ABSTRACT

Educational achievement is the touchstone of civilization, culture and progress of a country. It is important for the socio-economic development of a society. Out of 110 crore Indian population, only 72.38 crore people (65.8%) are literate. In India, youths getting educational opportunity, especially higher educational opportunity is very low and the relevant age-group entering into the universities is only 7 per cent. According to University Grants Commission (UGC) Report 2001-02, there are 300 universities, and 16,000 colleges exist in India. The number of students is 67.5 lakhs and there are 3.21 lakh teachers in the higher education. These numbers are very small for the population of India.

The existing formal and distance educational setup, infrastructure and non-availability of good teachers in sufficient numbers adversely affect the efforts made in education. Use of modern mass media technologies like radio, television and internet can change the educational scenario. The significant impact of mass communication systems on the cognitive development of human beings has influenced modern educationalists to such an extent that they emphasize the use of mass media in education. Most of world countries made efforts of using various mass media systems.

In the same way Indian planners also successfully demonstrated the educational utility of TV through Satellite Instructional Television Experiment (SITE). The pioneering efforts made in India to improve
educational infrastructure through media facilities, such as television, radio
and internet. Now Gyan Vani radio channel, Gyan Darshan television
channel, University Grants Commission’s Countrywide Classroom
programmes, Internet portals are using for educational purpose.

In spite of huge investments on establishment and maintenance of
educational media for students, there is very little knowledge about the usage
of these media. There also exists unequal distribution of facilities for
educational media. So students of distance education and regional language
medium classes have little or no access to these facilities unlike their
counterparts regular streams and English language medium classes. There are
similar variations between the students belonging to the rural and urban
background. These factors are at the backdrop of the research study. The
research study assumes significance as it proposes to assess the extent to
which these aims of Indian policy on educational development have been
achieved.

The research study has adopted the survey method and descriptive
research design. The study has attempted to cover possession, access, usage
and perceived effectiveness of educational media concerning students in the
under graduate level in the state of Tamil Nadu, whose size has been
estimated to be over 7 lakhs (universe). Two per cent of the universe drawn
from different types of colleges was used as the sample. Multi-stage cluster
sampling was adopted. Data was collected during the period January 2005 to
March 2006. Quantitative as well as qualitative methods were adopted to
analyze the data. Chi-square test was used to test whether specified variables
were independent using the contingency table pattern of frequencies attributed to these variables. The simple percentage method was applied to examine the variations in the influence level of different variables. Also Friedman’s two-way ANOVA and cross-tabulation were used for the study.

It was found from the study that many of the students, faculty members and principals were ignorant about some of the educational media opportunities available. The study pointed out that despite widespread usage of media; in general, educational channels are not regularly followed. There has been infrequent usage. The reasons for this are non-receipt of signal, and very little awareness about educational channels among the respondents. The programme formats also was not suitable to them.

Overall ranks make internet the most preferred and useful for educational purpose. Followed by television after which radio is opted for their utility value. All these media helps and fulfills the students’ requirements to some extent. In the study, the respondents suggested measures for making more effective radio programmes. They expected subject lectures, exam oriented lectures and consultations to be broadcast on radio. Regarding TV, a majority of the students wanted expert lectures, interactive and subject-based educational programmes and suggested that prior information and advertisements of the programmes should be provided. A majority of the respondents providing suggestions towards improvement in the internet contents, syllabus-based websites, equipped with latest study materials needed for education.
The main suggestion from students towards the improvement of the media was that the media should be designed in such a way that is more interactive. Awareness among students about educational media should be increased. The time and frequency of listening to the educational programmes on radio should be increased by adopting innovative measures such as interactive radio and a variety of other listener promotion strategies. There is ample scope for using TV as an educational media. Massive efforts should be carried out to familiarize the students with the contents and availability of the Gyan Darshan and UGC CWCR Programmes.

The research study recommends that the educational institutions should facilitate the viewership of the educational programmes on TV by allotting time and facilities. The study has found that there is scope for furthering the usage of internet among students, for which educational institutions should encourage students to make use of web sites for their course work. Educational institutions should make internet facilities in their campus easily available. The study recommends active consideration of efforts to foster latest and emerging technologies. Governments’ resources need to be directed towards embedding information and communication technologies into teaching and learning practices and foster greater convergence of content, communication and computing. Educational content should be integrated into the various media and should be delivered to the students effectively.