CHAPTER 1

DISTANCE EDUCATION —
THE CONCEPT AND GROWTH

'Education has always been important but perhaps never more so in man's history than today. In a science-based world, education and research are crucial to the entire developmental process of a country, its welfare, progress and security. It is characteristic of a world permeated by Science that in some essential ways the future shape of things is unpredictable. This emphasizes all the more the need for an educational policy which contains a built-in flexibility so that it can adjust to changing circumstances. It underscores the importance of experimentation and innovation. If I may say, the single most important thing needed now is to get out of the rigidity of the present system. In the rapidly changing world of today, one thing is certain: yesterday's educational system will not meet today's, and even less, so the need of tomorrow' (D.S. Kothari's letter to M.C. Chagla, Minister for Education, while submitting the Report of the Education Commission — 1964-66.)

1.1 DISTANCE EDUCATION: THE CONCEPT

Over the last two decades, development in distance education have spawned numerous attempts to define distance education.

For example, Moore (1975) names it as 'telemathic teaching', Delling (1976) as 'distance study', Sims (1977) as 'Correspondence education', Holmberg (1977) as 'distance education' and so on. Definitions of distance education usually emphasize that it is distinct from conventional education.

The term distance education has been borrowed from the European terms Fernunterricht, Tele-ensignement and Educación a distancia to describe all the teaching-learning arrangements in
which the learner and teacher are normally separated by space and/or by time.

Keegan suggests that the main elements in any definition of distance education are:

- The separation of teacher and learner which distinguishes it from face to face learning.
- The influence of an educational organisation which distinguishes it from private study.
- The use of technical media, usually print, to unite teacher and learner and carry the educational content of the course.
- The provision of two way communication so that the students may benefit from or even initiate dialogue, which distinguishes it from other uses of educational technology.
- The teaching of students as individuals and rarely in groups, with the possibility of occasional meetings for both didactic and socialisation purposes.
- The participation in a more industrialised form of education (Based on the view that distance teaching is characterised by division of labour, mechanisation, automation; application of organisational principles; scientific control; objectivity of teaching behaviour; mass production; concentration and centralisation).

Thus, the basic characteristic of this form of education is the separation of teacher and learner which distinguishes it from conventional, oral, group-based education. In this sense distance education is non-contiguous education according to Greville Rumble. This sense of non-contiguity is apparent in Moore's definition of distance teaching as: 'The family of instructional methods in which the teaching behaviours are executed apart from the learning behaviour, including those that in a contiguous situation would be performed in the learner's presence, so that communication between the teacher and the
learner must be facilitated by print, electronic, mechanical or other devices' (Moore-1973).

In conventional system the content of the course, especially that part that is not contained in recommended textbooks, is communicated by the teacher mainly by word of mouth - though it is clear that from primary school through to university the amount of self-study in project work and from textbooks may gradually increase. Distance education shatters this interpersonal communication and replaces it with some form of mechanical or electronic communication: print, telephone, teleconference, audio, video, broadcasting, computer. All of the communication has to take place by the use of one or a number of technological media.

Many years ago Delling* (1966) called this element in a distance system the 'Signal-carrier' and because of the diversity of procedures involved, careful formulation is needed of the role of the technological media in a definition of distance education. The presence of the learning group is as fundamental a characteristic of conventional education as the time-tableing of classes so that the teacher and student can be present in the same place and at the same time. Distance education is different in that it does not compel the student to join the learning group in order to study. Most distance systems treat the student basically as an individual; group working may be compulsory, optional, or may never occur, depending on the structure of the distance system in which one enrolls.

The advantage and disadvantage of the absence of the learning group in distance education is a practically untouched area for future research, though Sewart (1980)* and Cropley and Kahl (1983)* have alluded to this feature. Together with the separation of the learner from the teacher, the separation of the learner from the learning group throughout the length of the
learning process is a characteristic feature of this form of education which distinguishes it from conventional, oral, group-based education.

Another important characteristic of distance education is (according to Peters (1973)) its industrialisation of the teaching process. 'Distance teaching/education (Fernunterricht) is a method of imparting knowledge, skills and attitudes which is rationalised by the application of division of labour and organisational principles as well as by the extensive use of technical media, especially for the purpose of reproducing high quality teaching material which makes it possible to instruct great numbers of students at the same time wherever they live. It is an industrialised form of teaching and learning' (Peters, 1973).

Reaction has been mixed. Some commentators, especially those writing from a management or administrative perspective (Rumble 1986) consider that Peters has provided a valuable insight. Others (Baath 1981) have hesitated at the harshness of Peter's terminology and doubted whether his concept of industrialization can be applied to all distance systems, especially small correspondence schools.

As a result of these considerations, the definition had by 1983 evolved to the following formulation:

Distance education is that field of educational endeavour in which the learner is quasi-permanently separated from the teacher throughout the length of the learning process; a technological medium replaces the interpersonal communication of conventional, oral, group-based education; the teaching/learning process is institutionalised (thus distinguishing it from Teach-yourself programmes); two-way communication is possible for both student and teacher (thus distinguishing it from other forms of
educational technology). It represents an industrialisation of the educational process. (Keegan 1983).

Lastly, it may be pointed out that Distance Education is an institutionalised form of education offered through public or private providers. It shares with private study the individualised and private nature of study outside the structures of the learning group and at the same time it has much of the administrative characteristics of institutionalised education on-campus.

One cannot overlook the early definitions of distance education, specially those of Wedemeyer and Moore, that tended to emphasize the independence, autonomy and freedom of the distance learner. To quote Wedemeyer, "a distance system takes the student from the learning group and places him/her in a more private situation. It may be said that learning is often private when it is not institutionalised".

However, Holmberg's definition of distance education as follows: The term 'distance education' covers the various forms of study at all levels which are not under the continuous, immediate supervision of tutors present with their students in lecture rooms or on the same premises, but which, nevertheless, benefit from the planning, guidance and tuition of a tutorial organisation. (Holmberg 1977).

This clearly shows that the structuring of learning materials and the linking of these learning materials to effective learning by students through an educational organization differentiates distance education from private study, learning from interesting books or cultural television programmes.
Thus, according to Smith (1987), distance education is characterised by the privatisation of institutional learning.

In the light of the above discussion, it may be proposed that Keegan's latest definition of distance education (1986) has synthesized all the various views held with regard to the definition of the term distance education.

Distance education is a form of education characterised by:

* the quasi-permanent separation of teacher and learner throughout the length of the learning process; this distinguishes it from conventional face-to-face education.
* the influence of an educational organisation both in the planning and preparation of learning materials and in the provision of students support services; this distinguishes it from private study and teach-yourself programmes.
* the use of technical media; print, audio, video and computer, to unite teacher and learner can carry the content of the course.
* the provision of two-way communication so that the student may benefit from or even initiate dialogue; this distinguishes it from other uses of technology in education.
* the quasi-permanent absence of the learning group throughout the length of the learning process so that people are usually taught as individuals and not in groups, with the possibility of occasional meetings for both didactic and socialisation purposes' (Keegan, 1986).

1.2 DEFINITION OF TERMS

1.2.1 Distance Education

Historically, the primary means of communication between
learners and teachers separated by space and time has been through the printed word, and this is still the preferred medium of literally all distance education institutions/universities of the world.

Thus the first type of distance education to be introduced was correspondence education. This was an innovation, not so much in technology as in the organisation of teaching and learning. Otto Peters has pointed out that this is the first industrialised form of education, characterised by mass production and division of labour.

In the years immediately before the second world war, radio became a medium of some educational importance in North America. An early example is reported from Glasgow in 1924. It too is still widely favoured around the world. In the 1960s, educators concerned with distance learning experimented with television and with programmed instruction. In the seventies, while applications of television in education continued to grow, programmed instruction gave way to learning through the computer. Programmed instruction techniques have also lived on through the enormous improvements in the seventies in the design of the printed study material, specially in the world’s open universities. The 1990s is an era in which we see the development, application and promotion for education of the teleconferencing, audio-conferencing and computer conferencing media and most importantly, the application of video-conferencing delivered by satellite.

Although in most institutions offering distance education, correspondence education is still the dominant method of distance education though it is supplemented by communication through computers, audio and video teleconferences, recordings and broadcasts. The term correspondence education cannot encompass the didactic potential of this form of education in the 1980s and
beyond: print-audio-video-and computer-based possibilities must be reflected by the terminology chosen. In recognition of these changes, the International Council of Correspondence Education changed its name in 1982 to International Council for Distance Education.

It may be said that distance education is a generic term that includes the range of teaching/learning strategies referred to as 'correspondence education' or 'correspondence study' at further education level in the U.K, as 'home study' at further education level and independent study' at higher education level in the USA; as 'external studies' in Australia; and as 'distance teaching' or teaching at a distance by the Open University of the U.K.

1.2.2 Open Education

There is an extensive overlap between the use of the term 'open education' and distance education. The decision of the U.K. Government in the mid 1960s to rename the University of the Air 'The Open University' popularised the term 'Open'. The terms are not however synonymous. Distance Education, as mentioned earlier, replaced the expression correspondence education whereas open education is a term which even face-to-face or non-distance education institutions may use. According to Keegan, 'Open Learning is a term that is not to be used in an administrative context; its context is, rather, theoretical and describes, for instances, colleges with 'Open' administration policies or a special spirit. Open learning can, in fact, be carried on under both face-to-face and distance conditions. Many of the distance teaching universities, for instance, have closed and rigid structures, are inflexible and slow to respond to community educational needs, have cut off dates for computer-marked assignments and fixed assessment patterns. They design learning materials that narrow the curriculum and leave little room for
interpretation outside the direction provided by the course designers.¹⁹

Perhaps the most commonly used sense of 'open' has been the idea of creating opportunities for study for those debarred from it for whatever reasons, be it lack of formal educational attainments or shortage of vacancies, poverty, remoteness, employment or domestic necessities. To seek increased access is of course, not a recent objective amongst educators. It has a long honorable history, over a hundred years or more. London University was created in 1836 as a body to conduct examinations and award degrees and by 1858 admitted matriculated candidates from any part of the world. The work in the United Kingdom of such voluntary agencies as the Worker's Educational Association, the Extension Services and the extramural departments of universities is another expression of the same intention. It has parallels in many other countries, perhaps most notably in the Soviet Union, where today nearly half the students in higher education study on a part-time basis. Openness in that sense is no new phenomenon."²⁰

Its use in the title of the British Open University viz., 'Open University' in 1967 as a replacement to the earlier title 'University of the Air' proposed in 1964 was the most conspicuous example of the use of the term 'Open'. The concept of Open University was expressed in the address of the first Chancellor of the Open University, the Late Lord Crowther, when he received the Royal Charter in 1969. He said that the Open University would be open, not only as to entry, but as to place (no campus), as to method (the use of any communication medium that promoted its educational purposes) and as to ideas (in that it would be concerned not only with necessary skills and experience, but with all that human understanding can encompass).²¹

There are certainly no shortages of definitions. In 1977
Coffey, for example, was defining an Open Learning System as 'one in which the restrictions placed on students are under constant review and removed wherever possible. It incorporates the widest range of teaching strategies, in particular those using independent and individualised learning (Coffey, 1977)\textsuperscript{22}. In 1984 the Manpower Services Commission of U.K was defining it as follows:

>'Open Learning arrangements enable people to learn at the time, place and pace which satisfied their circumstances and requirements. The emphasis is on opening up opportunities by overcoming barriers that result from geographical isolation, personal or work commitments or conventional course structures which have often prevented people from gaining access to the training they need\textsuperscript{23}.'

A rather different and wider definition was given by Lewis and Spencer:

>'Open Learning' is a term used to describe courses flexibly designed to meet individual requirements. It is often applied to provision which tries to remove barriers that prevent attendances at more traditional courses, but it also suggests a learner-centered philosophy. Open learning courses may be offered in a learning centre of some kind or most of the activity may be carried out away from such a centre (eg. at home). In nearly every case specially prepared or adapted materials are necessary'(Lewis and Spencer, 1986)\textsuperscript{24}.

These strands are given further prominence in a recent book, Open Learning in Transition: An Agenda for Action, which has been published by the National Extension College, Cambridge to celebrate its 25th anniversary. Thus Fricker quotes Professor A.I.R. Cooper's definition of open learning as 'an attempt to break down the traditional barriers to training such as pre-
qualifications, age, geographical location, availability, scheduling, learning style and cost’ (Frick:er, 1988) elsewhere in the book open learning is characterised by Lewis as being ‘essentially a means to enable individuals, of whatever age, to take responsibility for their own learning in respect of content (what is learnt), learning methods (how the content is learnt), the place of learning, the time of learning, feedback on progress, and who can help the learning to occur (Lewis, 1988) and, by Roissetti, as involving open entry, individualised learning, self-assessment, learner support, self-pacing, and many start dates (Roissetti 1988).

As the various definitions of open learning given above suggest, the concept of openness is capable of a range of interpretations, Rumble has identified these under different criteria namely:

access related criteria, criteria related to place and pace of study, criteria related to means, criteria related to the structure of the programme in respect of content and assessment and criteria related to support services.

1.3 DISTANCE EDUCATION IN INDIA

1.3.1 Background

The preamble of the Indian Constitution reflects the spirit of Article I of the UN Declaration of Human Rights that ‘all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights’. The cornerstones of the constitution on which the new India was built were justice, liberty, equality and fraternity as inalienable rights of each citizen. These basic values which underlie the new social order are not indigenous to Indian society. The traditional world-view which has been operative for nearly millennia was one of rigid hierarchy and extreme inequity.
Education was categorically exclusive and denied to the lower castes and women. On independence the nation looked upon education as a vehicle for the transmission of these new values. The Report of the Education Commission (1954-56) on which the national educational policy was based asserted that if the 'great ascent' to economic development is to be achieved without violent revolution (and even then it would still be necessary), there is one instrument and one instrument only that can be used; Education..... it needs the education of the whole population in new ways of life, thought, and work'.'

In 1947, India inherited a system with great educational disparities between males and females, upper and lower classes, economically advantaged and disadvantaged groups and urban and rural populations. The downward filtration policy of the colonial period - due to limited economic development, a feudal agricultural society, and, hierarchial society which lacked an equilibrium philosophy - prevented the spread of education.

Further the main objectives that guided the educational developments in the colonial period were: to train personnel for administration, to develop a small class of educated persons, and to teach the Indians the English language and through it to introduce them to the literature, science and philosophy of the West. In Macaulay's words "a class of persons Indian in blood and colour, but English in taste, in opinions and in intellect". Social handicaps like Sati, Child marriage, ban on widow remarriage, and purdah prevented women from being educated. The practice of untouchability and discrimination based on caste prevented the spread of education among the lower castes. A history of isolation in the remote areas led to educational backwardness among the Scheduled Tribes.

Tremendous expansion has taken place since independence. The number of educational institutions in the country has
increased from 2,30,000 to 6,90,000, during the last three and a half decades.

The number of Universities have increased from 22 in 1951 to 178, the Colleges from 695 to 3,407 and the students in the university system, from 174,000 to 5.27 millions (1991-92). Yet around 6% of the age group only is said to be in the colleges. Even if we want to bring it to 10% we have to expand the system by nearly 70%, which is impossible in the given economic condition. Also providing the manpower and creating the infrastructure are formidable tasks.

Today only 57% of the age group of 11 - 14 years are in the schools (1988-89). To meet the requirement of compulsory education in the age groups, upto 14 as contemplated in the constitution, we need over a million additional teachers. We cannot produce them through the formal system.

1.3.2 The National Context for Distance Education

India has the largest University population in the world, which was 5.27 millions in 1991-92. Yet the main problem of the educated is unemployment. It is clear that the direction of expansion in higher education has not been related to the needs and capacity of national development. Despite the quantitative expansion of the educational system, it is still far from being equalitarian. Access to education is limited, says the 'Challenge of Education - A policy perspective', which is a fairly exhaustive analysis of the problems facing Indian education: "Though our achievement has been substantial in quantitative terms, there have not been enough to provide access for all. For a country like India with aspirations of developing into a highly productive and learned society committed to the distribution of the resultant benefits to all, this is an occasion for serious introspection".
A perusal of the data presented reveals that still there are inequalities in education in terms of sex. Fewer number of girls compared to boys have access to education. Similarly rural areas have lesser opportunities as compared to the urban. Comparatively, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes have lesser access to the educational system than the others. The spread of education in India has not been equal and there are still serious imbalances.

In addition, the social evils of casteism, regionalism, dowry, communalism and the overriding evil of poverty and its concomitants have been on the rise.

It is estimated that by the end of this century India would have a large concentration of illiterate population in the country. The country will have 54.8 per cent of world’s illiterate population in the age group 15 to 19. If the aim of the policy makers is to provide educational opportunities to all the sections of the society, we need to think of alternative models. While the formal system of education will continue to play an important role, major emphasis, as the Challenge of Education says, is to be laid on non-formal and adult education. There is a need for educational transformation.

A stage has now been reached when even the most affluent countries are convinced that they will not be able to provide adequate education to people unless they abandon their exclusive dependence on formal system of education. The conclusion becomes inescapable in all poor and developing countries.

While quantitative expansion is welcome it has not been accompanied by reasonably good quality of education. There can be disputes regarding what constitutes ‘quality’. However, without getting into the polemics on the subject, it is contended here that the general quality of education is poor.
There are two types of educational institutions in the country: (a) A small minority of high quality educational institutions at all levels such as the public schools, IITs, Institutions of Advanced Medicine and well endowed schools and universities; and (b) a large number of educational institutions which are poorly financed and are not able to maintain high quality of education. At the higher level there are about 6000 colleges out of which nearly 50% are considered non-viable.

Another aspect of quality is to what extent the schools and colleges are able to integrate the explosion of knowledge in all fields, particularly in science and technology. "Many educational institutions find themselves unable to absorb the accretions to knowledge and in the process, what they have to offer quickly become obsolete. Obsolete knowledge could not evidently be relevant knowledge. In the state of relative poverty in which the educational systems function, new books and sophisticated equipment arrive late and their diffusion into the system took time. This created a knowledge gap between the advanced countries and the poor countries. With every spurt in knowledge this was widened." Unless it is done, the subject matter of number of disciplines become obsolete.

Relevance of our education is under attack. In the universities and colleges one comes across this question. Whether what is being taught is relevant to the country and to the environment in which the learner is living?

Realising that there should be strong vocational stream in our education, the Education Commission (1964-66) had suggested 10+2+3 pattern so that after 10 years of schooling, a large vocational element could be introduced and under-graduate education should be of three years duration. Barring a few exceptions, vocational education remains a weak component in the educational system and the +2 vocational stream, wherever it
exists, has become just another stage in the hierarchy of education. Says the Challenge of Education, "... the attempts made in the past have not borne fruits and enrolment in this stream, which was expected to include around 50% of students at the 10+2 stage, has remained marginal and confined to a few states. The courses started with little imagination and with poor wherewithal have also lacked in prestige and attracting power."

There is a tremendous mismatch between the educational output and the employment requirement of the country. On the one hand, there are large number of arts and science graduates being produced by the conventional universities while their demand in the employment market is extremely meager, and on the other, there are technical and applied fields wherein the requirement is much more than what the educational system is catering to. The present educational system has always been criticised for alienating its recipients from social reality; universities have been referred to as Ivory Towers. These criticisms are mainly due to the lack of relevance of curricula of the schools and universities have to the societal problems and needs.

Although a number of committees and Commissions have been set up to look into the problems of education in the country, several of the recommendations of such commissions either have not been implemented or have only been marginally implemented and wherever implemented, effects have not been very impressive and lasting. There are institutions which introduced recommendations such as introduction of semester system and internal assessment but have given up later on. Innovations in the field of communication have not been integrated with education. While all sectors of the society have been able to make use of the new technologies, education indeed is very slow to respond. Courses and curricula tend to duplicate what already exists and there are very few innovations in this area. As a result, the system
suffers from inexhaustible inertia. No wonder, it responds sluggishly in adopting their internal affairs to new external expositions, even when resources have not been the main obstacle to adoption.\(^3\)

All said and done, most of the efforts to reform the educational system in the country have been in formal education. It is true that recommendations of several of the committees and commissions as well as the NPE - 1986 include those in favour of the non-formal system of education. But, the system is yet to be given a fair and serious trial. For a developing country like India with its demographic and economic conditions, the non-formal system may be better suited for many of its societal aims such as literacy for all and universal primary education which are still dreams even after more than forty five years of independence. Alternative strategies under the non-formal system need to be strengthened further so that they would help in accelerating democratisation and modernisation.

The system of Distance Education has the potential to fulfill the enormous responsibility of universalisation and democratisation of education, as it holds the promise of checking the falling standards at reasonable costs making the optimum use of media and technology and providing education relevant to the needs of the country. From this point of view distance education is a socio-historical imperative for India.

Thus the major objectives of Distance Education in India are: \(^4\)

(i) To provide an alternative cost-effective non-formal channel for higher education.

(ii) To supplement the conventional university system and to reduce the pressure on it.

(iii) To provide second chance education to those who have
had to discontinue their formal education or could not join regular colleges/universities owing to pecuniary and other circumstances.

(iv) To democratis higher education by providing access to large segments of the population, in particular the disadvantaged groups such as those living in remote and rural areas, including working people, women and other adults who wish to acquire and upgrade their knowledge and/or skills through studies in various fields.

(v) To strengthen and diversify the degree, certificate and diploma courses related to the needs of employment and necessary for building the economy of the country on the basis of its natural and human resources.

(vi) To provide a means for continuing and life-long education for enriching the lives of the people.

(vii) To provide an innovative system of university level education, which is flexible and open in terms of methods and pace of learning combination of courses, eligibility for enrolment, age of entry, conduct of examination and operation of the programmes with a view to promoting learning and encouraging excellence in new fields of knowledge.

1.3.3 Growth of Distance Education in India

The acceptance, spread and growth of distance education in most parts of the world during the last two decades has had a significant impact on India.

The national efforts to democratis the socio-economic services including education provided by various levels of governments and the growing realisation among the masses about the economic value of education have for long been exerting considerable pressure for expansion of education among a cross section of the Indian society. Consequently over the past three decades, the students enrolment at the tertiary level grew at the
rate of 9.7% per annum, whereas the growth rates at the secondary and elementary levels, recorded a mere 7.8% and 5.5% per annum respectively (Challenge of education – policy perspective, Ministry of Education, 1985). It is hence obvious that the demands for various courses at the higher level have been more pronounced than at other levels of education. In order to accommodate the increasing aspirants of higher education, the opening of more conventional institutions with adequate provision for infrastructural facilities has been beyond the financial capacities of the central and state governments owing largely to the crunch in financial resources. Moreover the conventional method of teaching is not only very expensive but also rigid so far as teaching and learning conditions are concerned. The search for an alternative to the conventional system has various types of courses at the tertiary level. Such a perceived need for an alternative system of education has given rise to the concept of distance education in India.

In 1961, the expert committee which was constituted by the Ministry of Education, with a view to working out the relevant details and preparing a scheme of correspondence education for the country had listed the major objectives as (a) to provide less expensive education at the higher level (b) to extend the benefits of education facilities to all those who had missed the opportunity to acquire knowledge, skill and training for social and economic reasons.41

The first courses in India through correspondence for the Bachelor's Degree were introduced by the University of Delhi in 1962. Within a year the courses attracted a large number of students. Encouraged by its success, the Education Commission (1964-66) recommended fuller exploitation of correspondence education for a wide range of purposes.42

Consequently, the University Grants Commission (UGC)
formulated guidelines for introducing correspondence courses in Indian Universities. Three more institutes of Correspondence Studies were established in the late 1960s. The 1970s saw the introduction of correspondence education in 21 more universities. During the 60s, only undergraduate courses were started as an experimental measure, whereas the 70s saw the introduction of post-graduate and diploma/certificate courses as well. During 1980-86, seven more universities started Institutes of Correspondence Studies. In 1991-92, there were 39 conventional universities offering correspondence courses in the country. Meanwhile a few universities like Mysore, SNDT Women’s University, Madurai Kamaraj, Andhra and Annamalai adopted open admission policies by relaxing formal qualifications for entry to undergraduate courses.

The first open university in the country was established by the Government of Andhra Pradesh in 1982 to provide access to higher education to adults to upgrade their skills, improve the quality of their life, equalize educational opportunities and provide lifelong education. The encouraging response to this university culminated in the establishment of the Indira Gandhi National Open University by an Act of Parliament on 20th September, 1985. The university has been charged with the dual responsibility of providing opportunities for higher education to larger segments of the population, particularly those for whom access to the formal system is difficult or impossible, and also to develop the open university and distance education systems in the country and to coordinate and determine standards in such systems.

In the last decade open universities have been established by the State Governments of Rajasthan, Bihar and Maharashtra, and recently by Madhya Pradesh.

In India there are 4 types of distance education
institutions:

i) Those offering external appearance (private appearance). The student is permitted to take the examination as a private candidate and if he passed he is given the degree. The institution/university does not take any responsibility to impart education to the student.

ii) Those offering vacation courses. The student is permitted to take the examination after attending the classes arranged during vacation time.

iii) Those offering purely correspondence education – many of these institutions have re-designated themselves as distance education institutions.

iv) Open Universities offering distance education.

The total enrolment in universities and colleges in India in 1991-92 was 52,74,594, out of which 663487 students were enrolled in Correspondence Institutions and the Open Universities. The annual growth rate of enrolment in correspondence courses/open universities during the past few years has been higher than that in the conventional universities, which can be deduced from Table 4.1 in chapter 4. The enrolment in distance education has gradually gone up from about 2.6 % of the total enrolment in universities/colleges in 1975-76 to about 12.6 % at present (1991-92).

The Education Commission (Kothari Commission; 1964-66) had suggested the objective of enrolling about one third of the students at the university level in correspondence education. With Distance Teaching Institutions, and in particular Open Universities attracting huge enrollments, for the first time this target appears to be achievable, possibly by 2000 A.D.

1.3.4 Distance Education in the State of Karnataka – Current Scenario
In the state of Karnataka, four universities have been offering distance education programmes viz., Bangalore University, University of Mysore, the Karnataka University and the Indira Gandhi National Open University. The oldest institution is the Institute of Correspondence Course and Continuing Education (ICCE) which was established under the auspices of the University of Mysore in 1969, the year in which the U.K.O.U was founded at Milton Keynes in England. The Institute was the first of its kind in South India. It was designated as an alternative system of education to reach out to people especially those in rural and educationally backward areas. In 1974, it adopted the Open University Scheme, first time in South Asia.

Bangalore University and Karnataka University do not offer distance education in the strict sense of the term. They have been offering external programmes since their inception. However, the Bangalore University in 1991 introduced correspondence education through the Directorate of Correspondence courses.

Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) was established by an Act of Parliament in 1985. It launched its academic programmes in 1987. It has been in existence in the state of Karnataka ever since (as in other states of India) its inception.

1.4 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The rapid expansion of the distance education/open university system in the country has provided a vast ever-growing field to introspect, explore and actualise both in research and policy formulation and implementation.

The thrust area that remains to be studied is a holistic investigation of the growth and development of distance education
system in the country. The funding for distance education is increasing, year after year - are these funds being utilised in a more productive manner in distance education in relation to conventional system.

There are also a variety of distance education models operating in India viz., correspondence education/distance education, through conventional universities, external exam system through conventional universities, autonomous distance education institutions and open universities. Each of these institutes is operating through different methods and thus using different components. The performance of these components in the different models and their effectiveness needs to be studied.

Moreover distance education has come into existence for certain philosophical, socio-economic reasons as an alternative system for enhancing the human resource potential of the society for providing social justice and to establish beneficial links between education, employment and economic development and also to expand and democratise higher education in order to reach out to the denied and deprived sections of society, particularly women, scheduled caste, scheduled tribes and rural people. A periodical review of the developmental effects of higher education made by distance education is required to be done in order to find out who are the users of this system and what benefits they have derived. Above all, there is a need for research and empirical evidence to influence the policy makers in order to correct the weaknesses of the distance education system offered by the major institutions of Karnataka with a view to improving the system and thereby enhancing its credibility.

Till date no such comprehensive study has been conducted in this State, although distance education has been in existence in this State since 1969 and open education system since 1974. Though sporadic information is available, but not sufficiently in
detail to draw the attention to throw light upon these questions. An in-depth study is required to be done. Hence, the present study is being undertaken.

1.5 **TITLE OF THE STUDY**

'**EFFECTIVENESS OF DISTANCE EDUCATION - A CASE STUDY OF KARNATAKA STATE**'.

1.5.1 **Definition of terms used (Title):**

**Effectiveness** - It refers to the examination of the performance of distance education system in the State of Karnataka with regard to the various components operating through various models viz., distance education through a conventional university and distance education through an Open University.

**Distance Education:** Distance education is the tertiary education being offered through correspondence and open university systems by the University of Mysore and IGNOU in Karnataka State.

1.6 **OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

The following are the objectives of this study:

**objective I)** to examine the historical development of distance education in India with special reference to Karnataka State

**objective II)** to examine the effectiveness of distance education in comparison to the conventional education with regard to the expansion and democratisation of higher education in the Karnataka State
objective III) to examine the effectiveness of the functioning of distance education system in Karnataka State.

objective IV) to examine the relevance of distance education courses to the learners' individual needs.

1.7 ORGANISATION OF THE THESIS:

Chapter - 1

DISTANCE EDUCATION: THE CONCEPT AND GROWTH

The concept and definition of the terms 'Distance Education' and 'Open Education' have been discussed in detail. Further the background and need for distance education in India has been briefly touched upon. The growth of distance education in India and the State of Karnataka has also been discussed. Lastly, the significance of the study in the context of the growth and development of distance education in Karnataka has been highlighted. The title and objectives of the study and the chapter scheme is also given at the end of this chapter.

Chapter - 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This chapter deals with a review of related literature in distance education at the international and national levels. It is a systematic exploration of a case for the study of 'Effectiveness of distance education in Karnataka State.'

Chapter - 3

DESIGN OF THE STUDY
It deals with the objectives, research hypotheses of the study and the methodological aspects of the study. Issues like database, collection of data, universe and sample selection, development of tools, tools used in data collection, pilot survey, field work, response rate, analysis of data and scope and limitations of the study are discussed in this chapter.

Chapter - 4

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF DISTANCE EDUCATION IN INDIA WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO KARNATAKA

This chapter is devoted to the genesis and growth of distance education in India through the policy initiatives of the government and institutional practice. It is divided into two phases (i) correspondence education phase, and (ii) open education phase.

The second part of this chapter deals with the growth and development of distance education in Karnataka and its comparative study with the conventional system. An in-depth analysis and interpretation of data has been presented in this chapter.

Chapter - 5

ANALYSIS AND RESULTS OF THE EFFECTIVENESS AND RELEVANCE OF DISTANCE EDUCATION SYSTEM IN KARNATAKA STATE

This chapter presents the effective functioning of the various components of distance education in the state and relevance of distance education courses offered by ICCCE, Mysore and IGNOU, Bangalore Regional Centre. An in-depth analysis and interpretation of data has been presented in this particular chapter.
Chapter 6

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This chapter summarises the findings of the study. Implications that emerge from the study and areas of future research have also been identified here.
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