Chapter: 5

Findings, Conclusion, Suggestion and Limitation

Findings

This chapter includes analysis of data and finding of the study on distance education. The interpretations have been divided into two parts viz Part 1, which deal with interpretation of data analyzed and collected from various distance education universities and Part 2, which deal with interpretation of the data analyzed and collected from student who are/were part of distance education. The chapter further deals with conclusion drawn, limitation of study and suggestions for further researcher, practitioners, government, and regulatory bodies.

This section relates to the interpretation of the data of the study related to the distance education. The discussion and interpretations have been made taking consideration the major finding about 83 distance universities selected from different part of the country. As discussed in chapter 3.

1. Role of Distance education in Indian Education System:

India holds an important place in the global education industry. The country has more than 1.4 million schools with over 227 million students enrolled and more than 36,000 higher education institutes. India has one of the largest higher education systems in the world. However, there is still a lot of potential for further development in the education system. India has become the second largest market for e-learning after the US.

   (i) One National Open University, 13 State Open, there are 98 Dual mode Universities, which offer education through distance mode also. Out of 112 Dual mode Universities, 18 are in Tamil Nadu. Among major States, in Jharkhand, neither there is any Open University nor any Dual Mode University.

   (ii) An additional factor behind the current predicament is the ballooning of the number of universities since the 1962s. Extensive changes were made to the
from one open university in 1992 it was reached to 256 open universities in 2009 but after five year now in 2014-15 this figure declined to 114 open universities in India., it is no wonder that an increasing number of universities are now struggling under enrollment. The rate of enrollment in higher education, meanwhile, has consistently risen over recent years in the 2009 total participation in higher education was approximately 30 per cent but in 2014-15 it was only 10.47%.

(iii) In 2009-10, around 20.88 million people were enrolled in distance education in India, followed by approximate 24.65 million in 2010-11, approximate 26.76 million in 2011-12, with a huge increased of approximate 50% with 34.21 million in 2012-13 and 28.49 million in 2013-14.

(iv) There are more than 70% universities running in Private sector; aided and unaided taking together, but it caters approximate 60% of the total enrollment in 2009-10 and 2010-11 and decreased to approximate 55% in 2011-12, approximate 53% and in academic year 2013-14 it was only approximate 46%. It shows lower per universities enrollment in aided and unaided Universities.

(v) Linear Trend shown that total enrolment in distance education has increased initially, while enrolment among female was not up to mark and increased slightly. The enrolment among males students has increased tremendously at steady rate from 2009-10 to 2011-12 and in 2013-14 it was higher but it has declined at faster rate in year 2013-14 due to some factors. Over all analysis represented that value of $R^2$ for Female and total enrolment is good but while for male it was not a good fit.

(vi) The education sector in India is poised to witness major growth in the years to come as India will have world’s largest tertiary-age population and second largest graduate talent pipeline globally by the end of 2020.

(vii) In FY 2015-16, the education market was worth about US$ 100 billion and is expected to reach US$ 116.4 billion in FY 2016-17.
Enrollment in Open and Distance Learning (ODL) is decreasing in last five year from 29.0 per cent in 2009-10 to 11.5 per cent in 2014-15. This, especially, applies to universities that look to offer distance learning programs. While major changes are happening in the open and distance learning market in India. It is essential that policies are proactively formulated along with codes of practices, so that a conducive environment is created for distance learning and there is more credibility in the programs offered.

With a modest genesis in 1962, the open and distance learning (ODL) system has grown exponentially into a dynamic and vibrant mode of teaching and learning that boasts of one national open university, 13 state open universities and more than 200 distance education centers functioning under conventional universities and private/autonomous institutions.

In year 2012-13, 34.21 lakh students enrolled in distance courses, which is the highest enrolment in last five year. In this year percentage of male was 61.15% and female was only 32.81%. But in 2013-14 enrolment decreased by 16.70 per cent it was a great decline in last five year in this year has only 28.49 lakh students enrolled in total and out of them 50.57% was male and 40.57 per cent women students.

Taking a look at the Male-Female ratio at each level, the trend is of higher males than females in almost every level but in over all analysis has a skewed distribution with small increased in females enrolment in last five year from 2009-10 to 2013-14. This trend of relatively higher male enrolment than female enrolment of students is also seen across the levels in the state-wise distribution.

The top 6 States are highlighted in terms of highest total student enrolment were Delhi, Andhra Pradesh and Telangana combined, Tamil Nadu, and Maharashtra. It is interesting to note that these 6 States with highest student enrolment constitute nearly 54.7 % of the total student enrolment in India. Rests of the 30 States (including UTs) have only 45.3 % of the total student enrolment. So inevitably, the female students in these 6 States is almost 55.1%
of the total female students enrolled and male students enrolled in these 6 States contributes to 54.4% of the total male students across India.

2. Women Participation in Distance Education:

India has a population of about 1.34 billion people of which 65.2 cr. (48%) are women (According to the United Nations in July 2016). The country’s literacy rate is about 74.04 per cent. There is a wide gender disparity in the literacy rate in India in 2011 were 82.14% for men and 65.46% for women (age 7 and above). Its indicated that census provided a positive indication that growth in female literacy rates 11.8% was substantially faster than in male literacy rates 6.9% in the 2001–2011, which shown the gender gap appears to be narrowing. Issues affecting women include poverty, health, domestic violence, divorce and marriage break up, cross border trading and economic hardships being evident in both rural and urban. Within the context of rapid technological change and deteriorating economic conditions, the Indian education system is challenged with providing increased educational opportunities without increased budgets. The enrollment of women students shows an upward trend.

(i) There is a gradual increase from 2009-10 onwards. The number of women students enrolled in 2009-10 was 81.54 thousand but in 2013-14 it was 1156239. Now in India Women participation wide increasingly to opt distance education.

(ii) The secondary source of data reveals that 40 to 50 percent of the students of the majority of the open and distance education institutions are women. In India, the percentage of women in distance education in 2011-12 was 41.20,2012-13 32.18 per cent in this year percentage of women enrolment decreased as compared to 2012-13 but number of enrolment increases. Again in 2013-14 this figure reached to 40.57 per cent with an enrolment of 11.56 Lakh. The gradual decrease of males participating in higher education, has led to a massive over-representation of women to the general population ratio, which is bound to have significant effects on society over the coming generation. Now women are much more likely to attend a university than men.
3. Scope of Distance Education:

(i) Now students can pursue two Degree courses at Same Time

The University Grants Commission has finally given the go-ahead to students to pursue two degree programmes simultaneously. Giving in to long-standing demands from universities and students, the apex higher education regulator, at a meeting on July 31, 2013, decided to accept its expert panel’s recommendations on permitting pursuit of an additional degree programme. This will allow students enrolled in a regular full-time degree programme to pursue one more additional degree programme simultaneously on open/distance learning mode from the same university or another institution. A student pursuing a regular degree will also be allowed to pursue an additional certificate/diploma/advanced diploma/PG diploma programme simultaneously either in regular or open/distance mode from the same university or another institution. In past, no student in India can legally pursue more than one degree simultaneously either from the same institution or from any other institution. The restriction is applicable irrespective of the mode of pursuing degree open/distance learning/part-time/private or full time. To ensure compliance, students are required to submit in the original the migration certificate issued by the previous institute. While there has been a lot of interest to pursue two or more degree programmes simultaneously to help students improve their knowledge, skill and employability, the present UGC guidelines are silent about the pursuit of a certificate/diploma course alongside a degree programme. This decision opens a door to attract more students in distance programmes who want to opt more degree with skill.

Findings on Primary Data

Students Opinion towards Distance Education (based on demographic variables):

(i) This study is based on different demographic factor like age, sex, qualification and employment status. It was statistically establish that there exist a difference of opinion of respondent in different gender and employment group regarding reason to chosen distance education programme. Most of the
male (about 46.6 per cent) selected distance education programme because of worked schedule but female respondent were have mixed response because of work schedule (33.3 per cent) and on campus classes was full (30.1 per cent). Apart from this different employment status employed and businessman (41.8%) selected distance education because of work schedule (53.9 per cent), unemployed (31.2 percent) selected distance education because of on campus classes was full.

(ii) Significant difference was observed in opinion of respondent groups with different gender group for the main reason behind choosing a specific course in distance mode. This means that male and female respondent may not have similar reasons to chosen a specific course in distance mode. Male respondent were selected specific course in distance mode to improve the rank to get promotion (28.8 per cent) and prepare for a change in career (39.8 percent) but female respondent opt specific course because of a change in career (37.2 per cent) and an interest in that subject (31.4%).

(iii) I observed that there were Significant difference was observed in opinion of respondent with different gender, educational and employment status opinion about mode selected for distance education. Most of the respondent didn’t have similar response in different groups. Most of the male respondents were in favored of selecting correspondence education as a mode but mix response sown by female respondent they were selected correspondence as well as MOOC as a mode of education. In different educational group 33.2% of Undergraduate students, 22.8% Post graduate selected correspondence mode but 51.9% of Ph.D/M.Phil students selected Mooc as mode of education. Also in different employment group respondent 40.0% of employed and 45.5% of businessmen were in favour of correspondence mode but 33.9% of employed (on study leave) and unemployed opted MOOCs as a mode of education.

(iv) Significant difference was observed in opinion of respondents in comparison of regular mode to distance mode, respondent did not have similar opinion regarding ease in distance education. Most of the respondent were of 16-20
age group feel that (36.0%) both regular and distance have same level of
difficulty, about 50% of respondent of 26-30 age and 55.6% of 36 & above
age group think that distance education is easier than regular mode. In gender
wise opinion both Male and female have no difference in opinion the think
that both programme had same level of difficulty. But different qualification
status group and employment status group shown difference in opinion 37.1%
of undergraduate think both programme had same level of difficulty but others
feel that distance programme is easier. 33.3% of employed people think that
distance education is difficult then regular mode but the other group in
employed think that both have same level of difficulties.,

(v) It was statistically established that in the opinion of respondent to attended
college or university before joining distance education programme no
difference shown in different age, gender and qualification group about 70%
of them was a part of regular college or university before joined distance
mode. Most of them attended college in full time only few were a part of part-
time programme. Presently in India about 88% of student enrolled in regular
mode enrollment in distance mode is only approximately 12 per cent only.
Most of student selected distance education as a mode of education having
some specified objective.

(vi) It was found that there was no difference in opinion of respondent about
distance learning programme offer convenient alternatives to those who
cannot a part of regular and formal education. Respondent who were from
different age, gender, qualification, and employment groups have similar
opinion they are agreed with the statement. Distance education is an
alternative to those who live in a geographically challenged area. There are
many people in India who live in areas from where the university or college is
quite far so distance education is good option for them.

(vii) It was statistically established that opinion about distance education gives
more flexibility to learner there is no significant difference in opinion of
respondent as for as demographic variable age, sex, education and
employment status. One half of respondent agreed that distance education
gives more flexibility to learner. There are various reasons behind it. First, admission is flexible. We do not discriminate on the basis of the marks scored by a student in his last examination. Secondly, open universities do not restrict a student from taking admission on the basis of his/her age. Third, Students can choose timing; they can continue his job and study at the same time. It provides flexibility with regard to the number of years in which you can complete the course that you have opted for. For example, in IGNOU you are free to complete a three-year course in 5 to 6 years. Fourth, it is economically viable though the standard of education provided by open universities is as good as that provided by conventional universities.

(viii) In the finding of the study, it was revealed that slightly more than sixty percent of respondents agreed that distance learning courses become more popular in rural areas than in urban areas. There is no difference in opinion of respondents as far as demographic variables age, sex, education and employment status. There are various reasons behind it.

(a) The higher educational institute of rural areas are lacking behind in different aspects as compared to the institutes of urban areas which leads to lower grading by NAAC. The percentage of colleges with libraries, computer centers, health centers, sport facilities, hostels, guest houses, teacher’s housing, canteens, common rooms, welfare schemes, gymnasiums, auditoriums, and seminar rooms are much higher in case of high quality colleges as compared with the low quality ones. Similarly, high quality colleges are better placed with regard to academic indicators, which include higher student-teacher ratios, number of permanent teachers or teachers with PhD degrees, books per student, books and journals per college, and students per computers etc. Thus, if low quality colleges are to be brought at parity with high quality ones; a substantial improvement in the physical and academic infrastructure is necessary in the higher educational institutions located in remote areas.

(b) The colleges located in rural areas have their own specific patterns of student's attendance in the classroom. Specially in rural areas more than 50 to 60% of the students use to remain absent in the classroom during the sowing season in the
fields as they are from the farmers families and the land-less labors families; and again in the season of harvesting the classrooms use to be vacant.

(c) Technical education sometimes only a dream for most of the students of rural areas where the people are mostly dependent on agriculture. Even sometimes it is seen that normal higher education expenses cannot be afforded by some of the families coming under lower middle class tag. Distance education opens a door for rural student to opt a degree and skill according to his/her desire and need. Apart from that rural people have lack of money so there for distance education is beneficial for them.

(ix) There were no differences of opinion about distance education courses are good option for young people who want to add on their skill. If you are a young, working professional and want to add value to your resume. You want to pursue any professional course. But making adequate time for a full-time programme is impossible due to the demands of your job or any other reason. Distance learning courses may add to your knowledge based and additional to your curriculum vitae.

(x) It was statistically established that there is no difference in opinion of respondent as far as demographic variable age, sex, education and employment status. A similar response shown by respondent in method used for evaluating student performance in distance mode most of respondent told that formative and summative method used for evaluation. Formative assessment the goal of formative assessment is to monitor student learning to provide ongoing feedback that can be used by instructors to improve their teaching and by students to improve their learning. More specifically, formative assessments:

(a) help students identify their strengths and weaknesses and target areas that they need work
(b) help faculty recognize where students are struggling and address problems immediately formative assessments are generally low stakes, which means that they have low or no point value. The goal of summative assessment is to evaluate
student learning at the end of an instructional unit by comparing it against some standard or benchmark. Summative assessments are often high stakes, which means that they have a high point value. Examples of summative assessments include:

- Midterm examination
- A project, etc.

Information from summative assessments can be used formatively when students or faculty use it to guide their efforts and activities in subsequent courses.

(xi) There is difference in opinion of respondent based on different employment status about text, study and material prescribed for the distance education programme. About fifty per cent of employed and 32.3 percent of retired respondent think that study material were very helpful but 34.8 per cent employed (on study leave)and 34 percent of unemployed founded only helpful but 38.3 percent of business man feel neutral. Apart from that other demographic factor including sex, gender and qualification status respondent were no difference in opinion mostly feel that study material provided by institution were very useful in studies.

(xii) It was statistically established that there exists no variation in opinion of respondent about assignments such as homework, essays and projects were appropriate to the objective of the course about sixty per cent of students agreed with statement. Developing course materials for Open and distance learning is a continuous process. A variety of staffs with a wide range of expertise are involved in producing a distance education course. That means a team of academics involved in distance education will be responsible to develop each program. Developing and designing instructional design and course materials for distance learning involves more research, commitment, planning and evaluation. IGNOU and other universities should give more emphasis on learning approach regarding its course materials development process.

(xiii) Significant difference was observed in opinion of respondent groups with different educational and employment status. This means that not everyone
may have similar opinion regarding the time frame allotted to complete distance learning programme 45.2 per cent of undergraduate and 45.8 percent of others qualification founded time frame reasonable. , apart from that 52.1 per cent of post graduate and 55.6% Ph.D/M.Phil students founded too long. In Employment status 59.4 per cent of employed feel that time frame is reasonable to complete the course but employed (on study leave), unemployed business man and retired found it too long.

Now National Centre for Innovations in Distance Education (NCIDE) has developed an innovative scheme of On-Demand Examination. The scheme is fully operational for more than 135 courses through 18 Regional Centres. Several students are appearing in On-Demand Examination as per their need and convenience. The software for generating individualized question papers and for on-line registration for On-Demand exam have been developed in-house in NCIDE with the help the Students Evaluation Division, Regional Services Division and the Regional Centres of IGNOU, the scheme of On-Demand Examination is now fully operational. The unique features of scheme include online submission of registration fee, issue of online hall ticket, online attendance record etc. The software can generate a large number of unique and parallel question papers exactly in accordance with the design and blueprint provided by the faculty. Presently the facility of On Demand Examination is available in 135 courses of different programmes through 15 Regional Centres of IGNOU including Aizwal, Bhubneswer, Cochin, Chennai, Dehradun, Delhi-1, Delhi-2, Hyderabad, Jabalpur, Jammu, Jaipur, Karnal, Koraput, Madurai, Nagpur, Noida, Ranchi, and Srinagar. This innovative and flexible scheme of On-Demand Exam is independent of the traditional fixed time frame and has the following features:

a) No need to wait for the six-monthly term end examination,
b) Choice of deciding the date of exam lies with students,
(xiv) It was statistically found that there was no significant differences in opinion of respondent as for as demographic variable age, sex and educational status, respondent agreed that the learning objective of distance education programme were met through the study material and other supplements. But opinion of respondent of occupational status were observed a significant differences approximately fifty per cent of employed, employed (on study leave),58.2 per cent of unemployed agreed with the statement but 43.6 per cent of business man and 66.7 percent of retired strongly disagree with the statement.

(xv) It was statistically established that there is significant difference in opinion of respondents regarding workload in distance courses. Most of the respondent feel that workload in distance education was appropriate challenging because most of the students evolved in doing job or earning for livelihood. So they didn’t have time for studied. Depending on the format, distance education can often create an overwhelming workload for students. Regarding the online teaching, the workload increases with the increase of the number of students. According to Dibiase et al (2005) an increase from 18 students in a class to 49 students increased course-related workloads from 47.5 hours to 116.7 hours total.

(xvi) We analyzed that based on the opinion of respondent regarding motivational status after about studied in distance education programme there is significant difference in opinion of students based on different demographic factor including age, gender and educational status group 42 per cent of students within age group 16-20 and 47.7 per cent of 21-25 age group feel moderated motivate,46.2 per cent of students of age group 31-35 felt not motivated at all and 44.4 per cent of 36 and above age group felt highly motivated. Based on educational status undergraduate (44.9%), postgraduate (30.8%),Ph.D/M.Phil(48.1) per cent of respondent felt moderately motivated and 39.9 per cent of others felt highly motivated. Apart from this 42.2 per cent of employed felt highly motivated while studying but 46.4 per cent of
employed (on study leave) 50.4 per cent of unemployed felt moderately motivated and 41.7 per cent of retired felt moderately motivated and not motivated at all both.

(xvii) In India there has been always confusion between the authority and validity of a degree awarded under an Open and Distance Learning. Lack of awareness amongst the public at large means there exist false notions. It was statistically found that there were no significant differences in opinion of respondent as for as demographic variable age, sex and educational status, about one half of respondent agreed with the statement. But there is significant differences shown on various employment status 40 percent of business man and 33.3 per cent of retired persons were in dilemma. A letter sent by the University Grant Commission (U.G.C.) under reference # F. No. UGC/DEB /2013 dated 14 October 2013 to the Registrars / Directors of all universities in India clearly mentions that the Government of India has envisaged a great role for the Open and the Distance Education System. The envisioned role may be fulfilled by recognizing and treating the Degrees/Diplomas/Certificates awarded through open/distance education at par with the degrees obtained through the formal system of education though regular mode. Open and Distance education in India is contributing to the expansion of Higher Education and is helping achieve the targeted GER without compromising on quality. Complete lack of recognition, the qualification conferred by ODL Institutions for the purpose of promotion/employment and pursuing higher education may prove a deterrent to many learners and will ultimately defeat the purpose of Open and Distance Education. A circular issued by UGC (letter F-1 No 52/2000 (CPP II) – Dated May 05, 2004) mentions that the Degrees/Diplomas/ Certificates awarded by Open Universities in conformities with UGC notification of degrees be treated as equivalent.

(xviii) Through the examinations students develop the ability to express his thought in a manner that other can understand it. Examinations also reflect that student has acquired a certain amount of knowledge in any field of study.
Examinations teaches also a lot of things like punctuality, writing skills timing sense and expressing their thoughts and opinions. Without Examination it is very hard to find out the real knowledge of individual students as well as student will lose their motivation with their studies. It was found that there is no differences in opinion of the respondent regarding rely on the examination procedure and transparency of the distance education system. About forty per cent of respondent were agreed with the examination procedure but a big per cent (60%) of respondent were disagreed or in dilemma regarding the examination procedure.

(xix) In the study, it was found that there is significant difference in opinion of students based on different demographic factor including gender and educational and occupational status regarding the opportunity to take a distance education programme again,38.1 per cent of males respondent will do again but half of (50%) of female is not in favor to opt distance education again.39.7 per cent of undergraduate 47.9 per cent postgraduate and 55.6 per cent Ph.d/M.Phil respondent will not do it again but 50.8 per cent of respondent will. Apart from this based on occupational level 46.7 per cent of employed would select distance education again, 48.2 per cent employed (on study leave), 46.1 unemployed, 50 per cent of businessman and retired would not select distance education programme again.

(xx) The study revealed that slightly there were difference in opinion of respondent regarding recommended a distance education programme to a friend,56.1 per cent of employed will recommend 43.8 per cent of employed(on study leave),43.3 per cent of unemployed will not recommend and 38.2 per cent of business people as well as 41.7 per cent of retired were in dilemma to recommend it or not to a friend. No differences found in other demographic factor including age,gender and educational status about 44 per cent of respondent in favor to recommended distance education to a friend.
Conclusion:

India has more than 50% of its population below the age of 25 and more than 65% below the age of 35. It is expected that, in 2020, the average age of an Indian will be 29 years, compared to 37 for China and 48 for Japan; and, by 2030, India's dependency ratio should be just over 0.4. India holds an important place in the global education industry. The country has more than 1.4 million schools with over 227 million students enrolled and more than 36,000 higher education institutes 750 universities. India has one of the largest higher education systems in the world. However, there is still a lot of potential for further development in the education system. Development is a process of structural change in the cultural, economical, political, social domains. It starts with people, their education and capabilities because people are the primary and ultimate focus of all development. The broader goal of development is to bring the entire population into the mainstream of the national development process, both as contributors and beneficiaries. Development is the development of an individual, each according to his or her potential and in this sense education is a crucial aspect of development. Large increase in population coupled with a growing awareness of the benefits of education are leading governments to explore the possibility of using alternative means to provide education on a large scale, particularly as conventional educational methods are becoming increasingly expensive. One such alternative that countries in the region are considering is Distance Education. India is the seventh largest and the second most popular country in the world. About three-quarters of the population live in villages and their main occupation is agriculture. India achieved Independence in 1947 and has adopted a parliamentary form of government based on universal adult franchise and a mixed economy. India had made notable advances in various sectors, but still is a developing country. Distance Education in India has a history of nearly three decades. Persistent efforts have been made by both government and voluntary organizations to achieve universal literacy and expand opportunities for female education.
Students Enrollment and Performance

The enrollment of students shows an mix trend. There is a gradual increase from 1988-89 onwards. The number of students from 1989 to 97 was below 100 in number while in 1997-98 it was 104, from 1988 to 2003 the strength of the students were below 300, from 2003 onwards the enrollment of students increased to more than 1,500. This indicates that the diversification in course offered by School of Distance Education is encouraging. The performances of the students are also satisfying where nearly 50% of the students who appeared in Distance Education came out successfully. The other 50% either lacked motivation, or academic and financial support.

Distance Education carry educational messages from the humanities to science courses, from elementary to higher education and training and from technical to health curricula. The following suggestions are made to increase the participation of women in distance education for their empowerment.

Distance Education is an important milestone in the development of higher education and has great potential to equalize opportunities and take higher education to the door steps of women. It is expected that this school of distance education will lead to empowerment of women especially among rural and tribal women. The presence of women in distance education is significant not only in the success of women as functionaries in the field but also in the recognition of women's experience as the basis for an adequate theory of distance education. Theories of distance education generated by men cannot speak for the experience of women. Women are necessarily central figures in developing appropriate theory and practice for a growing female learner population.

- Women constitute about fifty percent of the total population, but they form only nine percent of the total productive work force. The main reason for this poor share is low literacy level among women. When this major chunk is educated, no doubt, they can contribute significantly for the development of the country and can thereby empower themselves.
• Women's Development since 1901 shows the slow growth of female literacy. It was 0.60%, in 1901 and grew slowly to 1.05 in 1911, to 1.81 in 1921, 2.93 in 1931, 7.30 in 1941, 7.93 in 1951, to 12.95 in 1961, 18.69 in 1971, to 24.82 in 1981 39.29 in 1991, to 53.67 in 2001 and 65.46% in 2011.
• 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.
• Women worldwide increasingly opt for distance education. The secondary source of data reveals that 40 to 50 percent of the students of the majority of the open and distance education institutions are women. In India, the percentage of women in distance education is 30 to 40%.
• In fact, there is future only for distance education, not only in India but even in developed Western countries. What I am trying to suggest is that in the present process of the so-called globalization, states are not in a mood to spend much money on higher education. They are directing their energy on privatization and spending less money on higher education. So, universities are getting costlier, therefore compared to establishing a new conventional university you can set-up a distance university at a much cheaper rate. Also, as a result of the development in technology, students are getting education right at home and they don’t mind it. 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.

The following are the impact of Distance Education on learners drawn from responses of the sample.

- Improved their career opportunities
- Attained more degrees for satisfaction
- Updated their skills
- Second chance of learning for disadvantaged or compelled dropout
- More opportunities for networking and communicating
- Vision broadened
- Flexibility in time and space
- Gives more freedom to the learner and extends the campus into the people's home and work places.
- Assists in facing the challenges in life of women
- Increased the literacy rate of the country and State
- Leads to empowerment of women.
SWOT Analysis on Distance Education

Strength:

- High quality of institution like IGNOU etc. to provide distance education
- Government provides fund to developed good infrastructure.
- Technological development in education like E-Classes
- Institution like UGC and DEB
- Flexibility

Weakness:

- Communication gap between institutions and students.
- Lack of transparency in Examination.
- Message on degree of reliability.
- Potential for fraud.
- More time consuming both students and teacher to prepared education support materials

Opportunity

- India has more than 50% of its population below the age of 25 and more than 65% below the age of 35. It is expected that, in 2020, the average age of an Indian will be 29 years.
- Now students can pursue two degree courses at Same Time.
- Most of jobs personal want to add on skill to get promotion that’s why city like Delhi has highest number of enrolment in distance education.
- Increases the number of women participation

Threats:

- Negative perception toward Open and distance course in society.
- Number of enrolment declined day by day.
- Compilation of course by students is stagnant.
Suggestions

Government and Regulatory bodies (UGC, DEB etc.)

Distance Education carry educational messages from the humanities to science courses, from elementary to higher education and training and from technical to health curricula. The following suggestions are made to increase the participation in distance education and empowerment of society.

- Distance and Open education should also provide same importance viz regular medium.
- Government should attempt to remove the confusion associated with distance education.
- The examination system should be further clarified.
- Awareness programme regarding the distance education courses in urban, rural and tribal areas will provide opportunity for all to gain knowledge about existing educational facilities.
- The courses for women in distance education should be job oriented so that it will help them in their economic and social empowerment.
- Study centers with a library should be opened in each village to facilitate students.
- The course materials should be simple, preferably in regional languages to make more comfortable to use.
- The gender component should be incorporated in the syllabus of all discipline.
- The fee should be affordable to weaker sections of the society especially for women.
- Confidence building and personally building programmes are essential to help all to overcome resistance in distance learning.
- Enhance the use of technology in distance/open education.
- The quality of the study materials should be enhanced and availability should be made in time for the learners.
Distance Education is an important milestone in the development of higher education and has great potential to equalize opportunities and take higher education to the door steps. It is expected that this distance education will lead to empowerment of society especially among rural and tribal areas. Education through distance mode has accepted as relevant and necessary for meeting the requirements of the society. One of the main features of the Open Universities is providing access to higher education to all sections of societies, particularly women, who did not have access to it earlier.

**Students:**

When the time comes, it’s important to plan ahead and prepare for your college selection as it will have a large impact on the rest of your life. Here are some suggestions for student, on how to plan ahead and choose the school that will best suite your need.

- Never make your final college selection without visiting at least your top two or three choices. No matter how well you think you know a college or university, you can learn a lot by spending a few hours in campus, including whether or not the college feels like a good “fit” for you. Having family members accompany you on college visits is a great idea because it gives you extra “eyes and ears” and people with whom you can discuss your impressions.

- A college is not necessarily right for you because its name is familiar. That might seem pretty obvious, but you wouldn’t believe how many students equate educational quality with name recognition.

- There are very few worse reasons to select a college than because your friends are going there. Choosing a college because your friend is headed there is one of them. In fact, if there is a worse reason to choose a college.

- When it is time to make your final choice, discuss your options with your family, you, and others who know you well and whose judgment you value. If you have a tough time choosing among two or more colleges or universities it is probably because you have done a good job putting together your list and you will be happy at whichever institution you choose. Once you make your choice, don’t
agonize over it. If you have followed these rules there is an excellent chance your final college choice will be a good one.

- Take the time to search your university/college. Look through forums to find out what current students thinks about their course and ask them questions, and visit. Take the time to research your university online. Look through forums to find out what current students think about their course and ask them questions, and visit sites like (DEB, UGC, MHRD).

**Limitation of Research:**

**Accessibility of Data**

Some of universities refused to provides data without any reason and some of demanding unnecessary charge for floating the information.

**Limitation of Time**

Time availability was one of the biggest limitations faced due to shortage of time, the researchers had to limit the work in its present form such as they would have like to work on it, and the time constraint restricted them from doing so.

**Limitation of Cost**

Money was also one of the major limitations faced while conducting this research. A lots of money spent on IPO’s, Speed Post and information processing charges.

**Limitation On The Part of Respondents**

Some of the respondents were not interested in giving their personal details and some of them were not very cooperative. Our sample size of primary data was only 500 respondents so we have to limit our work in present form as we know area was wide.