But the framework of the four pillars emphasizes the value of balanced development. If teachers are to achieve this balance they will need a new approach to teaching and learning.

Teaching for Tomorrow

The discussion above of ICT, communication and learning has highlighted some significant changes in the teacher's role:

I.   Change in relationship with pupils;
II.   Change in role to facilitators and managers that support learning;
III.   Change in the content and scope of learner;

IV.   Changing locus of control, from teacher to learner;

These are dramatic changes. It is no wonder that the teaching profession is concerned about the implications of integrating ICT in schools. The barriers are formidable. It is easy to suppose that the main ones are resource important. Although the situation is changing rapidly, shortage of computers and the high cost of connection to the Internet is a problem for most schools. But it seems that hardware and infrastructure are not the biggest barriers. The main difficulty is transforming teaching. The challenge of integrating technological. What's more, it is not fundamentally about helping people to operate machines into their teaching as tool of a profession that is being redefined through the process.

What help do teachers need? The principles barriers faced by teachers in the adoption of new technologies have been summarized in a recent study as follows: "Large psychological barriers to trying out and using ICT difficult to change the pedagogical beliefs underlying teaching. Difficult to change deep-rooted mental structures on the "art of teaching." Teachers are afraid of losing authority and class control because they believe that their competence in computer infrastructure and software; teachers and schools cannot keep up problems and pitfalls at the institutions and governmental level. The effort required from teachers to master new technologies is underestimated."

These are principally human factors. ICT is apparently seen by many teachers as posing a threat to their professional expertise. The teachers of tomorrow need a new approach to their job and a new vision of what it means to teach and what it means to learn.

Conclusion

ICT is as we have seen a tool of great value, but its effective use entails mastery of a range of specific skills. The challenge of introducing teachers at all levels and in all sectors to the necessary skills is immense, particularly at a time when technology applications continue to develop almost as fast as they can be learned. But technical know-how is only part of the story. Effective of ICT cannot be separated from attitudes and approach to teaching and learning. The new teachers need to take an approach, to create an environment conducive to learning. There needs to be a balance using technology and traditional methods of teaching and learning.   Effective integration of ICT in schools may thus, in the end, require the transformation of school culture. ICT will perhaps, in retrospect, be seen as the catalyst which stimulated new ways of thinking about teaching and learning, and finally opened the classroom to changes.

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ROLE OF DEC IN THE OVERALL FRAMEWORK OF ODL IN INDIA

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Introduction

Today two terms that are being used almost inter-changeably are 'Open Learning' and 'Distance Education and they are often combined to be known as Open and Distance Learning (ODL). Open learning is a philosophy and Distance Education is the mode used for translating it into reality as the two are complementary to each other. Distance Education (DE) is an umbrella term which describes all the teaching learning arrangements in which the learner and the teacher are separated by space and time. In fact it is a mode of delivering education and instruction to learners who are not physically present in a traditional setting of a classroom. Transaction of the curriculum is effected by means of specially prepared materials (self-study (learning) materials) which are delivered to the learners at their doorstep through various media such as print television, radio, satellite, audio/video tapes, CD-ROMs, Internet and World Wide Web etc. Also a technological medium replaces the inter-personal communication of conventional classroom based education that takes place between the teacher and the learners. Communication between the institution, teacher and learners is mainly through electronic media (telephone, interactive radio counselling , teleconferencing, videoconferencing, chat sessions, email, website etc) and also through postal correspondence and limited face to face contact sessions held at Study Centres that are set up by the DE institutions as close to the learners' homes as possible. Educational opportunities are planned deliberately so that access to education is available to larger sections of the society. Thus, ODL is a term which accepts the philosophy of "openness" and uses the "distance mode" of learning.

Why ODL?

ODL occupies a special place in the Indian higher education system because of its major contribution in enhancing the gross enrollment ratio and democratization of higher education to large segments of the Indian population particularly to reach out to the unreached and to meet the demands of lifelong learning which has become more of a necessity in the knowledge society. The major objectives of ODL system are: To democratize higher education to large segments of the population, in particular the disadvantaged groups such as those living in remote and rural areas, working people, women etc. To provide an innovative system of university-level education which is both flexible and open in Terms of methods and pace of learning; combination of courses, eligibility for enrollment, age of entry, conduct of examination and implementation of the programmes of study; To provide an opportunity for up-gradation of skills and qualifications; and To develop education as a lifelong activity to enable persons to update their knowledge or acquire knowledge in new areas.

Historical Developments

Five decades ago policy-makers realized the imperative need of DE in order to expand the base of higher education. With the expanding base at the elementary and secondary education levels, the demand for higher education had increased. The University

Grants Commission (UGC) suggested in its report for 1956 - 960 that proposals for evening colleges, correspondence courses and award of external degrees should be considered. The Planning Commission took serious note of such a need and in its Third Five Year Plan mentioned the need for the introduction of correspondence education in the country. In the light of the observations made by the Planning Commission the Central Advisory Board on Education recommended the setting up of an Expert Committee under the chairmanship of Dr. D.S. Kothari, the then Chairman of UGC, to look into the proposal of introducing correspondence courses. The committee also suggested that correspondence courses in India should be administered by the universities only and in the first instance, by one University, viz., the University of Delhi as a pilot project.

1. Thus was born in 1962 the University of Delhi's School of Correspondence Courses and Continuing Education. Subsequently the Education Commission (1964-66), under the chairmanship of Dr. D.S. Kothari, also perceived correspondence education as an answer to the increasing pressure of numbers as well as the growing financial pressures on the universities.

2. The next decade i.e. the 1970s saw the growth and spread of the Correspondence Education system in India, by more conventional universities opening Correspondence Course Institutes (subsequently renamed as Directorates of Distance Education/ Centers of Distance Education).

3. Against this background the government introduced the Open University system in the 1980s, with the objective to further democratize opportunities for higher education to large segment of the Indian population, particularly those for whom access was difficult or impossible such as those living in remote and rural areas, working people, women and other adults who wish to acquire and upgrade their knowledge and skills through studies in various fields.

4. The Ministry of Human Resource Development in its National Policy on Education (NPE) 1986, gave prominence to an OU system as a means to "augment opportunities for higher education and as an instrument of democratizing education" Clearly, the vision was that OUs would be different from conventional universities.

5. Thus a new chapter in DE system began with the establishment of Dr BR Ambedkar Open University, Hyderabad in 1982, followed by the establishment of Indira Gandhi National Open University at the national level by the Parliament of India in 1985. The idea was accepted by many states and 1987 saw the emergence of two more Open Universities, namely, Nalanda Open University (NOU) Patna, Bihar and Vardhman Mahaveer Open University (VMOU), Kota Rajasthan. Subsequently, Yashwantrao Chavan Maharashtra Open University (YCMOU), Nashik Maharashtra was established in 1989.

6. The major responsibility for the promotion and coordination of Open and DE was bestowed by the Parliament on the Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU), instead of the UGC, the statutory authority for regulating higher education India. Thus IGNOU became a unique institution as it was entrusted with a dual role: of functioning like an Open University by offering programmes of education and training through distance mode and also acting as the promoter, coordinator of the Open and Distance Education system in the country and determining standards in such systems. To fulfil this particular mandate the Distance Education Council (DEC) was set up by IGNOU in 1991 as a statutory mechanism under IGNOU Act which became operational in February 1992. The DEC functioned within the broad framework, and the policies laid down by the Board of Management of IGNOU while enjoying a significant measure of autonomy in its operations.

7. As per the mandate of the DEC and the NPE 1986, which was revised in 1992, the DEC started interacting with the State Governments for establishing the SOUs in the respective states. As a result of DEC initiatives several State governments established Open Universities. As emphasized in the NPE of 1986 and subsequently Programme of Action in 1992, the OUs adopted a radically different approach to reach the disadvantaged by adopting a variety of media and delivery channels for dissemination of information and knowledge. As a result of this they have been able to make a definite impact on society, and more Indians have access to higher education than ever before.

Distance Education Council

- The Distance Education Council (DEC) took several initiatives for promotion, coordination and maintenance of standards of open and distance education system in the country. DEC has developed guidelines for regulating the establishment and operation of ODL institutions in the country.
- In August 2010, the Ministry of Human Resource Development constituted a Committee under the Chairmanship of Prof. Madhava Menon in respect of regulation of standards of education imparted through distance mode.
- In view of the acceptance of the Report submitted by the Madhava Menon Committee by the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) and its recommendations for the creation of 4 new regulatory body for ODL system, the Distance Education Council of India (DECI). The Madhava Menon Committee also decided that as an interim measure, the DEC of IGNOU may be shifted to UGC.
- Subsequently, the MHRD issued an order, dated 29th December, 2012, transferred the regulatory authority of distance education from IGNOU to UGC. Thereafter, IGNOU notified the repeal and deletion of Statute 28 of IGNOU Act and dissolution of DEC on 1st May 2013. UGC issued an order taking over the physical infrastructure of erstwhile DEC on "as is where is basis" and the staff working at erstwhile DEC on "deemed deputation basis". This is an interim measure till such time an independent body namely Distance Education Council of India is created by the Parliament

Role of the Distance Education Council (DEC) in India

With the dissolution of the Distance Education Council (DEC) of the IGNOU in June 2013, the regulatory powers on ODL has been transferred to the "Distance Education Bureau" of the University Grants Commission (UGC.) According to the Indira Gandhi National Open University Act, 1985 (IGNOU Act 1985), the Distance Education Council (DEC) was established in 1991 to be responsible for the promotion and coordination of the Open University and Distance Education system and for the maintenance of its standards. Based in New Delhi, the DEC mainly maintains the standard and quality of teaching, evaluation and research that takes place in the distance education systems and Open Universities of India. Open and Distance Learning (ODL) has become immensely popular in India in the last few decades. And in such a scenario, the role of the DEC becomes very critical and necessary.

Members of the DEC

The Vice-Chancellor of IGNOU acts as the Chairman of the DEC. Other members of the DEC include representatives from: Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD),

University Grants Commission (UGC), National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC), Vice-Chancellors of State Open Universities

Roles and Functions of the DEC

As already mentioned, the key duty of the DEC is to promote the open university/distance education system, coordinate its development and ensure that the quality of education is maintained as the best. It does this in the following ways:

a) The DEC develops a network of open universities/distance education institutions in India in consultation with the state governments, universities, and other concerned agencies and it identifies priority areas in which distance education programmes should be organized and then provides necessary support for organizing such programmes.

b) It is the duty of the DEC to recommend to the Board of management the pattern and nature of financial assistance that needs to be given to open universities/distance education institutions.

c) The DEC helps in coordinating and sharing the instructional materials prepared by different open universities/distance education institutions and the student support systems. It makes sure that there is no duplication of efforts.

d) It also tries to develop procedures for sharing of courses and programmes and for the payment of royalty or other charges to the members of the network whose courses and programmes are used by other member institutions.
f) The DEC also sets broad norms for the fees that need to be charged from students who join various distance education programmes.

e) It also collects, compiles and circulates information relating to the courses and programmes offered by various open universities/distance education institutions.

f) The DEC also advises the State Government, universities and other concerned agencies on their proposals to set up open universities or to introduce programmes of distance education.

g) It appoints Review Committees periodically, which study and assess the performance of the open universities/distance education institutions in its network.

h) The DEC also establishes a broad framework for the pattern and structure of the distance education courses and programmes.

i) It sets the norms, procedures and practices for admission, evaluation, completion of course requirements, transfer of credits, etc. of students admitted to the programmes of the open university/distance education network and for the award of certificates, diplomas and degrees to them. The DEC also develops guidelines for the organisation of student support services for the open university/distance education programmes.

j) The DEC starts the process of recognition. It recognizes ODL institutions on the basis of how prepared they are to offer programmes through distance mode depending upon their infrastructure, human and other resources, learner support system, and teaching methods.Recognition is the certification for offering education through ODL mode. It is, therefore, mandatory for institutions to get recognition from the DEC. Another major role of the DEC is in matters of financial interest. The DEC appoints committees that assess what development grants need to be sanctioned for various open universities and distance education institutions.

The DEC then sanctions grants to open universities/distance education institutions for specific projects on the basis of these reports submitted by the appointed committees   .

An Open University established by or under an Act of, a State Legislature, and declared fit to receive assistance from central sources under Section 12-B of the UGC Act.

Any other university as defined in Section 2(f) of the UGC Act provided that such a university is also declared fit, wherever applicable, under Section 12-B of that UGC Act.. An institution deemed to be a university under Section 3 of the UGC Act.

Thus, it is clear that the DEC, as an apex agency, is responsible for recognizing ODL institutions in India. It is compulsory that all institutions should take prior approval from the DEC for all existing and new programmes they plan to offer through distance mode. The DEC also provides technical and financial support to the Open and Distance Education institutes in the country.

Distance Education Council (**DEC**) was an organization based in New Delhi, India responsible for the promotion and coordination of the Open University and distance education system and for determination of its standards in India. The Council was constituted under the Indira Gandhi National Open University Act (1985).[3][4] It is considered necessary and expedient to establish a Distance Education Council as an authority of the University under Section 16 of the Act The Distance Education Council (DEC) is an apex body for the Open and Distance Learning (ODL) system in the country. It is empowered, under Statute 28 of the IGNOU Act, to act as an apex body for the ODL system. It is responsible for promotion, coordination and maintenance of standards of the ODL system. The Vice Chancellor of IGNOU is the *ex officio* Chairperson of DEC In June 2013, University Grants Commission has taken over DEC, by establishing Distance which will govern the distance education programs in India. The UGC has constituted a Committee to examine the pending proposals of programme-wise recognition to the institutions

Conclusion

The learning material used in Distance Education is usually prepared in the Self Learning Format and is referred to as Self Learning Material (SLM). The SLMs differ from a chapter of a textbook or an article of a journal as the SLMs make the learner think, write and do. The chapters of a textbook usually present information in a very compact form. They are closer to reference material than to learning texts. They are organized in terms of the subject matter to aid the teacher in an institution. On the other hand, SLMs are the instruments for learning. The ODL system being a learner centered, the SLMs should be Self-explanatory, Self-contained, Self-directed, Self-motivating, Self-evaluating and Self-learning.

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THE STATUS OF WOMEN EDUCATION IN OPEN DISTANCE LEARNING

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Introduction

"A country or a community in which women are not honored can't be considered as civilized said Gandhiji, As Dr.Chalar as pointed out if you educate a man, you educate an individual. If you educate a woman you educate a family. Half of our population consist of women but for centuries together have been treated as slaves and solvents. Mahatma Gandhi is regarded the father of out nation. Gandhi wrote his "autobiography" under the title "My experiments with truth" he talks about various issues in this book this extract from his autobiography bring about his view on women. Gandhiji was a ceaseless crusaer of women's equality. The other reformers wanted to protect, uplift and bring relief to women. They made women look helpless. But, Gandhiji believe in education for women. The believed that they should have the right to be free and equal and to shape her own destiny side by side with man.

Status of Women in India

India is a country of a billion people. Half of the population consists of women. Once they were dominated by men and consider as second class citizens. In previous year, women were denied of education after a fierce battle. Now the trend is changed. Madam Bikajicama, Sarojininaidu, Anniebesent, Vijayalakshmipandit and suchithakripalani are a few of the noble women, who devoted a major portion of their life in freedom struggle. Today women enjoy more freedom and occupy all position. They serve as ministers, doctors, teachers, lawyers, pilots, and other professionals. There is hardly a field today which remains untouched by them. They have achieved glory in all the filed. India had the world's 2nd women prime minister smt. Indira Gandhi as the 1st women president of the UN general assembly. They have been treated as slaves and savants. In domestic life the women is reduced to a mouth less creature that has to drudge all her life for the comfort and happiness of man. It is high time women found their right place in society.

Education Development of Women through ODL

The Government is in keen aim parting education to women. In big cities schools and colleges are opened exclusively for women are taught technical courses for women. women's hostels are opened for college girls in cities and for working women. Recently Mother Teresa Women's University has started Education for women at Kodaikanal, All over India women police stations are being opened to look into the complaints of women.

Research in higher education institutions for women is at its lowest ebb. There is an inadequate and diminishing financial support for higher education from the government and from society. Many colleges established in rural areas are non-viable, are under-enrolled and have extremely poor infrastructure and facilities with just a few teachers. A series of judicial interventions over the last two decades and knee-jerk reaction of the government – both at the centre and state level and the regulatory bodies without proper understanding of the emerging market structure of higher education in India has further added confusion to the higher education landscape in the country. There is an absence of a well-informed reform agenda for

higher education in the country. A few efforts made now and then are not rooted in the new global realties based on competition and increased mobility of women students and workforce.

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The matter of access and equity of open and distance learning for women is another very important issue in the management of higher education. This should be based on the simple principle that has already been stated 'No talented and deserving person should be denied access to higher education'. This guiding code presumes a lot of things. Open and distance learning should be based on merit and desire and not economic, social or influential forces. with the help of private sector, should take primary responsibility of financing open and distance learning system as fees will not be able to play a central role in the higher education economics. The concept of earning while learning or exchange of labour or skills for education needs to be promoted. Acquiring of multiple degrees and diplomas simultaneously has to be encouraged and the standards of evaluation have to be strengthened. Disparities and discrimination of age, gender, and socio-economic background need to be tackled.

Conclusion

Gandhi believed the women have the necessary courage to be the soldiers of nonviolence. Women could surely tolerate pain and still lead the country to freedom. Several measures are required to be taken to ensure that India has a respectable position in its research performance. These measures would include increasing the level for funding academic research in India and altering the funding mechanism, improving physical and information infrastructure for quality research through a nationally coordinated approach, putting in place objective measures for assessing research performance and rewarding performance and promoting collaboration along with competition in research in India.

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LEARNING STYLES OF DISTANCE EDUCATION LEARNERS IN RELATION TO THEIR COMPUTER AWARENESS

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Introduction-

As the growth of new information in the digital age accelerates learner's access knowledge via, multiple access points. And technology is nodoubt one access point that leads toknowledge.Distance education learning educators are changed with their responsibility of helping learners learn at distance. Science distance learning of education are faced with a heterogeneous group of learners, distance education learning educators should design activities that address various modes of learning in order to provide a significance experience each course participant. Increasing the demand of degree seeking working adults, one of the immediate problems that instructors face with it in distance education is adult learners learning styles, who may have different learning styles. In fact the existence of distance education is to some extent justify the learners styles. There is an intricate relationship between distance education and learning styles.

As distance education became more and more popular, researchers began to study learns learning styles to find out whether instruction matched students learning styles preparedness. To date a plethora scholars and researches have provided practical insights into the learning styles. For ex, Dunns (1984) learning styles focus on five stands that effect individuals learning (environmental, emotional, physiological, sociological, and psychological).

Learning styles

Learning styles are not intended to "box" students into a mind-set into which they have been "diagnosed" or "labeled." Rather, it is designed to initiate discussion about and reflection upon learning preferences (Passmore, 1995). Learning styles models incorporate a range of aspects of learning which can influence the way inwhich a person deals with incoming information and retrieves stored knowledge. There are five broadcategories of models :-> Channel or Mode of Learning,> Cognitive Strengths in Learning,> Personality Type influence on Learning,> Manner or Style of Learning,> Types of learning behaviour and strategy. Some models include a fourth channel, the reading and writing channel which is listed separately.> Visual> Auditory> (Reading/Writing)> Kinaesthetic. Stewart and Felicetti (1992) define learning style as those "educational conditions under which a student is most likely to learn." Learning styles refers to the way one internally represents experiences and recalls or processes information.

Significance of the study-

Learning styles are important in distance education because students take in information in different ways and use different cognitive schemes. Teachers cannot rely on visual cues for student understanding. Knowing a student's learning style will help to alleviate this barrier. When an instructor knows a student's learning style, he or she will understand why a student didn't perform well in a certain activity or had a hard time understanding. When students understand their learning style, they will be more focused in their learning.Online learning preferences will lead to teaching strategies that more closely match the student's learning style. Different activities are provided to increase student learning. Activities may include single student projects such as concept maps or instructional

graphics assignments. Collaborative projects will allow students to work together and share ideas. Technology has become a mainstream in education. We can improve the quality of education by incorporating technology into our courses. Those courses can be improved by determining students learning styles.

Objectives of the study
　　1. To find out the learning styles of Distance education learner.
　　2. To study the relationship between the learning styles of the distance learners and their computer awareness.

Hypothesis
　　1. There is no significant relationship　between　learning styles of the students and computer awareness and previous experience.

Methodology
　　　　The objective of this study is to describe the students' learning styles and their level of computer awareness.Descriptive survey method of research was employed to investigate the relationship between students'learning styles and computer awareness. The sample of the study comprised 62 members of undergraduate distance learners selected randomly from different study centres of Tumakuru city.
　　　　Two tools were used to collect the data. They were (i) Learning Style Inventory – (LSI-MK) by Karuna Shankar Misra (2012) and (ii) Computer Awareness Questionnaire was developed to identify students' awareness on computer.It is the process of functions of the computer, the utilizations of computers, web content, Extensive use of the web,and onlinelearning and their previous experience. Statistical techniques used- The collected data were analysed by applying mean, r values.

Table-1	Mean	SD
FR	27.71	3.894
FC	28.08	3.205
ER	21.52	4.132
EC	22.37	4 .38
VR	26.68	4.783
VC	26.44	4.445
Computer awareness	1.84	.853
Stu_Exp_in_Computer	1.85	.765

Findings of the Study
　1. More number of distance students has beenprefer Figural learning style, and verbal learning styles. Out of 62students 25stdents are moderately aware about the computer; 14students are highly aware, 23studentsare not aware about the Computer.
　2. There is a significance relationship between learning styles and computer awareness and student experience in computer. But only enactive and verbal reproducing learning styles are correlates to the computer awareness. The result reveals that student's computer awareness and experience is influenced the learning experience.

Conclusion
　　　　In order to help students succeed in distance education, instructors must understand how they learn, how they perceive, and how they process information. Learning styles of distance students must be identified so that the instructor can plan appropriate teaching

strategies to accommodate individual strengths and needs. It is very important for instructors to share information with students about their learning styles and the preferred teaching strategies to accommodate those styles. By sharing information about learning styles, instructors help their students gain power and control over their personal learning styles and the learning process.Learners centre learning style must strive to accommodate learners learning styles in order to maximise learning.

The overall suggestion is to teach to as many learning styles as possible in a distance-education course. The more ways teachers can present information, the more learning styles will be accommodated and the more learning will actually take place. Teachers can provide an explanation of how each class activity can relate to a learning style. Some students may not become engaged in the activities that do not match their learning styles, but if teachers can present different activities that relate to different learning styles, then more students will benefit from instruction.

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THE ROLE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES IN THE OPEN AND DISTANCE EDUCATION SYSTEM: THE CASE OF POLITICAL SCIENCE & PUBIC ADMINISTRATION IN REALISING 'VISION INDIA'

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Introduction

The role of social sciences in the open and distance learning system shall not be over emphasized. Particularly, Political science and Public Administration has been playing an important component in the distance education/learning process and it is mainly due to the importance given to these subjects in the civil services examination both at the state and central levels. The vision for the nation, projected by the political entities and the administrators has to be understood in particular context that necessitates proper understanding of the political and administrative systems, and their capabilities and shortcomings properly analyzed. Political Science and Pubic Administration gives the learners a different set of options and perspectives about public administration and an in-depth understanding of the politics of the nation. Even students who had done professional courses and also working as architects, journalists, engineers and doctors, has opted political science or pubic administration as their optional subject in various competitive examination. For this purpose, they are mainly taking the degree courses of these subjects offered through open and distance mode of education. This paper is an attempt to portray the importance of Political Science (Politics) and Public Administration in the context of social existence, activism and responsiveness of the general public and how the ODE system is catering to these purposes. In essence this paper deals with one of the sub-themes under the Vision India thrust area formulated for this National Conference, looking into the issue of how policies made by the administrators and the political class shall be understood and acted upon that eventually results in human resource development and nation building.

Understanding Political Science and Public Administration

Social sciences have always played an important and integral part of the social change that has occurred for centuries. In the advent of liberalization, privatization and globalization (LPG), social sciences, particularly Politics and Public Administration, have gained enormous importance at local, regional, national and international levels. It has become important for the stake holders to understand the basic functioning of both the state and non-state actors like the international non-governmental organizations, terrorists groups, multi-national corporations, etc. The public at large has also become vigilant and concerned on knowing and evaluating the response mechanisms set up by their respective governments to face, negate or absorb the challenges and opportunities thrown by different set of state and non-state actors that directly or indirectly affects the well being of the personal life and public good.

The present system of administration and governance in any country is the result of complex interplay of administrative, bureaucratic and political agencies. The very effect of this complex system and outcomes directly affects the people of a country. In the modern times, people are also having a watchful eye on the functioning of their respective public and political authorities and their dispensation. Even the foreign policy of any country is the result of the political maneuvering that helps to raise the national interest and well being of the particular nation. So it has become pertinent for the larger public, particularly for the

younger minds of a nation to understand the complex functioning of the pubic system and its repercussion on their lives. The inherent need for international and comparative social science using modern technological change hold the potential of a major paradigm shift to a broader and more robust social change in this century as has been witnessed by the social network revolution in different parts of the world in recent times.

Availability of Different Avenues and Usages

Many of the institutions like colleges, universities and special centers are providing political science and pubic administration as one of their subjects among other social sciences and humanities courses. As mentioned earlier, students and professionals from varied backgrounds are showing interest in these subjects as it helps them in their career prospects and promotions. Nonetheless, it is not confined to these objectives only. Nowadays people are showing more interest in public administration and becoming politically active through the usage of modern day technologies and social networks like Facebook, Twitter, Bogs, Instagram, etc. More and more people are decimating their ideas and suggestions for a better polity and governance through these channels. In this context, people who are not concerned with their career and promotion objectives are also engaging themselves to know about politics and public administration. It only enhances their understanding of the society, public system, administration, governance and the likes.

As the LPG took its massive expansion in most of the developing countries, this also resulted in the massive emergence of not-for-profit originations and NGOs in many of the developing countries like India. There are several of these organizations that work with particular objectives that are directly concerned with governance, administration, accountability, legitimacy, transparency, etc. These activities needs a clear understanding of the governmental systems, the political parties and political organizations therein and this is where the ODE system comes in handy for the people working in these kinds of organizations. ODE is thus functioning as a viable mechanism for many such interested people in providing knowledge and resources. It also provides the opportunity to study and master the subjects for those currently working in these areas as well as those who aspire to do so at a higher level.

Impact of these Subjects

Enlarging the scope and perceptive of the political understanding and the public administration has been one of the strong impact of these subjects as mentioned below;

- Offers an inter-disciplinary approach, enabling students to explore social responsibility and sustainability from multiple perspectives
- It helps in better understanding of social problems in one's personal context and competence
- Encourages and engages the students with the social and political activities that affect them personally, their society or state/country either directly or indirectly.
- It develops intellectual, subject based and transferable skills and knowledge through a wider spectrum of activities.
- These programs combines both academic and practical perspectives relating to this area and would be suitable for those interested in working in roles related to social responsibility, the public sector, social enterprises, non-governmental organization or the not-for-profit and charitable sectors.

Conclusion

The role played by social sciences in bringing social changes that has occurred in any part of the word is evident from history and current affairs. Apart from the role played by

economics, education and management sectors, it is the bureaucratic sector in terms of administration, formulation and implementation of policies that is responsible for the nation building and realising national goals and objectives. The political class is the master of the administrative class as a result of our constitutional set up and it this class that is holding the key in realisation of 'Vision India' set forth by previous and present governments at state and central levels in India. Understanding the intricate policy making and implementation process and the difficulties shall be better understood when one is having a proper understanding of the politics and public administration of a country. This can be achieved by learning the subjects of political science and pubic administration, where it creates an informed citizenry and socially conscious individuals. This in turn helps in creating an informed knowledge society that accepts proper viable policies and rejecting the contradictory ones. It is the avenue provided by the ODE system by offering courses in Political Science and Pubic Administration, that more and more people are being aware of the ways the pubic system functions and also makes them actively involved in realising the 'Vision India' projected and offered by the political authorities of the nation. The social networks available in this digital word have only enhanced the worthiness of understanding pubic administration and political participation of the common pubic.

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SMART CLASS ROOM IN TEACHER EDUCATION AT PRESENT CONTEXT

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Introduction

Teacher should play a pivotal role in spreading education. Competent efficient and effective teachers become role model for the students. In order to develop excellence in education a smart class room is needed. Now a days at school and college level smart classes are conducted to enhance the students intellectual powers. At present a smart class room in teacher education is in the advanced level.

The smart class room is based on the application of scientific knowledge and instructions that is educational technology. It improves the effectives and efficiency of teaching and training. Using technology we access and evaluate the students performance in a good manner. It is based on the scientific and technological advancement. It is more a practical discipline less a theoretical one. If brings pupils, teachers interactions together in an effective way. It helps effective learning, breaking the monotony and boredom of the class room scene. It identifies the educational needs of the pupils. It motivates the students creative interest and assets their distraction.

All types of projectors, cassette players, tape recorders , radio, television, closed circuit television (CCTV), teaching machines and computers, e-learning, e-teaching etc…, all includes smart classroom .All these mechanise the process of teaching so that teachers would be able to deal with more students with less expenditure in educating them.

Need and importance of smart classroom:-

Education is a ladder to pluck the fruits of success. We build a better nation through quality education. Education is sure to illuminate humanity. The ability to engage in critical thinking and to demonstrate mastery over life skills are necessary for a successful future. Plants are developed by cultivation and man by education.

We must promote awareness among children ale out digital skills, technology and how to use all of this digitals. The present on–going revolution is e-learning and e-teaching, e-father, e-mother. They can interact with their children in web-camera. In such a way there are lot of factors such as e-marketing, e-tutoring, e-business, e-teleconferencing etc. Learning in smart class room is an active social process in which students constructs new ideas or concepts based on their current events and knowledge. In order to meet the present day requirements and to strengthen all aspects of teacher education learning this makes smart assessment.

Principles of Smart Classroom

There is no single model of a smart classroom. Around the world there are a number of innovative learning spaces in various educational institutions which, given their singularity and structure, can be considered to be smart classrooms or labs of didactic innovation, e.g. Stockholm University's Future Classroom in Sweden or Universidad Camilo José Cela's smart classroom in Madrid. In order to establish universal principles as guidelines for the design, arrangement and pedagogical practice in formal learning spaces, our research group EMA carried out a thorough literature review about learning spaces and their features regarding architectural, design and pedagogical issues. In addition we did some research as well on various learning spaces considered innovative and facilitators of learning in schools in Stockholm (Sweden), focusing on the analysis of ICT integration, which resulted in

important findings to guide the design and arrangement of classrooms in a non-traditional alternative way [8]. At the present time we are extending our research, in the Catalonia region in Spain, by means of research on various schools with classrooms organized differently in terms of space and of pedagogical aims. This research is reinforcing and widening our knowledge on the principles that we established.

The following are the principles for smart classrooms in terms of arrangement and pedagogical configuration which we have established as widely generalizable and which should be considered in order to transform any formal learning space into a smart classroom.

1. *Flexibility of physical arrangement:* The arrangement of a smart classroom and its elements should be such that it allows agile and easy variations in activities, that is, make it possible to change student grouping, the type of resources being used, use of various types of resources at the same time, ICT and non-ICT, for different students to carry out different tasks, e.g. searching information, discussing, watching a video, etc. Therefore classrooms will be supplied with varied furniture elements to achieve flexibility of space arrangement, for instance using movable, rolling desks and chairs, or stackable, folding chairs, ergonomical spaces, areas for different uses, etc.

2. *Adaptability:* From the idea that every teacher and every class is different, and that space can be adapted to their needs, the concept of smart classrooms includes the principle of adaptability to the type and needs of teacher and of each student. Adaptability has to do also with a space which enables the inclusion of students and teachers with special education needs. Therefore classrooms will have furniture and objects that help in catering for learning difficulties, such as the ones impaired students have.

3. *Comfort:* A smart classroom should be a place arranged to comfortably do various activities –reading, watching videos, playing, listening to music and audios, writing, talking, debating, experimentation, and so on. Under this principle, elements which enable this well-being should be included in the learning space for the various tasks to be done for learning, such as couches, pillows, rugs and carpets, comfortable chairs, lecterns, desks and tables of various types, headsets, right lighting, etc.

4. *Multiplicity:* This principle refers to smart classrooms having features which enable the use of various types of resources and stimuli. While teaching and learning, the arrangement should enable possibilities for creativity, reasoning, logical thinking, etc., and it should be adapted as close as possible to learners' various needs and learning styles. Thus, it should be an open space where we can have access to any source of information, either physical or in digital format particularly.

5. *Connectivity:* The concept of connectivity has a twofold character. On one hand it is required that the learning space has a good network connectivity, both local and global, to use to the most the potential of mobile devices. Connectivity should be wireless, and this is fundamental to maximize physical mobility around the space and comfort in using technology. On the other hand, beyond digital connectivity there exists social and informational connectivity. Through networks, students live connected to teachers, friends, family, professionals and to a large number of information sources, both in their immediate surrounding and from distant places. This connectivity should not be underestimated by teachers, who should explore their possibilities and evaluate to what extent they can contribute to improving learning space and learning processes.

6. *Personalization:* Smart classrooms should allow students and teachers to personalize their environment according to their likes and needs. Therefore we are not referring to a standard, impersonal, cold environment, but a space which progressively teacher

and students should make their own, personalizing it by means of activities which support and reinforce learning.

7. ***Order / Organization:*** This is an important principle, even though it is not easy to design, and attain, sustainable placing, storing, arrangement and rules of use of spaces and resources available. For this reason teachers should carefully consider the order and arrangement of spaces and resources so that these are the most adequate for the learning activities that will take place in their smart classroom. At times, a chaotic space may foster creativity, but in any case this chaos should be controlled and re-oriented whenever necessary. After each activity is over, resources should be available to another student, another group of students, or a different activity.

8. ***Openness:*** This principle relates to the false and rooted belief that learning takes place only in the formal space in the traditional classroom, where the teacher presents information and gives a lesson in a "transmissive" way . Learning however takes place beyond the classroom space, both physically and virtually, and therefore activities put forward for smart classrooms should consider these extended learning places and learning times in order to learn beyond the classroom and the class times traditionally assigned.

9. ***Safety / Security:*** Learning spaces with heavy technological integration require that hardware and software have a high degree of security. Smart classrooms will have an arrangement which prevents users from having physical accidents and will also be safe in terms of access to information and communication on the Internet from the classroom. Therefore security systems will be taken into account when conceptualizing and designing smart classrooms.

In sum, the arrangement, structure, methodologies and principles of smart classrooms intend that learning experience be as likely as people's learning ways, preferences and styles, in a natural way and in a personal space; all this through active participation, experimentation, collaboration, solidarity, rapport, creativity, leadership, and so on.

Conclusion

The growth of science and technology is in rapid and zenith level.   Knowledge is improved in all the fields. To promote current events and affairs and to bring up the students for the innovative advanced path smart class is needed. It enriches and enhances the students as well as teachers.   Smart class room helps to enrich and enliven the instructional process. It stimulates the interest of the learners for further learning.   It helps the learners to easily understand what they learn and retain it for long.   It helps to win and sustain the attention of the learner. Quantity & quality teaching learning will be improved.

தொலைநெறிக் கல்வியில் தமிழ் மரபிலக்கியங்கள்

முனைவர் சு. அரங்கநாதன்

உதவிப் பேராசிரியர், தமிழியல் மற்றும் பண்பாட்டுப் புலம், தமிழ்நாடு திறந்த நிலைப் பல்கலைக்கழகம், சென்னை

கல்வி என்பது மொழியை அடிப்படையாகக் கொண்டது. இங்கே மொழி என்பது குறியீடு. அதனால் எந்த வடிவத்திலும் மொழி என்பது உண்டு. இந்தக் கல்வி என்பது பன்னெடுங்கால வரலாற்றை உடையது. இது எப்போதும் ஒரே நிலையில் இருந்தது இல்லை. காலந்தோறும் மாற்றத்திற்கு உள்ளாகியே வந்திருக்கிறது. அதற்கு காரணம் கல்வியின் தேவை அதிகரித்துக்கொண்டே வருவதுதான். கல்வி என்பது ஒருவனின் திறமையை, அறிவைத் தீர்மானிக்கக் கூடியது. இந்தக் கல்விதான் ஒருவனை பிறரிடமிருந்து வேறுபடுத்திக் காட்டும் காரணிகளுள் மிக முக்கியமானதாக இருக்கிறது.

இன்றைய வணிகமயமான உலகில் கல்வியும் விதிவிலக்கல்ல. பொருளாதாரத்தை நிர்ணயிப்பதில் கூட கல்வி முக்கியப் பங்கு வகிக்கிறது. அதனால் தான் இன்று கல்விக் கடைகள் ஏராளம் திறக்கப்படுகின்றன. இந்தக் கல்வியின் தரம் ஆசிரியர் மற்றும் கற்றல் கற்பித்தல் உபகரணங்களை முன்னிலைப்படுத்தி சந்தைப்படுத்தப் படுகிறது. சிறந்த கல்வியாளர்கள் கல்வியை வணிகப்பொருளாகக் குறிப்பிடுவதை ஏற்க மறுக்கலாம். அது அவர்கள் கல்வி மீது கொண்டிருக்கும் பக்தியாக மட்டுமே எடுத்துக்கொள்ளமுடியும். காரணம் தனியார் கல்வி நிறுவனமாக இருந்தாலும், அரசு கல்வி நிறுவனமாக இருந்தாலும் அது கட்டணத்தைப் பெற்றுதான் கல்வியைத் தருகின்றது. சில நிறுவனங்கள் விதிவிலக்காக இருக்கலாம்.

பெரும்பான்மை கல்வி நிறுவனங்கள் தரமான ஆசிரியர்களை முன்னிறுத்தி வியாபாரத்தை நடத்துகின்றனர். ஆனால் நம் நாட்டில் கல்வி முறைகள் பலதரப்பட்டவையாக இருப்பதால் ஆசிரியரை முன்னிறுத்துவது சில கல்வி முறைகளில் எடுபடுவது இல்லை. தொலை நெறிக் கல்வி மற்றும் திறந்த வெளிக் கல்வி முறைகளில் ஆசிரியருக்கு நேரடி வேலை இல்லை. மாறாக திறன்மிக்க ஆசிரியர்களால் உருவாக்கப்பட்ட பாடப் புத்தகங்கள் முன்னிலைப்படுத்தப்படுகின்றன. இந்த முன்னிலைப் படுத்தல் என்பது வெறும் வார்த்தை அளவில் மட்டுமே இருப்பது தான் உண்மை. தொலைநெறிக் கல்வியில் ஒரு குறிப்பிட்ட பாடப்புத்தகத்தை ஒரு குறிப்பிட்ட ஆசிரியர் எழுதியது எனும் முன்னிலைப் படுத்தலை எங்கும் கண்டது இல்லை. மாறாக ஒரு எளிமையான முறையில் மாணவனின் கற்றல் திறனுக்கு ஏற்ற வகையில் (தானே கற்றல் முறையில்) உருவாக்கப்படும் பாடப்புத்தகங்கள் என்று முன்னிலைப்படுத்தப்படுகின்றது.

மரபிலக்கியங்கள்

தமிழ் இலக்கியங்கள் நீண்ட வரலாற்று வகைமை வேறுபாடுகளைக் கொண்டவை. இவற்றில் கல்வி குறித்தும் கல்வியின் தேவை குறித்தும் பேசாத இலக்கியங்களே இல்லை என்பதை அறிந்திருக்கிறோம்.

"கற்க கசடற கற்பவை கற்றபின்

நிற்க அதற்குத் தக"

எனும் வள்ளுவ வரிகள் கல்வி குறித்துப் பேசுகிறது என்பதை விட கல்வி, வாழ்க்கை என்ற இரண்டையும் பேசுகிறது என்றுதான் சொல்லவேண்டும். ஆனால் இன்று கல்வி வேறு வாழக்கை வேறு என்னும் நிலைதான். வள்ளுவம் மட்டும் அல்ல. படிக்காதவனை வேறுபடுத்திப் பார்க்கும் முறை சங்க காலத்திலேயே இருந்திருக்கிறது. அதனால்; தான் சங்க இலக்கியங்களில் பல இடங்களில் "கல்லா இளைஞர்" என்று வருகிறது. இது படித்த புலவர்களின் நுண் அரசியலாக பார்க்க வேண்டிய வார்த்தைகள். ஓலைச் சுவடிகளில் பதியப்பட்ட பாடங்கள், நூல்வடிவம் பெற்று இன்று மின்னணு பாடங்களாக மாறியிருக்கின்றன.

மரபிலக்கியங்களைக் கற்றல் என்பது சுவையான அனுபவம். அது எப்போது என்பது தான் இங்கே நாம் பேசவேண்டிய விடயம். அதாவது மரபிலக்கியங்கள் என்பவை பல்லாயிரம் ஆண்டுகளுக்கு முந்தையது.

அன்றைய மொழிக்கும் இன்றைய மொழிக்கும் இவ்விலக்கியங்கள் இன்றைய மொழியமைப்பிலிருந்து வேறுபட்டவை. இந்த இடைவெளியை நிரப்பு ஒரு அணுகுமுறை தமிழ் இலக்கிய உலகில் உருவானது. அது உரை எழுதும் முறை. இந்த உரைகள் தான் மொழி இடைவெளியை நிரப்பக் கூடியனவாக இருக்கின்றன. அதனால் ஒரு இலக்கியத்திற்குப் பல உரைகள் எழுந்தன. எளிமையான, விரிவான உரைகள் நிலைபேறடைந்தன. கடினமான உரைகள் பெயரளிவில் மட்டுமே இருக்கின்றன. இதை இங்கே சொல்ல வேண்டியதன் தேவை, தொலைநிலைக் கல்வியில் பயிலும் இளங்கலை தமிழ் இலக்கியம், அல்லது முதுகலை தமிழ் இலக்கிய மாணாக்கர்களின் கற்றல் திறனுக்கேற்ற வகையில் மரபிலக்கியப் பாடப்புத்தகங்கள் உருவாக்கப்படுகின்றனவா? என்பது தான்.

மரபிலக்கிய உரைகள் சில இன்றைய மொழிநடையில் உருவாக்கப்படுகின்றன. ஒரு முறை படித்தாலே எளிதில் புரிந்துகொள்ள முடியும். ஆனால் இவ்வுரைகள் எளிமை கருதியே இலக்கிய உலகில் புறம் தள்ளப்படுகின்றது. மரபார்ந்த முறையில் எழுதப்படும் உரைகள், கடினமானதாக இருந்தாலும் முன்னிறுத்தப்படுகின்றது. இதனால் இலக்கிய வாசிப்பு குறைகிறது. இப்போது சங்க இலக்கியப் பாடல் ஒன்று தொலைநிலைக் கல்விப் பாடத்தில் இருக்கின்றது. சங்க இலக்கிய வாசிப்பை சுவையானதாக, ரசனைக்குறியதாக மாற்றுவது உரையாசிரியர்களின் உரைகளே.

"பாடல் 91, பாடியவர் - ஒளவையார், கூற்று - தலைவி, திணை - மருதம், துறை - பரத்தையர் மாட்டுப் பிரிந்த தலைமகன், வாயில் வேண்டிப் புக்கவழிந் தன் வரைத்தன்றி அவன் வரைத்தாகித் தன் நெஞ்சு நெகிழ்ந்துழித் தலைமகள் அதனை நெருங்கிச் சொல்லியது.

பரத்தையார்பால் சென்ற தலைவன் மீண்டு வந்தான். வந்தவன் தலைவியின் ஒப்புதலை வேண்டி நின்றான். அவள் ஊடல் புரிய விரும்பினாள். ஆனால் அவள் நெஞ்சம் அவன்பாற் சென்றது. கட்டுக்கடங்காமல் அவனை நாடிச் சென்ற நெஞ்சினை நோக்கி அவள் பாடுவதாக அமைந்தது இது.

'அரில்பவர் பிரிம்பின் வரிப்புற விளைகனி
குண்டுநீர் இலஞ்சிக் கெண்டை கதூஉம்
தண்டுறை ஊரன் பெண்டினை ஆயின்
பலஆகுகநின் நெஞ்சிற் படரே
ஓவாது ஈயும் மாரி வண்கைக்
கடும்பகட்டு யானை நெடுந்தேர் அஞ்சி
கொன்முனை இரவு+ர் போலச்
சிலஆகுக நீ துஞ்சும் நாளே."

(அரில் - பிணங்கிய, பவர் பிரம்பு - பிரப்பங் கொடி, குண்டுநீர் - ஆழமான நீர், இலஞ்சி - குளம், கெண்டை - ஒருவகை மீன், கதூஉம் - கவ்வும், ஊரன் - மருதநிலத் தலைவன், பெண்டு - மனைவி, படர் - துன்பம், ஓவாது - இடைவிடாது ஓயாமல், மாரி - மேகம், கடும் பகட்டு யானை - விரைந்து வேகமாகச் செல்லும் ஆண் யானை, அஞ்சி - அதியமான் நெடுமான் அஞ்சி, கொன்முனை - அச்சம் தரும் போர்க்களம், ஊர் - ஊரில் உள்ள மக்கள், துஞ்சும் நாள் - துயிலும் நாள்)

நெஞ்சே, ஆழமான நீருள்ள குளத்தில் புரளும் கெண்டை மீன், பிணங்கிக் கிடக்கும் பிரப்பங்கொடியின் பழத்தைக் கவ்வும் தண்ணிய துறைக்குத் தலைவன் மனைவியாயின் நின் நெஞ்சில் துன்பம் பலவாக இருப்பதாக. ஓயாது எப்போதும் வழங்கும் மேகம் போன்று கைம்மாறு கருதாத வண்மையுடைய கையினையும், விரைந்து செல்லும் ஆண்யானையையும், நெடிய தேரினையும் கொண்டவனாகிய அதியமான நெடுமான் அஞ்சி என்னும் வள்ளலினது அச்சமிக்க போர்க்களத்தில் இரவு நேரத்தில் ஊரிலுள்ளார் போல நீ தூங்கும் நாள்கள் சிலவே ஆகுக" (பக்கம் : 51-52, சங்க இலக்கியம், தமிழ்நாடு திறந்தநிலைப் பல்கலைக்கழகம்)

இப்பகுதி சற்று பழைய உரையாசிரியர்களின் உரையைப் பின்பற்றி சற்று கடினமான நடையைப் பின்பற்றி எழுதப்பட்டுள்ளது குறிப்பிடத்தக்கது. இது தொலை நெறிக் கல்வியில் பயிலும் மாணாக்கர்களுக்கு எளிதாகப் புரிந்து விடாது. மாறாக மரபார்ந்த இலக்கியங்களை வாசிப்பதற்கான மொழி இடைவெளியை

நிரப்புவதற்கு உருவான உரை ஓரளவு மெத்தப் படித்தவர்களுக்கு பயன்பட்டிருக்கின்றது. ஆனால் அடிப்படையில் இளங்கலை மற்றும் முதுகலை தமிழ் இலக்கியம் படிப்பவர்களுக்கு .இது முழுமையான பொருள் புரிதலைத் தந்துவிடாது. இது தானே கற்றல் முறைக்கு உதவாது. ஆசிரியர் அல்லது சங்க இலக்கியம் தொடர்பான வல்லுநர்களின் உதவி மிக அவசியமாகும். அதனால் தான் அடுத்த சில விளக்கங்கள் அவசியமாகின்றது.

"தலைவிக்கு ஊடல். அவனை ஏற்கக் கூடாது என்று கருதுகிறாள். ஆனால் நெஞ்சமோ அவன்பால் தாவுகிறது. அதனால் அவள் 'நீ அவன் அன்புமிகப் பெற்றிருப்பின் பலநாள் தூங்காது கிடந்து துன்பம் அடைவாயாக என்று கூறுகிறாள்,

நெஞ்சுக்கு நெஞ்சே கூறும் ஓர் இலக்கிய மரபினை இப்பாடலில் காண்கிறோம்.
போர் நடக்கும் பகுதிக்கண் உள்ள ஊரில் உள்ளார் இரவில் துஞ்சாது யாது நேருமோ என்னும் அச்சத்தோடு விழித்துக் கிடப்பர். அது போன்று நெஞ்சே நீயும் துன்பம் அடையப் போகிறாய் என்று நெஞ்சிற்குத் தலைவி எச்சரிக்கை செய்கிறாள்.

கடையெழு வள்ளல்களுள் ஒருவன் அதியமான் நெடுமான் அஞ்சி. தகடூரை ஆண்ட இவனை ஒளவையார் புகழ்ந்து பாராட்டிப் பாடிய பாடல்கள் பல புறநானூற்றில் உள்ளன. ஒளவைக்கு நெல்லிக் கனி தந்து புகழ்பெற்றவன் இவன். வீரத்தில் சிறந்தவன். இவன் போர்க்களத்தில் மடிந்த போது ஒளவையார் மனம் உருகிப் பாடிய பாடல் கையறுநிலைப் பாடல்களில் மிகச் சிறந்த ஒன்றாக விளங்குகிறது.

'நெஞ்சின் படர் பல ஆகுக. நீ துஞ்சும் நாள் சில ஆகுக. என்று தலைமகள் தன் நெஞ்சிற்கு நயம்படக் கூறுவதாகப் பாடலை அமைத்துள்ளார் ஒளவையார்.
'தண்துறை ஊரன்' என்பது கிளவித் தலைவனைக் குறிக்கிறது. 'அஞ்சி' என்பது பாட்டுடைத் தலைவனைக் குறிக்கிறது. சிற்சில பாடல்களிலேயே இவ்வாறு கிளவித் தலைவன் பெயரும் பாட்டுடைத் தலைவன் பெயரும் இடம்பெறும்.

உள்ளுறை

பிரப்பங் கொடியில் காய்த்துப் பழுத்த கனிகளைக் குளத்து மீன்கள் எளிதாகப் பெறும் ஊர், தலைவனது ஊர் என்கிறது பாடல். தன் சிறப்பால் அன்பும் அளியும் செல்வமும் அழகும் உடைய தலைவனைப் பரத்தையர் எளிதாகக் கவர்ந்து கொள்வர் என்பது இதன் உள்ளுறைப் பொருள்." (ப.52, சங்க இலக்கியம், தமிழ்நாடுதிறந்த நிலைப்பல்கலைக்கழகம்,)

இப்பகுதி தான் மிக முக்கியமானதாகும். இப்பகுதியில் உள்ள நடை எளிய நடையாகும். இது மொழி இடைவெளியை நிரப்பக் கூடியதாக இருக்கிறது. தொலைநெறிக் கல்வியில் பயிலும் மாணவர்கள் தானே கற்றல் முறையில் இப்பகுதி அமைந்துள்ளது. இருந்த போதும் பாடலைத் தொடர்ந்து அருஞ்சொற்பொருள், பழைய உரையைப் பின்பற்றிய விளக்கம் என்பது இங்கு தேவைதானா? என்ற கேள்வி எழுகிறது. ஆனால் பழைய உரையைச் சொல்லி சொல்வதன் மூலம், பிற சங்க இலக்கியப் பாடல்களை எளிதில் உரையில்லாமலே புரிந்து கொள்ள முடியும்.

தொல்காப்பியர் சுட்டும் நூலின் உத்திகள் 32 ஐயும், நீக்க வேண்டிய குற்றங்கள் 10 ஐயும் பின்பற்றினால் தொலைநெறிக் கல்விக்கு ஏற்ற பாடப்புத்தகங்களை உருவாக்க இயலும்.

சிதைவெனப் படுபவை வசையற நாடின்
கூறியது கூறல் மாறுகொளக் கூறல்
குன்றக் கூறல் மிகைபடக் கூறல்
பொருளில் கூறல் மயங்கக் கூறல்
கேட்போர்க் கின்னா யாப்பிற்றாதல்
பழித்த மொழியான் இழுக்கங் கூறல்
தன்னான் ஒருபொருள் கருதிக்கூறல்
என்ன வகையினும் மனங்கொள் இன்மை

அன்ன பிறவும் அவற்று விரியாகும் (தொல்காப்பியம் 654)

உரையாசிரியர்களின் உரையை வாசிப்பதன் மூலம் ஓரளவு மொழி இடைவெளியை நிரப்பிக்கொள்ள முடியும். ஆனால் முழுமையான புரிதலை அடைந்து விட முடியாது. அதற்கு மாற்றாக நடைமுறை மொழி அமைப்பிலிருந்து விளக்கங்களும், உரைகளும் அமைகின்ற போது அது ஒரு மாணவனின் தானே கற்றல் திறனுக்கேற்ற வகையில் அமைந்துவிடுகிறது. எனவே தொலைநெறிக் கல்வி முறையில் தமிழ் மரபிலக்கியங்களைக் கற்கின்ற போது, மொழி இடைவெளி ஒரு தடையாக அமைய வாய்ப்பு இருக்கிறது. அந்த இடைவெளியை நிரப்ப நடைமுறை மொழியாடலைச் செய்வதன் மூலம் எளிமையும், புரிதலும் நிறைகிறது.

பயன்கொண்ட நூற்கள்

1. சங்க இலக்கியம் - முதுகலை பாடநூல், தமிழ்நாடு திறந்த நிலைப் பல்கலைக்கழகம், சென்னை,

2. தொல்காப்பியம் : பொருளதிகாரம், முதுகலை பாடநூல், தமிழ்நாடு திறந்தநிலைப் பல்கலைக்கழகம், சென்னை

3. சங்க இலக்கிய உரைகள், நியூ+ செஞ்சுரி புத்தக நிறுவனம், சென்னை

அனைவருக்கும் கல்வி உரிமை

சித்ரா, ப.

இணைப் பேராசிரியர், அன்னை சரஸ்வதி கல்வியியல் கல்லூரி, திருவள்ளூர்

முன்னுரை

ஆனால் இந்திய மக்கள் தொகையில் .கல்வி உரிமை என்பது அனைவருக்கும் பொதுவானது 15% கூட முழுமையாக உயர்கல்வியை அடைய முடியவில்லை ,காரணம் பள்ளி இடைநிற்றல் . ஆதிதிராவிடர் மற்றும் பழங்குடியினர் உட்பட விளிம்பு நிலை ,பெண்கள் கல்வி தொடர இயலாமை ஆனால் திறந்தநிலை .மக்கள் அதிகம் சதவிகித்ததினர் தொடர் கல்வியை பெற இயலவில்லை இத்தகைய மா ,பல்கலைக் கழகமானதுணவர்களின் உயர்கல்விக்கு பாலமாக உள்ளது; சுயகற்றலுக்கு வழிகோலுவதோடு கற்பனைத் திறன் .படைப்பாற்றல் திறன் முழுவளர்ச்சி அடையச் செல்கிறது , ஏழைகளின் எழில்மிகு கலங்கரை விளக்காக திறந்தநிலை& தொலைதூரக் கற்றல் (ODL – Open & Distance Learning) நிகழ்கிறது இதனை விரிவாக .இக்கட்டுரையில் காண்போம் .

இந்தியா சுதந்திரம் பெற்று கிராமப்புற பெண்கள் இன்றும் ,ஆண்டுகள் நடந்தேறினாலும் 65 .பூப்பெய்திய உடன் பள்ளி இடைநிற்றல் நடந்தேறும் உண்மை உள்ளது21 வயது நிரம்பிய ஆண்கள்கூட தன் குடும்ப சூழ்நிலை காரணமாக கல்வியை தொடர இயலவில்லை . பெரும்பாலே◌ானோர் விளிம்பு நிலையில் வாழ்கின்றனர் ,ஆனால் திறந்தநிலைப் பல்கலைக் கழகம் . .மக்கள் இருக்கும் இடத்தில் இருந்து சாதிக்கும் சாதனையாளராக்குகிறது

கல்வியின் நோக்கம்

பொருத்தமான கருத்துக் ,மேம்பட்ட சமுதாயத்தை உருவாக்கிட சீரிய மனப்பான்மைகளையும் கண்ணோட்டத்தையும்(Proper dispositions) தனிமனிதர்களிடம் தோற்றுவிப்பதற்கு கல்வி உதவிட வேண்டும்அறிவுபூர்வமாக சிந்தித்தல் இவற்றை ,நுண்ணுணர்வு ,துணிச்சல் ,கல்வியில் மிகுந்த ஊக்கம் . .இளங்குழந்தையில் இருந்தே மேலோங்க செய்யவேண்டும்

கல்வியில் சுதந்திரம்

ஆசிரியர் மட்டுமின்றி மாணவர்களும் கருத்து சுதந்திரம் (Freedom of opinion) பெற்று எந்த ஒன்றைப் பற்றியும் தம் கருத்தை எவ்வித தயக்கமும் இன்றிகூறுபவரின் பின்னணியையப் பாராமல் , அதன் உண்மைத் தன்மையை மட்டும் அறிவியல் அடிப்படையில் ஆராய்ந்து ஏற்றுக்கொள்ளுதல்/ நிராகரித்தல் வேண்டும்.

தொலைதூரக் கல்வி Distance Education

காலத்தாலோ ,கல்லூரியில் சேர்ந்து கற்க இயலாத சூழலில் .கல்வியை முறையான பள்ளி அன்றி தூரத்தாலோ இடைவெளி ஏற்படும் வகையில் அமைக்கப்படும் கற்பித்தல் கற்றல் .செயல்முறையே தொலைதூரக்கல்வி எனப்படும்

இச்செயலுக்கு சிறந்தது TNOU என்றால் அது மிகையாகாது .

கல்வியும் கற்றலும் தொலைதூர கல்வியின் மகத்துவமும் ,

"கற்பித்தல் வாயிலாக வாழ்க்கையைப் பற்றியும் இவ்வுலகினைப் பற்றியும்ஒரு குறிப்பிட்ட , கண்ணோட்டத்தையும் சில மனத்திறன்களையும் உருவாக்குவதே கல்வி" என்று ரஸ்ஸல் கல்வியை வளர்க்கிறார் .

கற்கவேண்டியவற்றை உள்வாங்கி தன்னியற்பருத்த (Internalise) வேண்டியது கற்பவரே என்பதால் சுயகற்றல் முறையே ஆசிரியர் கற்பித்தல் முறையைவிடச் சாலச்சிறந்துமற்றவர்கள் .

மாணவரின் கற்றலை வழிப்படுத்த இயக்கமுடியுமே தவிர கற்றல் என்பது இறுதியாக கற்பவரின் செயலாகத்தான் இருக்க முடியும் .

"குதிரையை நீர்நிலைக்கு அழைத்துச்
செல்லலாமே ஒழிய நீர் ,
குடிக்க முனைவது குதிரையாகத்தான் இருக்கமுடியும்".

இச்செயலை செம்மையான முறையில் சீரும் சிறப்புமாக செம்மைப்படுத்துபவர் தொலைதூர& திறந்தநிலைப் பல்கலைக் கழகங்களே ஆகும் .

கல்வியில் சமவாய்ப்பளித்தல் (Equalisation of Educational Opportunities)

பாலின வேறுபாடின்றி அனைத்து மாணவர்களுக்கும்   ,பிராந்திய ,மொழி ,இன ,சமய ,சாதி தொடக்கக் கல்வி முதல் உயர்கல்வி வரையிலும் தரமான கல்வியை கிடைக்கச் செய்தலே கல்வியில் சமவாய்ப்பு என்று புதிய தேசிய கல்விக் கொள்கை(NEP 1986) கூறுகிறதுதிறந்தநிலைப் பல்கலை . கழகம் அனைவருக்கும் சமவாய்ப்பளித்து மேல்பட்ட படிப்பு வரை படிக் பாகுபாடு இன்றி வழிவகுக்கிறது.

கல்வியில் சமவாய்ப்பின்மை காணப்படுவதற்கான காரணங்கள்

1. மக்களின் பொருளாதார நிலையில் பெருத்த ஏற்றத்தாழ்வுகள்.
2. வட்டாரங்களுக்கு இடையே உள்ள சமமற்ற தன்மை.
3. கல்வித் தரத்தில் சமமின்மை.
4. பெண் ஆண் கல்வியில் காணப்படும் வேறுபாடுகள் ——
5. கற்பதற்கான வீட்டுச் சூழலில் காணப்படும் பெருத்த வேறுபாடுகள்
6. சமூக வகுப்புகளிடையே நிலவும் பெருத்த ஏற்றத்தாழ்வுகள்.
7. கல்வி நிறுவன மேலாண்மையில் உள்ள வேறுபாடுகள்.

கல்வியில் சமவாய்ப்பளித்திடும் வழிமுறைகள்

1. பொதுப்பள்ளி முறைமையை (common school system) முழுமையாக அமல்படுத்துதல்
2. மாநில ஏற்றத்தாழ்வுகளை அகற்றுதல்
3. நகர்ப்புற கிராமப்புற வேறுபாடுகளைக் களைதல் ,
4. கல்வி கட்டணத்தை நீக்குதல்
5. பள்ளிக் குழந்தைகளுக்கு இலவச மதிய உணவளித்தல்
6. பெண் கல்விக்கு முக்கியமளித்தல்
7. மாற்றுத்திறனாளிகள் ,தாழ்த்தப்பட்டோர் ,பழங்குடியினர் ,மூன்றாம் பாலினத்தனவர் , சிறுபான்மையினர் உள்ளிட்ட விளிம்பு நிலை மக்களுக்கும் உயர்கல்வியை சாத்தியமாக்குதல்.
8. இலவச பள்ளிக் கல்வியை கட்டாயமாக்குதல்
9. நலிவுற்றோர் கல்வி வாய்ப்பினை அறிவுறுத்தல்
10. உதவித் தொகைகள் / சிறப்புச் சலுகைகள் அளித்தல்

இன்றைய சூழலில் திறந்தநிலைப் பல்கலைக் கழகத்தின் தேவைகள்

என்ற கேள்வி எழுப்பினால் படித்தவர்கள் முதல் ?தொலைதூரக் கல்வி என்பது தேவையா பாமரர்வரை தேவை என்ற விடையே நல்குவர்.ஆண் சமத்துவம் என்பது —— இன்றளவும் பெண் . ஓட்டளவில்தான் உள்ளது இதனை சமன்செய்யும் பாலமாக திறந்தநிலைப் பல்கலைக் கழகம் ஆளுமை ,தொடர் ஆய்வு கற்பனை வளம் ,உழைக்கும் மக்கள் தொடர்கல்வி .செயல்படுகிறது சிந்தனையில் ஈடுபாடு அதிகரிக்கக் காரணம் த ,வளர்ச்சிஇறந்தநிலைப் பல்கலை கழகம் ஆகும் . 50 வறுமை கோட்டிற்கு கீழ் உள்ள% மக்களுக்கு ODL பயன்படுகிறது .

கோத்தாரி கல்விக் குழுவின் பரிந்துரை:

கல்விக்கு மத்திய அரசு10 தன் மொத்த வருவாயில் ,% நிதி ஒதுக்க வேண்டும்அது ,
6 முடியாத பட்சத்தில் குறைந்தபட்சம்% நிதியாவது கட்டாயம் ஒதுக்க வேண்டும்அப்போது தான் ,
.அனைவருக்கும் கல்வி சாத்தியமாகும்

இடைநிற்றலும் வகுப்பினைத் திரும்ப பயிலுதலும் ,(Dropout and Grade Repetition): 'கழிவு'
அல்லது 'இடைநிற்றல்'

தொடக்கக் கல்வியை முடிப்பதற்குள்ளாகவே குழந்தைகள் பள்ளியிலிருந்து விலகுதலே கழிவு
.இடைநிற்றல் எனப்படும் என்று உறர்டாக் கமிட்டி வரையறுத்துள்ளது (அ)

திறந்தநிலைப் பல்கலைக்கழகத்தின் இடர்பாடுகள்

திறந்தநிலைப் பல்கலைக் கழகத்தில் நடக்கும் பட்டப்படிப்பு தேர்விற்கும் கல்லூரி சென்று
(Regular) படித்து எழுதக்கூடிய பட்டப்படிப்புக்கும் தேர்வு விதிமுறை ஒன்றே; வித்தியாசம் கிடையாது .
ஆனால் .வகையான பட்டப்படிப்புகளும் சமமாக நடத்தப்பட வேண்டும் 2 இந்த ,ஆனால்
உயர்கல ீவியில் முன்னுரிமை வேலைவாய்ப்பில் பாகுபாடு அதிகம் பார்க்கப்படுகிறதுஇந்த .
முனைவர்பட்ட ஆய்வாளர் படிப்பு .இடர்களை தகர்த்தெறிந்தால் ஆய்வு மாணவர்கள் அதிகரிப்பார்கள்
(Doctorate) ஏழைகளின் எட்டாக்கனியாக இருந்தது திறந்தநிலை .& தொலைதூரக் கற்றல் ODL மூலம்
இனிமேல் இது .கட்டிக் கரும்பாக இனிக்கும் என்பது திண்ணம் ,

இந்திய அரசியலமைப்பு முகவுரையிலும்(Preample) 14 பிரிவுகள் ━, 21& 42
வாழ்க்கையுரிமை மற்றும் சமத்துவ உரிமை போன்றவை தெளிவாக ,ஆகியவற்றிலும் கல்வி உரிமை
கல்வி உரிமை என்பது அளிக்கப்பட்டால் அ .குறிப்பிடப்பட்டுள்ளதுஅனைத்து முக்கிய சாதனைகளையும்
எளிதாக அடைந்துவிடலாம்இந்தியா தொலைநோக்கு பார்வையில் உள்ளதற்கு நல்லதொரு .
.இது கல்வியில் முக்கிய அங்கமாக செயல்படுகிறது ,உதாரணம் திறந்தநிலைப் பல்கலைக் கழகம்தான்

அனைவருக்கும் கல்வி

"வாழ்நாள் முழுவதும் கல்வி" என்னும் இலக்கை அடைவதற்கான புதிய அமைப்புகளாக
தொலைதூரக் கல்வி இயக்கங்கள் அஞ்சல்வழிக் கல்விதிறந்தநிலைப் பல்கலைக் ,திறந்தநிலை பள்ளி ,
.கழகம் ஆகியவை தோன்றியுள்ளன திறந்தநிலைப் பல்கலைக் கழகம்பட்டப் படிப்பு என்பது ஒரு ,
மக்களிடையே மாபெரும் மாற்றம் கொண்டுவந ,எட்டாக் கனியாக இருந்தபோது ீது கற்பது
கற்கண்டே என கற்றலை இனிமையாக்கியது என்றால் மிகையாகாதுவாழ்நாள் முழுவதும் கற்றல் .
.வளர்ச்சியை தொடர் பாலமாக ஏற்படுத்துகிறது தமிழ்நாடு திறந்தநிலை பல்கலைக் கழகம்

எல்லோருக்கும் கல்வி தேவை" .தொடர்ந்து தேவை ,விடிந்தால் தூக்கு கயிறு என்று
தெரிந்தும் போராட்டவீரர் மாவீரன் பகத்சிங் கடைசி நிமிடம் வரை தொடர்ந்து புத்தகம்
வாசித்துக்கொண்டிருந்தார்சிறை அதிகாரிகள் அழைத்தபோது புரட்சியாளரோடு நான் ." "
அந்த .சிறிது அவகாசம் கொடுங்கள் என்றார் .உரையாடிக்கொண்டிருக்கிறேன்**புத்தகம்**லெனின் –
எழுதிய'அரசும் புரட்சியும்' என்ற புத்தகம்மரணத்தின் விளிம்பு வரை படிக்க வேண்டும் என்று இந்த .
இந்த வாழ்நாள் கல்வியின் தாக்கத்தை .உன்னதமான வரலாற்று நிகழ்வு உணர்த்துகிறதுODL
ஏற்படுத்துகிறது என்றால் சாலப்பொருந்தும்.

இந்தியாவில் அனைவருக்கும் கல்வி சட்டம் இருந்தாலும் ஒன்றாம் வகுப்பில் சேர்ந்தவர்கள்
அனைவரும் பத்தாம் வகுப்பு படிப்பது தேர்ச்சி என்பதை அடையவில்லை. சமீபத்தில் கல்வி 2009
தனியார் .உரிமை சட்டம் கொண்டுவந்தாலும் சுதந்திர போராளிகளின் கனவு நிறைவேறவில்லை
25 பள்ளிகளில்% மட்டுமே மீதமுள்ள ,இந்த உரிமைச் சட்டப்படி ஏழை மக்கள் கல்வி பெற முடியும் ,
பெரும்பான்மையான மக்களுக்கு இலவச கல்வி மறுக்கப்படுவதால்இந்த சட்டம் அனைவரும் இலவச ,
.பள்ளிக்கல்வி கிடைக்கும் வகையில் திருத்தம் செய்யப்படவேண்டும்

10 குறைந்தபட்ச கல்வி– ஆம் வகுப்பு தேர்ச்சி பெற்றிருக்கவேண்டும். மக்களில் பெரும்பாலும்
பெண்கள் ,SC/ST, இதர பிற்படுத்தப்பட்ட வகுப்பினர்சிறுபான்மை மக்கள் உள்ளிட்ட விளிம்பு நிலை ,

.மக்களிடையே இடை நிற்றல் அதிகமாகின்றது நம்நாட்டில் மொத்த மக்கள் தொகையில் 15% உயர்கல்வி பெறுகிறவர்கள். அயல்நாட்டில் வளர்ந்த நாடுகளில் பெரும்பாலோனோர் உயர்கல்வி பெறுகிறார்கள் ,

தமிழகத்தில் 25% பள்ளி மாணவர்கள் தனியார் பள்ளிகளில் படிக்கிறார்கள்ஆனால் , வளர்ந்த முதலாளித்துவ நாடுகளான அமெரிக்கா பின்லாந்து உள்ளிட்ட நாடுகளில் கூட பள்ளிகள் அனைத்தும் அரசின் பொறுப்பில் பொதுப்பள்ளிகளாக(Common School) உள்ளன. நமது நாட்டில் அனைத்துப் பள்ளிகளும் பொதுப்பள்ளிகளாக அருகாமை பள்ளிகளாக (Common School System with Neighbourhood School) இருக்க வேண்டும்அப்போது தான் இலவச பள்ளிக்கல்வி என்பது . .சாத்தியமாகும்

பொதுப் பள்ளிகள் வழங்கும் இலவச கல்வியானது கிண்டர் கார்டன் முதல் முதுநிலை பட்ட) வகுப்புகள் வரைKG to PG வரைஅப்போதுதான் கல்வி .இலவசமாக அரசு அளிக்க வேண்டும் (இதனை தாய்மொழியில் அளிக்கும்போது .நல்ல முழு தீர்வாகும். உரிமை முழுமையும் சென்றடையும் .முழுமையான தீர்வாகும்

முடிவுரை

தொலைநோக்கு ,அனைவருக்கும் கல்வி உரிமை பெறுவதற்கு நீண்ட பயணத்துடனும் பார்வையுடனும் அரசாங்கத்தின் ஒத்துழைப்புடன்செயல்பாடுகள் அரசு நிதியுதவியுடனும் சமுதாய , .பங்களிப்புடனும் இருக்க வேண்டும்

இடைநிற்றல் மாணவர்களுக்கும் உயர்கல்விக்கும் திறந்தநிலை& தொலைதூரக்கற்றல் ODL ஒரு பாலமாக அமையும் இந்த .ODL முறைமுறை .பயில்பவர்களுக்கு சுயகற்றலை உருவாக்குகிறது ,யான (Regular) கல்வியோடு ஒப்பிடும்போது ODL முறையானது சுயகற்றலுக்கு பெரும் வாய்ப்பைத் தருகிறது .

50 நமது மக்களில்% வறுமைக் கோட்டிற்கு கீழ் வாழ்கிறார்கள்70 தற்சமயம் .% மக்கள் மட்டுமே பள்ளி இறுதிப்படிப்பு வரை படிக்கிறார்கள் .15% மக்கள் மட்டுமே உயர்கல்வி படிக்கிறார்கள் . மத்திய அரசு தொடர்ந்து தன் .அதிலும் விளிம்பு நிலை மக்களின் சதவிகிதம் மிகவும் குறைவு 2 மொத்த வருவாயில்% நிதி மட்டுமே கல்விக்கு ஒதுக்கி வருகிறது6 கல்விக்கு குறைந்தபட்சம் .% நிதி ஒதுக்க வேண்டும்அனைவருக்கும் இலவச ,அப்போதுதான் ஒரு கால வரையறைக்குள் , ஆரம்பக் கல்வி முதல் ஆராய்ச்சி பட்டப்படிப்பு கல்வி வரை சாத்தியமாகும் .

அதற்கு பொதுப்பள்ளி தாய்மொழி கல்வி வழிக்கல்வி ஆகியவை — அருகாமைப்பள்ளி — அதற்கான இடைப்பட்ட பாலமாக ,முழுமையாக அமுல்படுத்த வேண்டும்ODL விளங்குகிறது .ODL கல்வியானது சுயகற்றலை பெரிதும் ஊக்குவிக்கிறது ,இந்த சுயகற்றலானது படைப்பாக்கத்திறன் , சுயகற்றலில் .புதுமைத் திறன் ஆகியவற்றை பெருமளவில் வளர்த்தெடுக்கும் ,கற்பனைத் திறன் மாணவர்களும் விடுதலைப் ,ஆண்களுமாகிய இளைஞர்களும் ,இந்தகையத் திறன் பெற்ற பெண்களும் போராட்ட வீரர்களின் கனவான அனைவருக்கும் கல்வி உரிமையை மட்டுமல்ல சமத்துவ இந்தியாவை வென்றெடுப்பார்கள்!உலகிற்கே வழிகாட்டுவார்கள் !உருவாக்குவார்கள் !

பார்வை நூல் & இணையதளம்

1. கல்வி புதுமைகளும் கலைதிட்ட மேம்பாடும்   - ராம் பதிப்பகம்
2. மலரும் இந்திய சமுதாயத்தில் கல்வி   ராம் பதிப்பகம் -
3. திருக்குறள் தெளிவுரை   வரதராசனார்.டாக்டர் மு -
4. கல்வி உரிமைக்கான அகில இந்திய கூட்டமைப்பு / All India Forum for Right to Education – AIFRTE வெளியிட்டுள்ள சென்னை அறிக்கை – Chennai Declaration.
5. பொதுப்பள்ளிக்கான மாநில மேடை(State platform for common school system) வெளியிட்டுள்ள அகில இந்திய கல்வி உரிமை போராட்ட பயணத்திற்கான கையேடு .

திறந்தநிலை மற்றும் தொலைநிலைக் கல்வி: புதிய போக்குகள்
(Recent trends in Open and Distance Learning)

முனைவர் மு. வையாபுரி

உதவிப் பேராசிரியர், தமிழியல் மற்றும் பண்பாட்டுப் புலம், தமிழ்நாடு திறந்தநிலைப் பல்கலைக்கழகம், செ்ன்னை

அறிமுகம்

கல்விப் பெறுதல் என்பது ஒவ்வொரு மனிதனுக்கும் உள்ள அடிப்படை உரிமையாகும். உலகளாவிய நிலையில் கற்றல் கற்பித்தலில் புதிய புதிய அணுகுமுறைகளும் தொழில் நுட்பங்களும் வளர்ந்து வருகிற ஒரு அறிவுச் சமூகத்தில் நாம் வாழ்ந்து வருகிறோம். அதற்கேற்ப கல்வித் துறையில் குறிப்பாக உயர்கல்வித் துறையில் கற்றல் கற்பித்தலில் நடைபெற்றுவரும் மாற்றங்களை நாம் உன்னிப்பாக கவனிக்கவும் உள்வாங்கவும் வேண்டிய நிலையில் உள்ளோம். குறிப்பாக திறந்தநிலை மற்றும் தொலைநிலைக் கல்வி முறையில் பல புதிய புதிய கருத்தாடல்களும் தொழில் நுட்பங்களும் வளர்ந்து வருகின்றன. அவற்றை நாம் உற்றுநோக்குவது நமது வருங்கால கல்வி மேம்பாட்டில் மாற்றங்களைச் செய்ய உதவும்.

உயர் கல்வியை வழங்குவதில், மரபார்ந்த பல்கலைக்கழக முறையிலிருந்து தொலைநிலை மற்றும் திறந்தநிலைக் கல்வி முறை முற்றிலும் வேறுபட்ட தன்மைகளைக் கொண்டதாகும். அண்மைக் காலங்களில் தொலைநிலைக் கல்வி என்பது மின் கற்றல் என்பதனோடு நெருக்கமானதாக வளர்ந்து வருகிறது. எதிர்கால உயர்கல்வியில் கற்பித்தல் கற்றல் என்பது தொலைநிலை மற்றும் மின்கற்றல் சார்ந்த ஒன்றாகவே இருக்கும்;. அவ்வகையில் இந்தக் கட்டுரை தொலைநிலை மற்றும் திறந்தநிலைக் கல்வி முறையின் அண்மைய போக்குகள் குறித்து சுருக்கமாக விளக்க முற்படுகிறது.

திறந்தநிலை மற்றும் தொலைநிலைக் கல்வி முறையின் வரலாறு

கி.பி.6ஆம் நூற்றாண்டளவிலேயே சீனாவில் Imperial Examination system என்னும் முறை இருந்துள்ளது. 1728களில் பாஸ்டன் கெஜட்டில் short hand course என்னும் பெயரில் விளம்பரங்கள் கொடுக்கப்பட்டுளதை அறிய முடிகிறது. 1840களில் Pitman's Short hand course என்பது பிரபலமாக இருந்துள்ளது. தென்னாப்பிரிக்கப் பல்கலைக்கழகம் பிப்ரவரி, 1946இல் முதன் முதலில் தொலைநிலைக் கல்வி முறையில் படிப்புகளை வழங்கியதாக அறியமுடிகிறது. உலகின் முதல் திறந்நிலைப் பல்கலைக்கழகம் 1969இல் இங்கிலாந்தில் (UKOU) செயல்படத் தொடங்கியது. இப்பல்கலைக்கழகம் தொடங்கப்படுவதற்கு இரவீந்திரநாத் தாகூரின் home-based study என்னும் சிந்தனை தூண்டுகோலாக இருந்தது என்பர். இன்றைய நிலையில் திறந்தநிலை மற்றும் தொலைநிலைக் கல்வி என்பது தவிர்கமுடியாத ஒரு கல்வி முறையாக வளர்ந்து வருகிறது.

திறந்தநிலைப் பல்கலைக்கழங்கள்

இன்றைய நிலையில் உலகளவில் 90க்கும் அதிகமான திறந்தநிலைப் பல்கலைக்கழங்கள் செயல்பட்டு வருகின்றன. அவற்றுள் 15 பல்கலைக்கழகங்கள் இந்தியாவில் செயல்பட்டு வருகின்றன. ஆந்திர மாநிலத்திலுள்ள டாக்டர் அம்பேத்கார் திறந்தநிலைப் பல்கலைக்கழகம் இந்தியாவில் முதல் திறந்தநிலைப் பல்கலைக்கழமாகும். இது 1982இல் தொடங்கப்பட்டது. இந்தியாவின் முதல் தேசியத் திறந்தநிலைப் பல்கலைக்கழம் இந்திராகாந்தி தேசிய திறந்தநிலைப் பல்கலைக்கழகமாகும். இது 1985இல் தொடங்கப்பட்டது. தற்போது இந்தியாவில் 14 திறந்தநிலைப் பல்கலைக்கழகங்கள் செயல்பட்டு வருகின்றன. இவை மட்டுமல்லாது, பெரும்பாலான பொதுப் பல்கலைக்கழகங்களும், நிகர்நிலை பல்கலைக்கழகங்களும், தனியாருக்குச் சொந்தமான தொலைநிலைக் கல்வி மையங்களும் திறந்தநிலை மற்றும் தொலைநிலை முறையில் உயர்கல்வியை வழங்கி வருகின்றன.

திறந்தநிலை கற்றல்

அச்சு, தொலைக்காட்சி, வானொலி, இணையம் முதலான ஊடகங்களைக் கொண்டு வீட்டிலோ, அலுவலிடத்திலோ, கல்வி நிலையத்திலோ பயிற்றுநர் அல்லது ஆசிரியர், குரல் வழிக் கலந்துரையாடல், கணினி உதவியுடன் கூடிய கற்பித்தல் ஆகியவற்றின் உதவியுடன் கற்றலை நாம் திறந்தநிலைக் கற்றல் எனலாம். இம்முறைக்கு வயது வரம்பு, கல்வித் தகுதிகள், கால வரையறை என எவ்விதக் கட்டுப்பாடுகளும் இல்லை.

தொலைநிலைக் கற்றல்

தொலைநிலைக் கல்வி முறை என்பது கற்பித்தலில் - கற்றலில் ஒரு வகையாகும். ஆங்கிலத்தில் distance learning, dlearning, or D-Learning எனப் பல பெயர்களில் வழங்கப்படுகிறது. மரபார்ந்த கல்வி முறைபோல் வகுப்பறைக்கு வந்து கற்றல் போன்றதல்ல இது, காலம், சூழல், பணிநிலை, தொலைவு, பொருளாதார நிலை போன்றவைகளினால் ஒருவர் நேரிடையாக கல்வி நிறுவனத்திற்கு வருகை தந்து கற்கும் நிலை இல்லாதபோது, அவர் இருக்கும் இடத்திலிருந்தே அஞ்சல் வழியாகவோ, வானொலி, தொலைக்காட்சிகள் வழியாகவோ பாடங்களைப் பெற்று கற்கும் முறையாகும். செய்முறைப் பயிற்சி முதலான சில கற்றல் நடவடிக்கைகளுக்காக மட்டும் கல்வி வளாகத்திற்குகோ, ஆசிரியர் இருப்பிடத்திற்கோ சென்று கற்றல் இம்முறையை சார்ந்ததாகும். அண்மைக் காலங்களில் தொலைநிலைக் கல்வி முறையில் பெருமளவில் கணினி சார்ந்த தொழில் நுட்பங்களின் உதவியோடு கற்பித்தல் - கற்கும் நிலை வளர்ந்து வருகிறது.

திறந்தநிலை மற்றும் தொலைநிலைக் கல்வி முறையின் (ODL) சிறப்பம்சங்கள் :

திறந்தநிலை மற்றும் தொலைநிலைக் கல்வி முறை என்பது சமூகத்தின் அனைத்து தரப்பினருக்குமான ஒரு திறந்த களமாகும். சமூக, இன, சாதி, மத, பாலின, பொருளாதார பாகுபாடுகளைக் கடந்தது. வாழ்நாள் முழுவதும் கற்பதோடு விரும்பியபொழுதில் விரும்பும் விதத்தில் கற்கக்கூடிய (Flexible Learning) நெகிழ்வுத் தன்மைகளை உடையது. கற்போர்களின் விருப்பத்தினை நிறைவேற்றக்கூடிய பாடத்திட்டங்களைக் கொண்டது. தனிமையில் தன்விருப்பத்தின் பேரில் விரும்பிய விதத்தில் கற்கும் இயல்புடையது. கால அட்டவணை தேவையில்லை. இடப்பிரச்சினையில்லை: பல இலட்சக்கணக்கானவர்களுக்கு அவர்கள் வீட்டிற்கே கல்வியைக் கொண்டு செல்லும் இயல்புடையது. வளர்ந்துவரும் நாடுகளுக்கான சிக்கனமான கல்வி முறை: கல்வி வாய்ப்புகளை இழந்தவர்களுக்கு மீண்டும் கல்விப் பெறும் வாய்ப்பு: முற்றிலும் சனநாயகமானது: இவ்வாறு பல்வேறு சிறப்பம்சங்கள் இக்கல்வி முறையில் உள்ளது.

திறந்தநிலை மற்றும் தொலைநிலைக் கல்வி முறை இப்போது ஐந்தாம் தலைமுறை தொழில் நுட்பத்தினை பயன்படுத்தி வளர்ந்து வருகிறது. முதல் தலைமுறை அஞ்சல் வழிக் கல்வி முறையாகும். இது அச்சு நூல்களை அடிப்படையாகக் கொண்டது. இரண்டாம் தலைமுறை பல்லூடகக் கல்வி முறை குறிப்;பாக, அச்சு நூல்கள், ஒலி-ஒளி முறைகளை அடிப்படையாகக் கொண்டது. மூன்றாம் தலைமுறை தொலையுணர்க் காட்சி முறையிலானது. இது ஒலி-ஒளி கலந்துரையாடல், வானொலி, தொலைக்காட்சி முதலானவற்றை அடிப்படையாகக் கொண்டது. நான்காம் தலைமுறை கலப்புக் கற்றல் முறையாகும். இம்முறையில் இருவழிக் கலந்துரையாடும் பல்லூடகங்கள், இணையம் முதலானவை பெருமளவில் பயன்படுத்தப்படும். ஐந்தாம் தலைமுறை கல்வி முறை என்பது நாம் சமகாலத்தில் காண்பது, இது இருவழிக் கலப்புக் கற்றல் முறை: இது முழுக்க முழுக்க தன்னியக்கம் கொண்டது: இணையம் சார்ந்தது. அண்மைக் காலங்களில் Cybor Universities, On line learning, Virtual Teaching or Virtual learning போன்றவைகளும் இக்கல்வி முறையில் விவாதிக்கப்படுகிறது. இவ்வாறு பல்வேறு சிறப்பம்சங்கள் தொலைநிலைக் கல்வி முறையில் உள்ளது. இக்கல்வி முறைக்கு சில வரைமுறைகளும் எல்லைகளும் உள்ளன.

திறந்தநிலை மற்றும் தொலைநிலைக் கல்வி முறையின் எல்லை:

இக்கல்வி முறைக்கு மக்களிடையே இருநிலைப்பட்ட மனப்பாங்கு உள்ளது. குறிப்பாக, இது இரண்டாம் தரமானது, மேலும் எப்போதும் இதன் தரம் பற்றிய விவாதம் தொடர்வது. இந்தியாவில் பல்கலைக்கழக மானியக் குழுவின் தொலைநிலைக் கல்வி மன்றத்தால் அங்கீகரிக்கப்பட்ட கல்வி நிறுவனங்களால் படிப்புகள் வழங்கப்பட்டாலும் இந்தியாவில் அரசு வேலை வாய்ப்பு நோக்கில் சில இடர்ப்பாடுகளை இக்கல்வி முறை எதிர்கொள்ள வேண்டியுள்ளது. சில நேரங்களில் மாணவர்கள் நீதி மன்றங்களை நாடவேண்டியுள்ளது. இக்கல்வி முறையில் கல்வியை வழங்குவதும் திட்டமிடுவதும் அதில் நீடிப்பதும் சவாலானது. இந்தத் துறையில் பயிற்சிப் பெற்ற நம்பிக்கையான மனிதவளம் என்பது போதுமான அளவில் இல்லாமல் இருப்பது போன்ற சில எதிர்மறையான விடயங்களும் இக் கல்வி முறைக்கு சவால்களாக உள்ளன.

சமகாலப் போக்குகள் : மின்-கற்றல் (e - learning) :

மி-கற்றல் (மின் கற்றல் e - learning) என்பது மின்னணு ஊடகங்கள் மற்றும் தகவல் தொழில் நுட்பத்தினைப் பயன்படுத்தி கற்றல் - கற்பித்தலாகும். மி- கற்றல் என்பதற்குள் நாம் கற்றல் - கற்பித்தலில் இன்று நடைமுறையில் பயன்படுத்தப்படும் அனைத்துவிதமான கல்வித் தொழில்நுட்பங்களையும் அடக்கலாம். குறிப்பாக, பல்லூடகங்கள் வழிக் கற்றல், தொழில்நுட்ப உதவியுடன் கற்றல், கணினி அடிப்படையிலான பயிற்சி, கணினி வழிக் கற்றல், இணைய வழிக் கற்றல், இணையத் தளங்கள் வழிக் கற்றல், இணையக் கல்வி, சமூக ஊடகங்கள் வழிக் கற்றல் ஆகிய அனைத்தும் கற்றலுக்கான தளங்கள் தாம். m-learning, digital learning எனப் பலவாறாக குறிப்பிடப்படுவன எல்லாம் மி - கற்றல் வழிப்பட்டதேயாகும்.

மி-கற்றல் என்பது அச்சு, உரை, படங்கள், அசைவுக் காட்சிகள் ஒளிப்படம், ஒலி-ஒளி நாடா, செயற்கைக்கோள் தொலைக்காட்சி, குறுவட்டுகள், இணையம், கச்சித அலைபேசி;, பென் டிரைவ்;, நினைவு சில்லுகள் (மெமரி கார்டுகள்) முதலான அனைத்தையும் பயன்படுத்தி கற்றல் - கற்பித்தல் செயல்பாடுகளை மேற்கொள்வதாகும்;. இதற்கு மரபான வகுப்பறை என்பது தேவையில்லை. இது தானே கற்றல் வகைப்பட்டதாகும். இம்முறை தொலைநிலைக் கற்றல், கலப்புக் கற்றல், நேரடி வகுப்பு முறை என அனைத்தும் கலந்த கற்றல் முறை: பொதுவாக இது blended learning அல்லது Flexible learning என்று அழைக்கப்படுகிறது.

அலைபேசி வழிக் கற்றல் (m-learning):

m-learning என்பது ஒவ்வொரு பகுதிக்கும் ஏற்ப பல்வேறு பொருளில் புரிந்துகொள்ளப்படுகிறது. மின் கற்றல், கல்வித் தொழில் நுட்பம் மற்றும் தொலைநிலைக் கல்வி ஆகிய தளங்களில் கற்றலுக்கான ஒரு கருவியாக அலை பேசிகளை குறிப்பாக கச்சித அலைபேசிகளை (Smart Phone)ப் பயன்படுத்துவது என்பது தான் இதன் முதன்மை நோக்கமாகும். மடிக் கணினிகள், எம்பி3 பிளேயர்கள், மின் குறிப்பேடுகள், அலைபேசிகள், கையடக்கக் கணினிகள், தகவல் மின்னட்டைகள் (DATA Cards, Pen Drive ஆகிய அனைத்தும் அடங்கியதுதான் அலைபேசி வழிக் கற்றல் தொழில் நுட்பமாகும். கற்போர் தாம் விரும்பிய இடத்தில், விரும்பிய நேரத்தில் கற்கற உதவக்கூடிய ஒரு கல்வி முறைதான் அலைபேசி வழிக் கற்றல் முறையாகும். தற்காலத்தில் கற்றல் கற்பித்தலுக்கான அனைத்துவிதமான மென்பொருள்களையும் உள்ளடக்கிய கச்சித அலைபேசிகள் (Smart Phones) வழக்கத்தில்; உள்ளன. இவற்றின் உதவியால் அலைபேசி வழிக் கற்றல் என்பது இளந் தலைமுறை யினரிடையே பரவலாகி வருகிறது.

எங்கும் எப்போதும் கற்றல் (**Ubiquitous learning**) :

Ubiquitous learning என்பதை u-learning, ULearning என்றும் அழைப்பார்கள். அடிப்படையில் அலைபேசி வழிக்கற்றலின் ஒரு வடிவம் தான் இந்த Ubiquitous learning என்பது. இந்த முறையிலான கற்றலில் பாடப் பொருள்களை எளிதில் எடுத்துச் செல்கிற மின்னணு கருவிகளிலிருந்து கம்பி அல்லது கம்பியற்ற தகவல் தொடர்பு முறையில் பரிமாறிக்கொள்ள உதவும் மென்பொருள்கள் முக்கியப் பங்கு வகிக்கின்றன. மேலும், ஒளிப்படம், மின்னணு வடிவ உரைகள், மின்னணு காட்சி வில்லைகள் போன்ற வடிவிலான பாடப்பொருள்கள் இம்முறையில் கற்றல் கற்பித்தலுக்கு அடிப்படையாக அமைகின்றன. இது ஒரு வகையில் மின் கற்றலின் ஒரு பகுதிதான். என்றாலும் சமகாலக் கல்விச் சூழலில் Ubiquitous learning என்னும் சொல்லாடல் மிகுதியும் பயன்படுத்தப்படுகிறது.

முடிவுரை

சமகாலத்தில் ஒவ்வொரு துறையும் புதிய புதிய தொழில் நுட்பங்களின் உதவியோடு பல மாற்றங்களை அடைந்து வருகின்றன. அவ்வகையில் திறந்தநிலை மற்றும் தொலைநிலைக் கல்வி முறையிலும் புதிய புதிய கற்றல் கற்பித்தல் தொழில் நுட்பங்கள் மிகுந்து வருகின்றன. அதன் காரணமாக கல்வி என்பது ஒரு திறந்த களமாக விளங்குகிறது. சமகாலத் தொழில் நுட்பங்கள் வாய்க்கப்பெற்ற எவரும் நவீன கல்வியை தாம் விரும்பும் நேரத்தில், இடத்தில், விதத்தில் பெற்றுக்கொள்கிற ஒரு ஜனநாயக சூழல் நிலவுகிறது. இவற்றிற்கு உதவியாக ஒவ்வொரு துறைசார்ந்தும் பல்வேறு விரி தரவகங்கள் (Corpus) உருவாக்கப்பட்டு வருகின்றன. எதிர்காலத்தில் தொலைநிலை மற்றும் திறந்தநிலைக் கல்வி என்பது அனைவருக்குமான ஒரு கல்வி முறையாக அமைவதற்கும் வாய்ப்புகள் உண்டு. தமிழ்ச் சூழலில் இத்துறை தற்போதுதான் வளர்ந்து வருகிறது. தமிழ்நாடு திறந்தநிலைப் பல்கலைக்கழகம், தமிழ் இணையக் கல்விக் கழகம் போன்ற நிறுவனங்கள் அதனை நோக்கி மெல்ல அடிவைக்கத் தொடங்கியுள்ளன. அயல் நாடுகளில் வாழும் தமிழர் பலர் இந்தத் தொழில் நுட்பங்களை பயன்படுத்தி தமிழ் கற்றல் கற்பித்தல் பணிகளை செய்து வருகின்றனர்.

கட்டுரை உருவாக்கத்தில் பயன்பட்ட நூல்கள் - கட்டுரைகள்- இணைய தளங்கள் :

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பெண் கல்வி

கே.விஜயலட்சுமி

முன்னுரை

உலகத்துப் பல் வேறு உயிரினங்களில் வேகம் மட்டுமே கொண்டது மிருகங்கள். விவேகம், சிந்திக்கும் ஆற்றல் இவை கொண்;டவனே மனிதன். மனத்தை விரிவுபடுத்தி சிந்திக்கத் தூண்டும் விவேகத்தைத் தருவதே கல்வி . இந்த ஆற்றலே மனிதனை வளர்ச்சியடைய வைக்கிறது. இங்கே வளர்ச்சியெனக் குறிப்பிடுவது அறிவு வளர்ச்சியே! இத்தகைய வளர்ச்சி ஆண், பெண் இருபாலருக்கும் அவசியமானதும், பொதுவானதும், சம உரிமையுடையதும் ஆகும். ஆனால் நுண்மையாகப் பார்த்தோமானால், உலக ஜனத் தொகையில் ஏறக்குறைய சரிபாதியும், மனித வளத்தில், மூன்றில் இரண்டு பங்கும் அளிக்கும் பெண்மைக்கு இக்கல்வி போய்ச் சேருவதில்லை என்பது ஆய்வாளர்கள் தரும் சோகமான உண்மை. இப்படிப்பட்ட உன்னதமான பெண்மை சக்தி வெகுகாலம் வரை சமுதாய, பொருளாதார, அரசியல், காரணங்களால் ஒதுக்கப்பட்டு, புறக்கணிக்கப்பட்டு வந்தது. இது இந்தியாவில் மட்டுமின்றி உலகம் முழுவதிற்குமான செய்தியே. நாடுகளும், நாகரிகமும் வளர அகில உலகமும், இந்தியாவும், பெண்களின் பங்களிப்பு நாட்டின் சமுதாய, பொருளாதார வளர்ச்சியை மேம்படுத்துகிறது என்கிற உண்மையை உணர்ந்து அதனை செயலாக்கப்படுத்திக் கொள்ளத் துவங்கும் போது தான் "பெண் கல்வி" அவசியம் என்னும் விடிவெள்;ளி எழுந்தது. விழித்துக் கொண்டது உலகம். கிழக்கும், மேற்குமாக பன்னாடுகள் ஒன்று கூடி கருத்தரங்குகள் கூட்டி பெண் சக்தியை ஏறெடுத்துப் பார்க்கத் தொடங்கியது. பெண்களுக்கான உரிமை, அவர்களுக்கான நலன்களும், வளங்களும் முழுமையாக அங்கீகரிக்கப்பட்டு. பாராட்டி ஆதரவு அளிக்கக் கூடிய பல்வேறு திட்டங்களை செயல்படுத்தத் துவங்கின.

முதன் முதலில் 1945 ம் ஆண்டு ஐக்கிய நாடுகள் ஒன்று கூடி பெண்ணுரிமை ஆண், பெண் சமத்துவம் ஆகியவை முக்கிய உட்கருத்தாகக் கொண்டு அகில உலக நாடுகளும் ஒப்பந்தத்தில் கையொப்பமிட்டன. இதற்குக் பின்னரே பெண் குலத்தின் மேம்பாடுகள் துவங்கின எனலாம். பெண்ணின் மேம்பாட்டிற்கான அவசியத் தேவையான பெண் கல்விக்கு முக்கியத்துவம் தரப்பட்டது.

பெண் கல்வி

கல்வி என்பது முன்னேற்றத்தின் அடித்தளம். கல்வியானது சரியான அறிவையூட்டி மனத்தை விரிவுபடுத்துகின்றது. திட்டமிட்டு வாழ, தானும் தன்னைச் சேர்ந்தோரையும் வாழவைக்கும், ஆளுமையையும் அளிக்கின்றது. மனவுறுதி, உடல்நலம் ஆகியவற்றை வளர்ப்படுத்தி தன்னம்பிக்கையை வளர்க்கின்றது.

இதிலும் பெண் குழந்தைகளுக்கு, பெண்களுக்கு கல்வி பயிற்றுவிப்பதன் மூலம், அவர்களது வாழ்க்கைத் தரமானது தற்காலத்திலும், எதிர்காலத்திலும் மேன்படுகிறது என்பதைப் பல சான்றுகள் விளக்குகின்றன. பெண்களின் பல்வேறுபட்ட திறன் கல்வியோடு சேரும்போது அவர்களிடத்து தன்னையறிதல், தன் பலம் எது? பலவீனம் எது? என்பதைப் புரிய வைக்கும் பெரும் பணியைச் செய்கிறது. இதன் மூலம் பெண்களும் அவரைச் சார்ந்தவர்களையும் நல்ல வண்ணம் சுகமாக வாழ வைப்பது மட்டுமின்றி சுயமாகவும், வாழவைக்கிறது. ஒரு பெண் கல்வி பெறும் போது அவளுடைய பலம், திறன் ஆகியவை கண்டெடுக்கப்பட்டு பட்டை தீட்டப் பெறுகிறாள். ஒரு ஆணுக்கு அளிக்கப்படும் கல்வியானது அவனை முன்னேற்றும். ஒரு பெண்ணுக்கு அளிக்கப்படும் கல்வியானது அவள் குடும்பத்தையே முன்னேற்றும்.

ஒரு பெண்ணுக்கு தரப்படும் கல்வியானது. அவன் குடும்பத்தினர் அனைவருக்கும், முக்கியமாக அடுத்த சந்ததியினருக்கும் போய்ச் சேர்கிறது. அதன் மூலம் பெண் கல்வியானது. பண்மடங்காகப் பெருகி ஆற்று நீராக, புறப்பட்ட இடத்திற்கு மட்டுமின்றி எல்லோருக்கும் பயன்படுவதாகிறது. இதனாலேயே.

"இல்லதென் இல்லவள் மாண்பானால்"...................என்கிறது திருக்குறள். இங்கு மாண்பு எனப்படும் "தன்னிகரில்லாப் பண்பு" மாட்சிமை பெற்ற ஞானம் என்று பொருள்படும். அத்தகைய மாட்சியை, கல்வியை ஒரு பெண்ணானவள் பெற்று விட்டால் அவள் தனக்காகவும், தன்னைச் சாந்தவர்களாகவும் யோசித்து விவேகமாக முடிவெடுக்கும் வல்லமையும், ஆளுமையைப் பெற்று விட்டாளேயானால் சூழ்நிலை. சமுதாய, பொருளாதார, அரசியல் ஆகிய எல்லா நிலைகளிலும் அவன் ஆக்க சக்தியாக செயல்படுவாள். பின்னர் இல்லை என்பது என்ன? ஒன்றுமே இல்லை என்கிறார் திருவள்ளுவர்.

இத்தகைய ஆளுமை பெற்ற பெண்களை காலந்தோறும் காணலாம். இந்தியாவில் இராணி மங்கம்மாள், சுல்தானா ரசியா, நூர்ஜகான் முதல் சமீப கால இந்திரா காந்தி வரை பெண்கள் தான் பெற்ற ஞானத்திறனை

நாட்டிற்குப் பங்களித்து, 'தொட்டில் ஆட்டும் கை தொல்லுலகை ஆளும் கை" என்பதனை நிரூபித்துச் சென்றனர்.

சுதந்திர இந்தியாவில் பெண்கல்வி:-

பன்முகக் கூறுகள் கொண்ட இந்தியாவின் ஜனத் தொகையில் 50 சதவிகிதம் பெண்கள். இன்னும் குறிப்பாகச் சொன்னால் நாட்டின் மனித வளமைக் கூறுகளில் பாதிப் பங்கு பெண்களுடையது. துhயாக, பன்முகப் பங்களிப்பில், குடும்ப, சமுதாய, பொருளாதார முன்னேற்றத்திற்கு சரிபாதிக்கும் மேற்பட்ட பொறுப்பேற்பவர்கள் பெண்கள் இந்த வகையில் பெண்மை சக்தியை, சிறந்த முறையில் ஆக்கப்படுத்துவதனால் நாட்டின் மேம்பாட்டிற்குத் தேவையான மூலதனமாக நம்மால் சேகரித்துக் கொள்ள முடியும் என்பதை உணர்ந்த அரசியல் வல்லுனர்கள், அறிஞர்கள் பெண் முன்னேற்றம், பெண்ணுரிமை, பெண் கல்வி ஆகிய துறைகளில் பல்வேறு நலத் திட்டங்களை அரசியல் சட்டங்களை வகுத்தனர். ஐந்தாண்டுத் திட்டங்களில் முக்கிய கருத்தாக ஏற்றுக் கொண்டு ஆலோசனைக் குழுக்கள் முதலியவற்றை ஏற்படுத்தி அவர்களின் வழிகாட்டுதலின்படி நிதி ஒதுக்கீடு முதல் மற்றும் பலவகைப்பட்ட திட்டங்களை செயல்படுத்தினர்.

பெண்களுக்கு அதிகாரமளித்தல், பாலின சமத்துவம், சமூக, பொருளாதார பாதுகாப்பு, சதி – உடன் கட்டை ஏறுதல் தடை, விதவா மறுமணம், பெண்களுக்கு எதிரான வன்முறைத் தடுப்பு, பெண்கல்வி, அனைவருக்கும் கட்டாய கல்வி ஆகிய கூறுகள் நுணுக்கமாக ஆய்வு செய்யப்பட்டு செயலாக்கம் பெறத் தொடங்கின. பெண் கல்வி வழியில் அரசியல் மற்றும் சமூக வளர்ச்சி திட்டங்கள் இனிக் காணலாம். இந்த அரசியல் திட்டங்கள் மூலமாக நாடு முழுவதும் கிராமங்கள் உட்பட அதிக அளவில் இளநிலை, மேல்நிலைப் உயர்நிலை பள்ளிகள், கல்வி நிறுவனங்கள் தொடங்க அனுமதி, மகளிருக்கான கல்வி திட்டங்கள், கல்விக் கடன் திட்டங்கள், கல்விச் சலுகை – உதவித் தொகை, போக்குவரத்துச் சலுகைகள், உள்ளிருந்து படிக்கும் கல்விக் கூடங்கள், திறந்த வெளி பல்கலை கழகங்கள், இலவச கட்டாயக் கல்வி, இலவச மதிய உணவு, தொழிற் பயிற்சி நுண்கலைகள் போன்ற எண்ணற்ற பலன்கள் மக்களைச் சென்றடைந்தன.

பெண் கல்வி வளர்ச்சிக்கான திட்டங்கள் :-
1957ல் துர்காபாய் தேஷ்முக் குழு பரிந்துரைகள்:

பெண்களின் கல்வி, உயர்கல்வி, முதியோர் கல்வி என பெண்களின் கல்வி மேம்பாட்டை ஆராய்ந்ததோடு, அக்கால கட்டத்தில் கல்வி முறைகளில் என்னென்ன மாற்றங்களைச் செய்ய முடியும் என ஆராய குழு ஒன்றினை சிபாரிசு செய்தது. 1957 செப்டம்பர் மாதம் மாநிலக் கல்வி அமைச்சர்கள் மாநாட்டில் இவை ஏற்றுக் கொள்ளப்பட்டு துர்காபாய் தேஷ்முக் தலைவராக பல அறிஞர்களின் ஆலோசனைகள் பரிந்துரைக்கப்பட்டன.

அதன் சாராம்சம் :-
1. பெண் கல்விக்கு அதிக முக்கியத்துவம் கட்டாயம் கொடுக்கப்பட்ட வேண்டும். அதற்காகும் செலவினை கல்வி நிதியிலிருந்தே ஈடுகட்ட வேண்டும்.
2. தேசிய அளவில் ஒரு கல்விக்குழு அமைக்கப்பட்டு மாணவிகளும், பெண்களும் அதிக பட்ச அளவில் கல்வி பயில ஏற்பாடு செய்ய வேண்டும்.
3. மாநிலங்கள் அளவில் தனித் தனி குழு அமைக்கப்பட்டு பெண் கல்வி கண்காணிக்கப்பட வேண்டும்.
4. அரசு சாரா உதவி பெற்று வரும் தனியார் நிறுவனங்களும், தன்னார்வமிக்க நிறுவனங்களும் பெண் கல்விக்கு உதவ வேண்டும்.
5. நிரந்தர மைய அலுவலகம் ஒன்று அமைக்கப்பட்டு கல்வி வளர்ச்சியை அவ்வப்போது ஆராய்ந்து மேல் திட்ட ஆலோசனைகளை வழங்க வேண்டும்.

இத்தகைய பரிந்துரைகள் பெண் கல்வி திட்டத்தின் முக்கியமான மைல் கல்லாக அமைந்தது.

1958	-	பெண் கல்விக்கான தேசிய குழு
1963	-	பக்தவச்சலம் குழு
1964	-	பெண் கல்வி தேசிய ஆலோசனைக் குழு
1964- 1966	-	ஸ்ரீ மதி ஹன்ஸா சமத்துவ குழு, டி.என்.எஸ். கோத்தாரி குழு

கோத்தாரி குழு பரிந்துரைத்த நலத்திட்டங்கள் :-

1. உயர்நிலைக் கல்வியில் தொழிற் பயிற்சிக்கான பாடப்பிரிவுகள் முக்கியத்துவம் பெறுவது அவசியமானது.

2. கல்வித் திட்டங்கள் சீரிய முறையில் சமுதாயத்தோடு தொடர்பு கொண்டதாகவும், பள்ளியின் சுற்றுச் சூழலுக்கு ஏற்றதாகவும், மாற்றப்பட வேண்டும்.

3. 14 வயது வரை இலவசக் கட்டாயக் கல்வி

4. பாடங்கள் இன்றைய அறிவியல் முன்னேற்றத்துடன் இணைந்ததாக இருத்தல் வேண்டும்.

5. மாணவர்களின் ஆளுமைப் பண்புகளுக்கு முக்கியத்துவம் அளிக்கப்பட வேண்டும்.

6. புதிய மதிப்பீடு முறைகள் பின்பற்றப்பட வேண்டும். நுண்கலை வளர்ச்சி, மக்களிடைNயு ஒருமைப்பாட்டை உருவாக்கும் சமூகவியல், தனி மனிதத் தேவை, சமுதாயத் தேவை, நவீன மயமாக்கல், கைவினைப் பணி, விவசாயப் பணி, தொழில் தொடர்புப் பணிகள்p ஆகியவற்றில் பயிற்சி முதலிய ஆலோசனைகள் வலியுறுத்தப்பட்டன.

- 1986 -ஆண்டு அமுலாக்கப்பட்ட தேசியக் கல்விக் கொள்கையில் பெண் சுதந்திரம், சமத்துவம், நாட்டு ஒற்றுமையுணர்வு இவற்றோடு பெண்களில் பிறப்படுத்தப்பட்ட அனைவர்க்கும் கல்வி சமவாய்ப்பு ஆகியவை அறிமுகப்படுத்தப்பட்டன.

- 1986 ஆம் ஆண்டு துவங்கப்பட்ட 'பெண்கள் மேம்பாட்டு செயல் திட்டங்களா' சமூக திட்டங்கள், சமூக பொருளாதார ரீதியில் பெண்கள் முன்னேற்றத்திற்கு வகை செய்தது. 'மகளிர் சுய உதவிக்குழு' மூலம் பெண்களின் பண்முக திறமைகளுக்கு அங்கீகாரம் கிடைத்தது. சுமார் 5207 மகளிர் சுய உதவிக்குழு பெண்களுக்குக் கை கொடுத்து உயர்த்தின. மேலும் 'கடன் மானிய செயல் விரைவுத் திட்டம்' ஏற்படுத்தப்பட்டது.

- 2000 ம் ஆண்டு அமைக்கப்பட்ட 'தேசிய கலைத்திட்ட வரைவு கமிட்டி' பாலின சமத்துவத்தை வலியுறுத்தி பெண்களின் பங்களிப்பிற்கு முக்கியத்துவம் ஏற்படுத்தியது. 'ஆசிரியர் பயிற்சி வரைவு திட்ட'த்தின் மூலம் பெண்களின் அறிவும், திறனும் பயன்படுத்துவதற்கு வகை செய்யப்பட்டது.

- 1997 - 2002 - 9ம் ஐந்தாண்டுத் திட்டத்தின் கீழ் பெண்ணுரிமைக் கான பல நலத்திட்டங்களை உருவாக்கி மத்திய அரசும் மாநில அரசும் நிதி ஒதுக்கீடு செய்து மகிளா யோஜனாதிட்டம், உருவாக்கியது. அதன் மூலம் பெண்களுக்கு கணிசமான பலன் கிட்டியது.

- 2001 ம் ஆண்டு ஸ்த்ரீ சக்தி புரஸ்கார் என்ற விருதினை அறிவித்து பிரதம மந்திரி, சமூகத்தின் அடித்தட்டிலிருந்து சமூக கல்வி, பொருளாதார வளர்ச்சிக்காகப் பாடுபட்ட 5 பெண்களுக்கு அதனை அளித்து கௌரவப்படுத்தினார்.

- 2002-2007-10ம் திட்டத்தின் கீழ் கஸ்தூரிபா பாலிகா வித்யாலயா ஏற்படுத்தப்பட்டு தாழ்த்தப்பட்ட மலைவாழ் பெண் சிறுமியர்கள் கல்வி கற்கும் வாய்ப்பு ஏற்படுத்தப்பட்டது.

- 2007-2012 11ம் திட்டத்தின் கீழ் மகிளா சமக்யா திட்டம் ஏற்படுத்தப்பட்டு, பெண்கள் தமக்குச் சாதகமான சூழலில், தமக்குத் தேவையான துறையைத் தேர்ந்தெடுத்து கல்வியைப் பெற வாய்ப்பு ஏற்படுத்தப்பட்டது. இதன் மூலம் 9 மாநிலங்களில் 83 மாவட்டங்களிலும் 20380 கிராமங்களில் செயல்படுத்தப்பட்டு பயன்பெறுகிறது.

கல்வி வளர்ச்சி நிலை:-

    இது போன்ற பல்வேறு அரசியல் திட்டங்கள் மட்டுமின்றி தன்னார்வத் தொண்டு நிறுவனங்கள் தனியார் நிறுவனங்கள் ஆகிய அனைத்தும் ஒன்று சேர்ந்து இந்தியாவில் எழுந்தறிவு, கல்வித்தரத்தை உயர்;த்துவதற்கான பெரும் பணியைச் செய்து கொண்டு இருக்கின்றன. சுதந்திரத்திற்குப்பின் 50 வருடங்களில் இந்தியாவின் கல்வி வளர்ச்சி நிலை இங்கு பார்க்கலாம்.

இந்தியாவின் படிப்பறிவு நிலை விகிதம்

வருடம்	1951	1961	1971	1981	1991	2001	2011
ஆண்	27.2	40.4	46.0	53.4	64.1	76.0	82.14
பெண்	8.9	15.3	22.0	28.5	39.3	54.16	65.46

மேலே காட்டிய பட்டியலிலிருந்து பெண்கல்வி வளர்ச்சி 1951 லிருந்து 2011 வரையிலான கடந்த 60 ஆண்டுகளில் வளர்ந்து கொண்டு வந்துள்ளது. இருந்த போதிலும் ஆண்களின் கல்வியறிவு வளர்ச்சியோடு ஒப்பிடும் போது பெண் கல்வி வளர்ச்சி மிகக் குறைவானதே என்பது ஒரு வருத்தமான செய்தியாகும். இந்த வளர்ச்சிக்குக் குறைவிற்குக் காரணம்; 1.சமூக சாதி சம்பிரதாயங்கள், 2.குடும்ப சுமை, 3.பொருளாதார நெருக்கடி. பொருளாதார ஏற்ற தாழ்வுகளே. அதிலும் குறிப்பாக தாழ்த்தப்பட்டவர் தலித்துகள் மற்றும் மலை வாழ் இனத்து பெண்களே அதிக பாதிக்கப்பட்டவர் ஆவர். ஆனாலும் தனிப்பட்ட வளர்ச்சி விகிதாச்சாரத்தில் பெண் கல்வி வளர்ச்சி ஏறுமுகமாகவே உள்ளது என்பது. நம் அரசு கல்வித் திட்டப் பணிகளின் வெற்றியே எனப் பெருமிதம் படுத்தலாம். முந்தைய பத்து வருட பெண் கல்வி விகிதாசாரத்தைக் கணக்கிடும் போது 2025 களில் 80% தாண்டும் என்று கணக்கிடலாம். அதற்கும் மேலான 80% + என்பதை எட்டிப் பிடிக்க வேண்டியதே நம் இலக்காகக் கொள்ள வேண்டும்.

பெண் கல்விக்கு வித்திட்ட பெருமக்கள் மத்தியில் 'புறநகர் பெண்களும், புத்தறிவு பெறவேண்டும்" என்கிறார் பேராசிரியர் சே.கண்மணி அவ்வகையில் அந்த இலக்கை நாம் அடைய நாம் செய்ய வேண்டியதென்ன?

பெண் கல்வி முன்னேற்றத்திற்கான வழிகள் :

1. பெண்களுக்கு முதலில் கற்றுக் கொள்வதற்கு கற்றுக் கொடுக்க வேண்டும். எதைக் கற்றுக் கொள்ள வேண்டும் என்பதைத் தெளிய வைக்க வேண்டும்.

2. அதற்கு பெண்கள் தன்னையறிதல் வேண்டும். தன் பலம் எது? தன் சூழலுக்கு தகுந்தலை எது எனத் தீர்மானிக்கும் திறன் உருவாக்க வேண்டும்.

3. சமர்பிரதாய, சடங்கு சாதி முறைகளினால் பெண்கள் முடக்கப்படுதல் தடுக்கப்பட வேண்டும். அவர்கள் வெளி வருதல் வகை செய்ய வேண்டும்.

4. இன வயதுத் திருமணம், இள வயது மகப்பேறு இவை தடை செய்யப்படுவதோடு மக்கட்பெருக்கம் குறைப்பிற்கான அறிவூட்ட வேண்டியதும் அவசியம்.

5. சமூக, பொருளாதார ஏற்றுத் தாழ்வுகளினால் கல்வி வாய்ப்புகள் தடை செய்யப்படுவது. நீக்கப்பட வேண்டும்.

6. பாலின சம வாய்ப்பு அளிக்கப்பட வேண்டும்.

7. விதவைகள், கைவிடப்பட்டோர் ஆகிய பெண்களுக்கு, வாய்ப்புகள் சலுகைகள் அளிக்கப்பட வேண்டும்.

8. திருமணம் மற்றும் சூழ்நிலைக் காரணங்களால் இடை நிறுத்தப்பட்ட கல்வியைத் தொடர்பவருக்கு முன்னுரிமையும், வாய்ப்பும், அளிக்கப்பட வேண்டும்.

9. வயது வரம்பு ஒரு தடையாக நிறுத்தப்படாமல் ஆர்வமுள்ளவர்க்கெல்லாம் வாய்ப்பளிக்கப்பட வேண்டும். முனைவர் சரோஜினி வரதப்பன் தன் முனைவர் பட்டத்தைப் பெறும் போது அவருக்கு அகவை 83 (சென்னப்பல்கலைக் கழக கூட்டத்தில் அவரே கூறியது)

10. உயர்கல்வி தரத்தினை வளர்க்க உயர்கல்விக்குழு மற்றும் கல்வியபிலும் பெண்களுக்கு ஆலோசனைக் குழு இவை வழிநடத்துதல் வேண்டும்;.

11. தகுதி வாய்ந்த பெண்களுக்கு ஊக்கத் தொகை உதவித் தொகை, சலுகைகளுட வழங்குதல் வேண்டும்.

12. தாழ்த்தப்பட்ட தலித் மற்றும் பின் தங்கிய மலைவாழ் இனத்தவரை ஊக்கப் படுத்துவதற்கான இலவச பாட நூல், சீருடை காலணி மற்றும் உபகரணங்கள் வழங்குதல் வேண்டும்.

13. கல்விச் சாலைகள் அனைவருக்கும் எட்டும்படியான சூழலில் இடங்களில் அமைக்கப் பெற வேண்டும்.

14. போக்குவரத்து வசதிகள் ஏற்படுத்தப்பட வேண்டும்

15. கல்விச் சாலைகள் தூய்மையான பாதுகாப்பான, சுகாதாரமான அமைக்கப்பட வேண்டும்

16. விளையாட்டு மைதானம், சோதனைக் கூடம், நூலகம், ஆகியவை வசதியான முறையில் அமைக்கப்பட வேண்டும்.

17. குடிநீர், கழிப்பறை வசதிகளைச் செய்வனே அமைக்க வேண்டும்

18. பயிற்சி பெற்ற ஆசிரியர்கள் அவர்கள் விருப்பில் சென்றால் அப்பணியைச் செய்ய மாற்று ஆசிரியர்கள் பணியில் அமர்த்தப் பட வேண்டும்.

19. மிக முக்கியமாக கல்விக் கூடத்தைச் சுற்றிலும், கண் காணிப்பு, பாதுகாப்பு காவல் பணியாளர், நியமனம் செய்யப்பட்டு எல்லா இடங்களையும் காட்டும் புகைப்படக் கருவிகள் இவைகள் அமைக்கப்பட வேண்டும்.

20. மாணவ மாணவியருடன் பழகும் ஆசிரியர், மற்ற பணியாளர்களின் நன்னடத்தையுடையவராய் நியமனம் செய்யப்படுவது மட்டுமின்றி அவர்களைக் கண்காணிக்கும் மேற்பணியாளரும் அமர்த்தப்பட வேண்டும்.

21. கல்விக் கூட வளாகத்தில் உடல் நல பாதுகாப்பு வசதி மற்றும் முதலுதவி வசதிகள் அமைக்கப்படவேண்டும்.

சமுதாயத்தின் அடிமட்டத்தில் உள்ளோர், மலைவாழின் பெண்களையும், கவர்ந்து கல்விக் கூடங்களுக்கு வரவைக்க மேற்கண்ட எளிமையான வசதிகளை செய்து தரவேண்டும். இவை தவிர மேற்குறிப்பிட்ட வழிமுறைகள் பயிலும் மாணவியரின் தனிப்பட்ட தேவைகளாகும் . அவை பராமரிக்கப்பட வேண்டும் மற்றும் நிறுவனங்கள், கழகங்கள் இவை மூலம் ஆக வேண்டிய பணிகளும் ஏராளமானவையாகும். அனைத்து வசதிகளுடனும் கூடியதாய் இளநிலை, உயர்நிலை பள்ளிகள், உறைவிடப் பள்ளிகள், கல்லூரிகள், பல்கலைக் கழகம், திறந்த வெளி பல்கலை கழகம், தொடர் கல்வி, ஊடகங்கள், கணினி – மாத்திரை வழிக்கல்வி, முதியோர் கல்விக் கூட்டங்கள் போன்ற கல்வி நிலையங்கள் கல்வித் திட்டங்களை உருவாக்குவதோடு அவை சிறந்த முறையில் செயல்பட ஆதரவளிக்கவும், கண்காணிக்கபடவும் வேண்டும். முறைகள் உருவாக்கினால் மட்டும் போதாது. அவை சிறந்த முறையில் செயல்படவும்.

முடிவுரை

கல்வி நிலையங்கள் மேற்கூறிய நலத்திட்டங்களை செவ்வனே செயல்படுத்த வேண்டும். நம் சுதந்திர இந்தியா, இன்று வரை, பெண் கல்வி, பெண் முன்னேற்றம்; ஆகியவற்றிற்காய் உருவாக்கித் தந்த எண்ணற்ற நலத்திட்டங்கள் அனைத்தும் தேக்கம் இன்றி பெண்ணினைத்துக்குப் போய்ச் சேர்ப்பிக்க வேண்டிய பெரும்பணியை சிறப்புற ஆற்ற வேண்டும். தனியார் நிறுவனங்களும், தன்னார்வத் தொண்டு நிறுவனங்களும் பெண்களுக்கு, பெண்களுக்கு ஆர்வத்தை அளித்து அவர்களை முன்னுக்கு இட்டு வர வேண்டும் பெண்கள் தம் அறிவுச்சுடர் பன்முகத்திறன் பங்களிப்பிற்கு வித்திட வேண்டும்.

> 'பட்டங்கள் ஆள்வதும் சட்டங்கள் செய்வதும்
>
> பாரினில் பெண்ணை நடத்த வந்தோம்"

என்று பாரதி பெண்களை முன்னுக்கு அழைத்து வந்ததின் காரணம் அவர் பெண்களின் வல்லமையை அறிந்தே தான். நம் சமூகமும், கல்வி நிலையங்களும் கைகோர்த்து பெண்ணுக்கு சிறப்புற ஆற்றவேண்டும். இந்த கூட்டு முயற்சியால் அடுத்த பத்தாண்டுகளில் 80 சதவிகிதத்தையும் பெண் கல்வி வளர்ச்சி தாண்டி நாம் விரும்பிய பெண்கள் பொறுப்புணர்ச்சிமிக்கலர்கள். இடைவிடாது தொடர்ந்து உழைக்கும் தன்மையும் பன்முகத்திறனும் கொண்டவர்கள். உலகின் மூன்றின் இரண்டு பங்கு மனித நேரத்தைப் பங்களிக்கும் பெண் சக்தியை மனித வளத்தை நம் நாட்டின் நம் நாட்டின் மூலதனமாகச் சேமிக்க முடியும். பெண் கல்வியில் 81க்கும் கூடுதலான விகிதம் பெற்று முன்னேற்றச் சிகரத்தின் உச்சத்தை வெகு விரைவிலேயே நாம் நிச்சயம் தொட்டு விடுவோம். என்ற நம்பிக்கையோடு 'பெண்மை வெல்க வென்று கூத்திடுவோமடா" பாரதியின் இப்பொன் வாக்கை வாழ்த்தாக ஏற்றுக்கொள்வோம்.

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- சுவாமி ராம கிருஷ்ணானந்தர் (தமிழ் மொழி பெயர்ப்பு) (2006) கல்விச் சிந்தனையாளர்களுக்கு – ஸ்ரீ ராமகிருஷ்ண மடம்)
- பாரதியார் கவிதைகள்– திருக்குறள்

தொலைதூரக் கற்பித்தலில் உள்ள தொழில்நுட்பக் கருவிகள்
(ICT TOOLS IN DISTANCE EDUCATION)

விமலா அ ,

முனைவர் பட்ட ஆய்வாளர் சென்னை ,தமிழ் நாடு திறந்தநிலைப் பல்கலைக்கழகம் ,

முன்னுரை

தகவல் தொடர்பு தொழில்நுட்பத்தின் மிக விரைவான வளர்ச்சி கல்வித் துறையிலும் மிகப் பாரிய தாக்கத்தை ஏற்படுத்தியுள்ளது. கணினியையும் இணையத்தையும் பயன்படுத்தாத கல்வி நிறுவனங்களே இல்லை என்கின்ற அளவுக்குத் தொடக்கப் பள்ளி தொடங்கி உயர்க்கல்விக் கழகங்கள் வரையில் எல்லா இடங்களிலும் இதன் ஆதிக்கம் பெருகி வருகின்றதுஇத்தகையச் சூழலில் ., கற்றல் கற்பித்தலில் இணையமும், இணைய ஏந்துகளும் முக்கிய இடத்தைப் பிடித்துவிட்டன எனலாம். கோலின்சு)1996) என்பார் கூற்றின்படி, 1996 / 1997ஆம் ஆண்டுகளிலேயே கற்றல் கற்பித்தலில் இணையம் ஊடுருவி வளர்ந்துவிட்டது என்கிறார். இதன் அடிப்படையில், இணையம் வழியான கற்றல் கற்பித்தல் முறைமை இன்று மிகவும் புகழ்பெற்றதாகவும் எல்லாராலும் விரும்பப்படுவதாகவும் இருக்கின்றதுஆகவேதான் ., இணையத்தைப் பயன்படுத்தி கற்றல் கற்பித்தலை வழிநடத்துவதற்கு உலகம் முழுவதிலும் உள்ள எல்லாக் கல்வி நிறுவனங்களும், தனியார், தன்னார்வ நிறுவனங்களும் முண்டியடித்துக்கொண்டு முயற்சிகளை முன்னெடுக்கின்றன. இணையத்தின் வழியாக அல்லது செயலிகள், மென்பொருள்கள், வலைத்தளங்கள், மின்னிதழ்கள், ஒலி ஒளி மின்னூடகங்கள், மடற்குழுக்கள், சமூக வலைத்தளங்கள் முதலான இணைய ஏந்துகள் வழியாகத் தமிழ்மொழியைக் கற்கவும் கற்பிக்கவும் வேண்டிய தேவைகள் அதிகரித்து வருகின்றனஆகவே ., காலத்திற்கு ஏற்ற வகையில் புதிய அணுகுமுறையில் தமிழ்மொழிக் கற்றல் கற்பித்தலை மேம்படுத்த வேண்டும்அதற்குரிய . விரிவான வாய்ப்புகள் இன்று உருவாகி இருப்பதை ஊக்கத்துடன் வரவேற்று விரிவாகப் பயன்கொள்ள வேண்டும்.

தகவல் தொடர்பு நுட்பங்கள்)ICT) என்றால் என்ன?

வெவ்வேறு வகையான தொழில்நுட்பங்களை பயன்படுத்தி தகவல்களை மின்னணுத்தொடர்பு மூலம் பிறருக்கு அணுப்புதல், சேமித்தல், புதிதாக உருவாக்குதல், வெளிப்படுத்துதல், பரிமாறிக் கொள்ளுஎதலே தகவல் தொடர்பு - நுட்பம் என்பதாகும். இந்த நுட்பத்தில் வானொலி, தொலைக்காட்சி, படக்காட்சி, டி.டி.வி., தொலைபேசி, (தொலைபேசி, மொபைல்செயற்கைக் கோள் (, கணிணி மற்றும் அதைச் சார்ந்த மென்பொருட்கள் ஆகிய அனைத்தும் அடங்கும் .மேலும், படக்காட்சி மூலம் கலந்தாய்வு, இமெயில், பிலாக்ஸ் உள்ளிட்ட கருவிகள், சேவைகளும் இதில் அடங்கும்.

தகவல் பரிமாற்ற காலத்திற்கு தகுந்தார்போல் கல்வியை வழங்க, நவீன தகவல் தொடர்பு நுட்பங்களை பயன்படுத்துவது அவசியம். இதற்கு கல்வியாளர்கள், முதல்வர்கள், ஆசிரியர்கள், தொழில்நுட்ப வல்லுநர்கள் ஆகியோர் தொழில் நுணுக்கங்கள், பயிற்சி, நிதி, கட்டிமானத் தேவைகள் போன்றவற்றில் சரியான முடிவுகளை எடுக்கவேண்டும்புது மொழியை கற்றுக் கொள்வதைவிட ., புதுமொழியில் கற்பிப்பது போன்று, இது பலருக்கு சிரமமான பணிதான்இந்த பகுதியில் ., நாடுகளை இணைக்கும் செயற்கைக் கோள்கள் முதல் வகுப்பறையில் மாணவர்கள் பயன்படுத்தும் கணிணி வரையிலான இயந்திரங்களை நாம் பார்க்கப் போகிறோம்கல்வியாளர்கள் ., கொள்கை முடிவெடுப்போர், பாடதிட்டம் வகுப்போர், போன்ற பலருக்கு இவை பயன்படும் என்று கருதுகிறோம்.

கல்வியில் தகவல் தொடர்பு தொழில்நுட்பத்தின் பங்கு

பொதுவாக, கல்வியில் தகவல் தொடர்பின் முக்கியத்துவத்துவத்தை அனைவரும் அறிவர் . ஆனால், தகவல் தொடர்பு நுட்பத்தின் குறிப்பிட்ட பங்கு மற்றும் அதன் முழுமையான பலனை பெருதல் குறித்தே விவாதங்கள் நடந்து வருகின்றன. இப்பகுதி, கல்வித்துறையில் தகவல் தொடர்பு நுட்பத்தின் தாக்கம் பற்றிய கட்டுரைகள், வலைதளங்கள், கருத்தாய்வுகள் போன்றவைகளை கொண்டுள்ளது. அத்துடன், பள்ளிகளில் எந்த நோக்கில் தொழில்நுட்பம் பயன்படுத்தப்பட்டு வருகிறது என்பது குறித்தும் இப்பிரிவில் காணலாம்தகவல் தொடர்பு பயன்பாடு ., அதன் மூலம் ஏற்படும் நன்மைகள், தகவல் தொடர்பு நுட்பங்களை கல்வித் திட்டங்களுடன் ஒருங்கிணைக்க வழிமுறைகள் பற்றிய அனுபவங்களும், இப்பிரிவில் வழங்கப்படுகின்றன.

பயன்படும் தொழில்நுட்பங்கள்

உலகளவில் தொழில் நுட்ப பயன்பாட்டின் அனுபவங்களைப் பார்க்கும் போது, பெரும்பாலும் அவை கீழ்கண்ட தலைப்புகளுள் அடங்கும்

- பல்வேறு ஊடகங்கள் மூலம் கற்றல்
- கல்வித்தொலைக்காட்சி
- கல்வி வானொலி
- இணையதளம் மூலம் ஆலோசனை வழங்குதல்
- நூலகங்கள் மூலம் ஆராய்தல்
- அறிவியல் தொழில்நுட்பத்தில் செயல்முறைகள்
- ஊடகங்களின் பயன்பாடு
- இளம் குழந்தை வளர்ச்சி, குறைந்தளவு மக்கள்தொகை உள்ள இடங்களில் கல்வி, முதியோர் கல்வி, பெண்கல்வி, வேலைத்திறனை அதிகரித்தல் ஆகிய பகுதிகளில் தகவல் தொடர்பு நுட்பங்கள் குறிப்பாக பயன்படுத்தப்பட்டுள்ளன.
- ஆசிரியர்களை தயார் செய்யவும், அவர்களது பணிக் காலத்தில் பயிற்சி அளிப்பதற்கான நுட்பங்கள்.
- கொள்கைகளைத் திட்டமிடல், உருவாக்குதல், புள்ளி விவரங்கள் பராமரித்தலுக்கான நுட்பங்கள்.
- பள்ளிகள் பராமரிக்கத் தேவையான நுட்பங்கள்.

வானொலி, தொலைக்காட்சி கல்விக்கு எப்படி உதவிகரமாக இருக்கின்றன -?

கல்வி கற்பித்தல் பணிக்கு வானொலி 1920ல் இருந்தும், தொலைக்காட்சி 1950ல் இருந்தும் உறுதுணை புரிந்து வருகின்றனகல்வியில் இந்த ஊடகங்களின் . பயன்பாடு, மூன்று முறைகளில் பின்பற்றப்படுகின்றன.

- நேரடியாக பாடங்களை ஒலிபரப்பு செய்தல் இம்முறை -, தற்காலிகமாக, ஆசிரியர்கள் இல்லாத போது, மாணவர்களுக்கு பாடம் கற்பிக்க உதவுகிறது.
- பள்ளிக்கல்வி இது பாடம் நடத்தும் ஆசிரியருக்கு - (கல்வி ஒலிபரப்பு) - உறுதுணையாக இருக்கிறதுமேலும் கல்வி கற்கும் உபகரணங்கள் வேறு இல்லாத போது . இம்முறை பயன்படும்
- சமூகம், நாடு, உலகம் தழுவிய பொதுவான கல்வி நிகழ்ச்சிகள், பொதுவான மற்றும் முறைசாரா கல்வி வசதிகளை வழங்குகிறது.

நேரடி பாடம் நடத்துதலுக்கு, வானொலி மூலம் பள்ளிக்கல்வி பாடங்கள் பெரிதும் உதவுகிறது. இதில், கணிதம், அறிவியல், சுகாதாரம், மொழிகள் ஆகிய பாடங்களில், மாநில மற்றும் தேசிய அளவிலான பாடத்திட்டங்களில் வானொலிப்பாடங்கள் தயார் செய்யப்பட்டு வகுப்பறையில் தினமும் 20-30நிமிடம் ஒலிபரப்பு செய்யப்படுகிறதுஇது பள்ளியில் பாடங்கள் எடுக்கும் தரத்தை . மேம்படுத்த

உதவும். மேலும் முறையான பயிற்சி பெறாத ஆசிரியர்களுக்கும், வசதி வாய்ப்பு குறைவாக உள்ள பள்ளிகளுக்கும் பேருதவியாக இருக்கும். வானொலிப்பாடங்கள் இந்தியா மற்றும் தெற்கு ஆசிய நாடுகளில் அமல்படுத்தப்பட்டுள்ளது. இது முதலில் 1980ல் தாய்லாந்து நாட்டில் அறிமுகப்படுத்தப்பட்டது .1990களில் இந்தோனேசியா, பாகிஸ்தான், வங்கதேசம், நேபாளம் ஆகிய நாடுகளில் கொண்டுரவப்பட்டது. இம்முறை மற்ற தொலை தூரக்கல்வி முறைகளிலிருந்து எப்படி மாறுபட்டது என்றால், இம்முறையின் முக்கிய நோக்கம், அனைவருக்கும் கல்வி அளிப்பதைத் தாண்டி, தரமான கல்வி கற்பித்தலே ஆகும். இதனால் இம்முறை, முறையான கல்வி மற்றும் முறைசாரக்கல்வி அளிப்பதில், பெரும் வெற்றி பெற்றுள்ளது. உலகளவில் மேற்கொள்ளப்பட்ட ஆய்வில், இத்திட்டம் கல்வி அறிவு பெறுதல், அனைவருக்கும் சமமான கல்வி அளித்தலில் பெரும் முன்னேற்றம் பெற உதவிபுரிந்துள்ளது என கண்டு பிடித்துள்ளனர்மற்ற . திட்டங்களுடன் ஒப்பிடும்போது இத்திட்டத்திற்கு ஆகும் செலவும் மிகக்குறைவே. ஒரிடத்தில் தயாரிக்கப்பட்ட தொலைக்கல்வி நிகழ்ச்சிகள் செயற்கைகோள் மூலம் குறிப்பிட்ட நேரத்தில் நாடு முழுவதும் உள்ள பள்ளிகளுக்கு ஒளிபரப்பப்படுகிறது . ஒவ்வொரு மணி .இதற்கு நல்ல வரவேற்பும் கிடைத்துள்ளது நேரத்திலும் வெவ்வேறு பாடங்கள் விளக்கப்படுகின்றனமாணவர்கள் இதன்மூலம் பல . ஆசிரியர்களின் பாடங்களை கேட்டு விளக்கம் பெறுகின்றனர். தேவையான விளக்கம் அளிக்க வகுப்பறைகளில், அனைத்து பாடங்களுக்கும் ஒரே ஆசிரியர் இருப்பார்.

இம்முறை மூலம் பாடங்களை வழங்குதலில், பல ஆண்டுகளில், நிறைய மாற்றங்கள் கொண்டுவரப்பட்டுள்ளனநிபுணர் பேசுவது மட்டுமில்லாமல் ., ஒருவருக்கொருவர் கருத்து பரிமாறிக் கொள்ளுதல், நேயர்களை நிகழ்ச்சியோடு ஒருங்கிணைத்தல் ஆகிய மாற்றங்கள் செய்யப்பட்டுள்ளன . இந்த மாற்றங்களின்போது, சமூக பிரச்சனைகளை நிகழ்ச்சிகளில் கொண்டுவருவது, அதற்கு தீர்வு காண்பது, குழந்தைகளுக்கு ஒருங்கிணைந்த கல்வி வழங்குவது, பல்வேறு நிறுவனங்களோடு சமூகத்தை இணைப்பது, பள்ளிக் கூடங்களை நன்முறையில் பராமரித்தல் ஆகியவை சேர்க்கப் படுகின்றன. இதனால் மாணவர்களும் தங்களை சமூகப்பணியில் ஈடுபடுத்திக் கொள்கின்றனர். தொலைக்காட்சி கல்வி நிகழ்ச்சிகளின் மூலம் சமூகத்தில் வரவேற்கத்தக்க மாற்றங்கள் ஏற்பட்டுள்ளனபள்ளிகளில் . மாணவர்களின் தேர்வுத்திறன் அதிகரித்துள்ளதுஆசியாவில் ., இந்திராகாந்தி தேசிய திறந்தநிலை பல்கலைக்கழகம் உட்பட, சைனாவில் 44 வானொலி, தொலைக்காட்சி பல்கலைக்கழங்கள், இந்தோனேசியாவில் டெர்புகா பல்கலைக் கழகம், போன்றவை, அதிக மக்களை அடைவதற்காக இம்முறையை பயன்படுத்தியுள்ளன. இந்த நிறுவனங்கள் ஒளிபரப்போடு புத்தகங்கள், ஒலி நாடாக்களையும் சேர்த்து வழங்குகின்றன.

இம்முறைகள் அனைத்தும் வகுப்பறை ஆசிரியருக்கு மாற்றாக இருக்க முடியாது. மாறாக, பள்ளிக்கல்வி முறையை நன்முறையில் செயல்படுத்த உறுதுணையாக இருக்கும். ஆசிரியர்கள் ஒலிபரப்பு பொருட்களை தங்கள் பாடத்திட்டத்தில் முழுமையாக பயன்படுத்திக் கொள்ள வேண்டும். வளர்ந்துவரும் நாடுகளில் பள்ளிக்கல்வி ஒலிபரப்பு, மத்திய கல்வி மற்றும் தகவல் ஒலிபரப்பு அமைச்சகங்களால் சேர்ந்து செய்யப்படும் ஒரு பணியாக இருக்கிறது. பொதுவான கல்வி நிகழ்ச்சிகளில் நிகழ .செய்திகள் -⟨⟩வுகள், வினா விடை, உரைச்சித்திரம், கல்வி சம்பந்தப்பட்ட படக் காட்சிகள் இடம்பெறுகின்றன. இவை முறைசாராக்கல்வி வாய்ப்புகளை நேயர்களுக்கு வழங்குகின்றன.

கற்பித்தல் பணியை கற்பவர்கள் மையமாக மாற்றுவதில் தகவல் தொடர்பு நுட்பத்தின் பங்கு என்ன?

21ம் நூற்றாண்டில் கல்வித்துறை மாற்றத்தில், தகவல் தொடர்பு திட்டம் பேருதவி புரிந்துள்ளதாக ஆய்வு முடிவுகள் தெரிவிக்கின்றனஇத்திட்டம் . முறையாக செயல்படுத்தப்படுமேயானால், வாழ்நாள் முழுக்க பயன்படும் கல்வி அறிவு மற்றும் திறமையை மாணவர்கள் எளிதாக பெற இயலும். தகவல் தொடர்பு நுட்பம், குறிப்பாக, கணினி மற்றும் இணையதளம் முறையாகப் பயன்படுத்தப்பட்டால், மாணவர்கள் மற்றும் ஆசிரியர்கள் இருவரும் பயன்பெரும் வாய்ப்பு உள்ளது.

இந்தப் புதிய முறை பாடம் கற்பித்தலில், ஆசிரியர்கள் மாணவர்களை மையப்படுத்தி கற்பிக்க வழிவகுக்கிறது.

1. **ஆர்வத்துடன் பயிலுதல்:** தகவல் தொடர்பு தொழில் நுட்ப பயன்பாட்டின் மூலம், பல புதிய முறைகளில் தகவலை பயன்படுத்த மாணவர்களுக்கு வாய்ப்பு ஏற்படுகிறது. மணப்பாடம் செய்து படிப்பதைக் காட்டிலும், வாழ்க்கையில் சந்திக்கும் பிரச்சனைகளை எதிர்கொள்ளுதல், கற்றலை எளிமையாக்குதல், கற்போரின் வாழ்க்கை சூழ்நிலைக்கு ஏற்ப கல்வி அமைதல் ஆகியவை சாத்தியமாகும்.

2. **கூட்டாக பயிலுதல் :** தகவல் தொடர்பு தொழில் நுட்பத்தை பயன்படுத்தி பயிலுதல் முறையானது, மாணவர்கள், ஆசிரியர்கள், வல்லுநர்களிடையே அவர்களுடைய இடம், தகுதியை கணிக்காமல் கலந்துரையாட ஊக்குவிக்கின்றது. பலவிதமான கலாச்சார பிரிவினரிடையே பழகுவதற்கு ஒரு வாய்ப்பை ஏற்படுத்தி கொடுக்கிறது. இதன் மூலம் கற்போருடையே ஒருமித்த கருத்தும், தகவல் பரிமாரிக் கொள்ளும் திறனும் அதிகமாக உதவி செய்கிறோம். மேலும் கல்வி பயிலுதல் ஒரு காலகட்டத்திற்கு மட்டும் என்றில்லாமல், வாழும் காலம் முழுக்க தொடர்பணியாக மேற்கொள்ளப்படுகிறது.

3. **தகவல் தொடர்பு தொழில் நுட்பம்** பயிலுதலை உண்மையிலேயே அதிகப்படுத்தி உள்ளதா? தகவல் தொடர்பு நுட்பத்தினால் கல்வியில் தாக்கம் ஏற்படுவது, அது எப்படி பயன்படுத்தப்படுகிறது, எதற்காக பயன்படுத்தப்படுகிறது, என்பதைப் பொறுத்து அமையும். மற்ற கல்வி கற்கும்சாதனங்கள், கருவிகள், மாதிரிகளைப் போல, தகவல் தொடர்பு நுட்பம் எல்லாருக்கும், எல்லா இடங்களிலும் ஒரே மாதிரி செயல்படுவதில்லை.

4. **கல்வி பயிலுதலை சாத்தியமாக்குதல்:** தகவல் தொடர்பு நுட்பம், அடிப்படை கல்வி பயிலுதலை எவ்வளவு அதிகப்படுத்தியுள்ளது என்பதை கணித்தல் கடினமாகும். ஏனென்றால் இதற்காக நடத்தப்பட்ட ஆய்வுப்பணி சிறிய அளவிலானது. முழுமையாகவும் அது பற்றி கருத்து தொடக்கப்படவில்லை தெரிவிக்கப்படவில்லை. பள்ளி அளவில் தகவல் தொடர்பு நுட்பம் கடைபிடிக்கப்பட்ட மாதிரிகளும் இல்லை. உயர் கல்வி மற்றும் பெரியோர் கல்வியில், பல்கலைக்கழகங்களுக்கு செல்ல முடியாதவர்களுக்கு தகவல் தொடர்பு நுட்பங்கள் மூலம் கல்வி பயில வாய்ப்பு கிடைத்தது ஓரளவிற்கு உறுதி செய்யப்பட்டுள்ளது. இந்தியாவின் இந்திரா காந்தி திறந்தநிலைப் பல்கலைக்கழகம் போன்ற பல்கலைக்கழங்களில் மாணவர்கள் பதிவு செய்வதை ஒப்பிட்டுப் பார்க்கும் போது இது விளங்கும்.

5. **தரம் உயர்த்துதல்:** வானொலி, தொலைக்காட்சி மூலம் கல்வி ஒளிபரப்பின் தாக்கம் குறித்த முழுமையான ஆய்வு நடத்தப்படவில்லை என்றாலும், சிறிதளவு மேற்கொள்ளப்பட்ட ஆய்வு முடிவுகளின் படி, சாதாரண பள்ளிக்கூடகல்வி முறையோடு இம்முறை ஒத்திருப்பதாக தெரிய வருகிறது. இம்முறையால் மாணாக்கர்களின் மதிப்பெண்களும், அவர்கள் பள்ளிக்கு வருகின்ற நாட்களும் உயர்ந்திருப்பதாக தெரிகிறது.

மாறாக, கணிணிப் பயன்பாடு, இணையதள மற்றும் அது தொடர்பான நுட்பங்களின் பயன்பாட்டால், பயிலுதலில் முன்னேற்றம் ஏற்பட்டுள்ளது என்று கருதப்படுகிறது. ஆனால், இது பற்றி கருத்து பேதங்களும் நிலவுகிறது.

முடிவுரை

கணிணியின் பயன்பாட்டால், இருக்கக்கூடிய பாடத்திட்டத்தின் பயன்பாட்டளவு உயர்ந்துள்ளதாக பல ஆய்வுகள் கூறுகின்றன. குறிப்பாக, கணிணி, ஒரு ஆசிரியராக இருந்து, எப்போதும் பயன்படுவதால், பாடங்களில் மாணவர்கள் அதிக மதிப்பெண் பெற உதவி புரிந்துள்ளதாக ஆய்வுகள் தெரிவித்துள்ளன. மாணவர்களும் விரைவாக கல்வி பயிலுகின்றனர். மாணவர்கள் கற்கும் திறன் அதிகமாகின்றது. கணிணியை பயன்படுத்தும்போது, அதிகமாக படிக்கத் தூண்டுதல் ஏற்படுகின்றது. இவ்வளவு முடிவுகள்

தெரிவிக்கப்பட்டாலும் இதிலும் சில குறைகள் இருப்பதாகக் கூறப்படுகிறதுகணிணி பயன்பாடு ., இணையதளம், அது சார்ந்த நுட்பங்கள், ஆசிரியர் பயிற்சியும், படிப்பதற்கு உகந்த சூழலை உருவாக்கவும், உதவி செய்கிறதாம். இந்த ஆய்வுகள் அனைத்தும், விமர்சனத்திற்கு உட்பட்டவைஇதில் . குறைகள் இருப்பதாகவும் கூறப்படுகிறதுசர .ரியான புள்ளி விபரங்கள் இல்லாததே குறையாகும் . மாணவர்கள் ஆசிரியர்களுக்கிடையே கருத்துப் பரிமாற்றம், கல்வி கற்றலில் நல்லதொரு மாற்றத்தைக் கொண்டு வரும் என கூறுப்படுகிறது. கணிணி மற்றும் இணைய தளங்களின் பயன்பாட்டை கணிப்பதில் உள்ள ஒரு பிரச்சனை, கற்போரை மையமாக வைக்கும் கல்வி சூழலை பரிசோதிக்க, தற்போது நடைமுறையில் இருக்கும் அளவீடுகளால் முடியாதுஅத்துடன் கற்கும் முறையோடு ., தொழில்நுட்ப பயன்பாடும், ஒருங்கிணைந்து வருவதால், எந்த நுட்பம் சரியானது என்பதை கண்டுபிடிப்பதும் கடினம் . கற்றலில்ஏற்படும் மாற்றத்திற்கு, நுட்பங்கள்தான் காரணம் என்பதையும் முடிவு செய்ய இயலாது.

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ABOUT TNOU

Tamil Nadu Open University (TNOU) is the 10th Open University in the country, which was established in 2002. This university aims at benefitting the sections of people who have been deprived of and/or denied access to higher education. The community of the deprived includes the destitute, the physically challenged, the working men and women, the economically weaker and marginalised people, and the drop-outs owing to various reasons. In nutshell, it aims at reaching the hitherto unreached. Within a decade, since its existence, the TNOU has remarkably catered to the learning needs of more than 5 lakh students with over 100 programmes, through 13 schools and 7 divisions. It has a well-knitted network of student support services with 4 Zonal Centers & Constituent Community Colleges, 152 Learning Resource Centres (LRC), 165 Computer Programme Centres, 195 Community Colleges, 10 General B.Ed. Programme Study Centres (PSC), 13 Special B.Ed. Programme Study Centres, 9 Special Centres in Prisons, 33 Off-campus Centres, 3 Counselling and Psychotherapy Centres. In addition, the University has entered into a MoU with various Virtual Study Centres (VSCs).

TNOU's instructional system comprises quality print materials in Self-learning format, digital content through stand-alone CDs, face-to-face contact sessions, continuous assessment and term-end examinations. Most of the operations of the University have been brought under e-Governance for the efficiency, accuracy and transparency. The university is poised to embark on technology enhanced learning environment. This is the first university in the state to have produced self-learning materials (SLMs) and implemented Credit System, based on expected learner-input/workload. Some of its SLMs have been adopted on royalty basis by various other Universities including Dr.B.R.Ambedkar Open University, Hyderabad.

Proceedings of
XX IDEA ANNUAL CONFERENCE on
Empowering India through Open and Distance Learning:
Breaking down Barriers, Building Partnership and
Delivering Opportunities

ISBN: 978-93-81830-89-5

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