CHAPTER 6

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

6.0 INTRODUCTION

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 historical investigation of the growth and development of distance education system in the country.

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. 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 on 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.

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.

In a diverse country like this, it is a felt need to conduct an in-depth study of the growth and development of the distance education system in a particular region. The studies conducted so far are either all-India level studies which are too general in nature and do not give an insight into the development of distance education in any particular state/region. Region specific studies are there, but they are very few in number and are again pertaining to specific universities or institutions.

There is a felt need to study the distance education system in Karnataka State as till date no comprehensive study has been conducted on the state, although distance education has been in existence in this State since 1969 and Open Education since 1974. Though sporadic information is available, it is not sufficiently in detail to draw the attention to throw light upon various issues related to distance education system, such as performance of the various components operating in different models in distance education system in the state, who are the users of this system; a periodical review of the development effects on higher education made by distance education and open education institutions in order to correct the weakness of distance education system with a view to improving the system and thereby enhancing its credibility.

Moreover a culture/region specific interpretation of distance education also necessitates a sociological study of distance education in one region namely Karnataka Region. Hence the need and importance of undertaking the present study.

6.1 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM - 'EFFECTIVENESS OF DISTANCE EDUCATION - A CASE STUDY OF KARNATAKA STATE'
6.2 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.

6.3 Research Hypotheses

1. The rate of change of enrolment during the period 1985-92 is relatively higher in distance education compared to conventional education in Karnataka.

2. The rate of change of female enrolment during the period 1985 - 92 is relatively higher in distance education as compared to conventional system in Karnataka.

3. The rate of change of SC/ST enrolment during the period 1985 - 92 is relatively higher in distance education as compared to conventional education in Karnataka.

4. There is no difference in the enrolment pattern amongst rural and urban population in distance education system in Karnataka.

5. The media used for the advertisement of the courses is appropriate to the environmental reach of the specified target groups.

6. The admission procedures followed in distance education institutions are simple and self-explanatory.

7. The distance learners get instructional materials in time for their studies.
8. The instructional materials received by distance learners satisfy their needs.
9. The contact sessions are useful to distance learners.
10. The contact/counselling sessions are interactive.
11. The feedback from assignments is effective in developing, understanding and learning in the subject.
12. The assignments are useful to prepare the distance learners for term-end examination.
13. The turn-around time to provide feedback through assignment is optimum to be effective.
14. The method of term-end examination is effective in testing the expected learning outcome.
15. The distance education courses increases the scope of career advancement to the learners.
16. The distance education courses enhances the academic competency of the learner.
17. The distance education courses raises the social-status of the learner.

6.4 DESIGN OF THE STUDY

Descriptive and documentary method of research has been used for this study. The design mainly uses the survey technique. Schedules were canvassed to collect data. Interviews and case study techniques were also used to supplement the database.

The first objective of the study being the historical development of distance education in India, the information has been collected in the form of literature from various sources. The literature of authentic nature from the original sources namely ledgers and records from ICCCE and IGNOU and documents from Government offices such as Reports of Ministry of Education, Government of India, Dept. of Education, State Govt. of Karnataka, University Grants Commission, Mysore University and IGNOU were collected. Apart from this research documents were
referred for the supportive data. The secondary sources were basically books and articles written by distance educationists and papers presented in conferences. The data was qualitatively analysed and comprehensively presented.

For the second objective, information has been collected from the offices of IGNOU, ICCCE and Dept. of Education, State Govt. of Karnataka. The data was quantitatively analysed and presented in the form of percentage analysis. For objectives III and IV, the information has been collected from the field. For this purpose, sampling of population, data collection and analysis was undertaken.

6.4.1 Universe and Sampling

The distance learners of ICCCE, Mysore University and Bangalore Regional Centre, IGNOU form the universe of the study.

Both Universities are offering Post-graduate and undergraduate courses, in addition to diploma and certificate courses. Diploma and certificate courses are excluded from this study. The students enrolled at the two Universities for the Post-graduate and Under-graduate courses during the academic year 1991-92 form the universe of the study which is 20443 at ICCCE and 2036 at IGNOU (excluding the students enrolled from the Goa State under the Bangalore Regional Centre). The 1992 batch students have been purposely selected as they have been enrolled in the system since one year and their opinion would be more valuable than that of the freshly enrolled students of 1993.

The students were classified into four groups, according to their ages.

The groups are

- Group 1 - below 25 years
- Group 2 - 26 years to 45 years
- Group 3 - 46 years to 60 years
- Group 4 - above 60 years
Using the random sampling technique, 10% (from ICCGE) i.e., 2044 students and 25% (from IGNOU) i.e., 509 students (keeping in view the enrolment at the respective universities), students from each group were selected.

Due weightage is given to women, rural, scheduled caste and scheduled tribes students, while choosing the sample.

6.4.2 Procedure:

The study was completed in four main stages which are given below, stage-wise:

Stage I - Preparatory stage: March - June, 1993.

The following activities were involved in this stage:

1. As a preamble, the available allied literature was studied to provide a theoretical background to establish the need for this study.
2. Identification of the Universities, Institutions offering distance education in Karnataka
3. Development of Tools:
   i. Identification of type of tools to be used
   ii. Item development (identification of variables) for each of the tools used
   iii. Development of the draft of the tools
   iv. Field try out of the tool
   v. Finalisation of the tools

Stage II - Field Work: July to December 1993

1. Data was collected from the offices of the University Grants Commission, Ministry of Education, Govt. of India, New
Delhi, Dept. of Education, State Govt. of Karnataka, Bangalore; IGNOU, New Delhi, IGNOU Regional Centre, Bangalore and ICCCE, Mysore University, Mysore.

2. Schedules were administered to the offices of IGNOU and ICCCE to collect institutional information.

Stage III - Field Work: January to June 1994

1. Schedules were administered to students by post/person of ICCCE, Mysore and IGNOU, Bangalore Regional Centre.
2. Schedules were once again administered to some of the above students who did not return the questionnaires.
3. Interviews were conducted with some of the above students as a follow-up measure.
4. Interviews were conducted with the officials of ICCCE and IGNOU as a follow-up measure.

Stage IV - Analysis and interpretation of Data: July to March 95

1. Data collected from the University records and government offices for objective 1 and 2 were analysed using simple percentages and growth rates.

2. Data collected from the selected students of 1992 batch were computerised. A data matrix was developed to analyse the objectives 3 and 4. Data were subjected to simple percentage analysis and tests of significance (Chi-square).

3. Data was also presented in the form of graphs and diagrams in order to present the data explicitly.

6.5 FINDINGS:

The major findings of this study are listed below objective-wise.
6.5.1 **Objective - 1**: To examine the historical development of distance education in India with special reference to Karnataka State.

A historical review of the policy initiatives of the Government of India with regard to the adoption and implementation of the distance education system in India was undertaken. This has been chronologically traced right from 1956 onwards, when there was no mention of the distance education system in any of the documents except as suggestions and till 1992. The growth and development of distance education in India has been discussed in detail in two phases, namely; Correspondence education phase i.e., from 1962-1982 and open education phase from 1982-1992. All the recommendations made by various commissions from time to time up till 1992 have been covered in this study.

During the period 1962-1982 there were only correspondence institutions attached to conventional universities. Since 1982 onwards a dual structure is developing with independent open universities and correspondence institutions attached to conventional universities.

The first correspondence education institute was established in 1962. During the first decade i.e., 1962-72 the number of institutions went up to 12 institutions offering under-graduate courses in Arts and Commerce through distance education. In next decade 1972-82 19 more institutions were added and for first time post graduate and diploma/certificate courses and science programmes like B.Sc were introduced through distance education. During the third decade i.e., 1982-92 17 more institutions were added and some of them were closed down.

During this period multi-media approach was adopted and science and technology and vocational courses through education were
introduced. This period also saw the birth of 4 State Open Universities and a national open university, which are independent, single mode education institutions.

The percentage of enrolment in distance education in the total enrolment of higher education in India has gone up from 2.4% (64210) in 1975-76 to 12.6% (663487) in 1991-92.

Considering the period from 1975-76 to 1982-83, the rate of growth in the conventional system is 3.7% and in the distance education system is 17.4%. For the period 1982-83 to 1991-92, the figures are 4.1% for the formal system and 15.7% for the distance education system.

The distribution of the institutions offering distance education courses indicates marked imbalance among the regions. The share of the southern region in 1975-76 was 37.1% and it rose to 63% in 1991-92. In the northern region where the beginning was made in distance education in 1962, the enrolment stood at 58.2% of the total in 1975-76 and it came down to 28.9% in 1991-92. The position is not satisfactory in the eastern region where the enrolment has come down from 2.5% in 1975-76 to 1.9% in 1991-92. In the central and western the enrolment has marginally gone up from 2.2% in 1975-76 to 6.2% in 1991-92.

Considering the overall share of distance education enrolment in the total it is 12.6% for the whole country (1991-92). The regional variation is quite significant here also. Tamil Nadu not only has the highest enrolment in higher education in India (715618 in 1991-92) but also the highest enrolment in distance education (284872 in 1991-92). The percentage of students enrolled in distance education is 39.8% as against 60.2% in the conventional system.
The ratio of enrolment in distance education is even greater in the states of Delhi (conventional system 48.79%; Distance Education 51.21%) and Himachal Pradesh (conventional system 41.59%; distance education 58.41%). In the northern region where the beginning was made in distance education in 1962, the ratio of enrolment in distance education is greater in the State of Himachal Pradesh (conventional system 41.59%; distance education 58.41%). Andhra Pradesh and Delhi are above the national average of 12.6% viz. 23.3%. All the other states are ranging from 0.06% to 12.5%.

In 1991-92 out of the total enrolment in distance education (6.63 lakhs) open universities account for 17.8% (1.18 lakhs) of the enrolment and distance education institutes attached to conventional universities account for 82.2% (5.45 lakhs).

The share of the latter in the total enrolment in higher education is 10.3% (through 33 institutes attached to conventional universities) whereas the share of 4 open universities in the total enrolment in higher education is 2.2%. Thus the share of conventional education (through 178 universities) in the total enrolment in higher education is 87.4%.

In the conventional system at the national level the enrolment per university is 25905. Only in the northern region the enrolment per university is lower than the other three regions, namely eastern, southern, central and western regions and also below the national average of 21194 per university.

The regional distribution of enrolment in distance education per university is very low in the eastern region (31461) and central and western region (5853) as compared to the northern region (11752) and the southern region (26143). It is interesting to note that the enrolment per university in distance
education in the southern region (26143) is almost equal to the
enrolment per university in the conventional system at the
national level (25905) and also in the conventional system in the
region itself (26567).

State-wise enrolment in distance education for 1991-92 shows
that the enrolment ranges from 124 Mother Theresa University
(124) to 284872.

14 Distance education institutions/universities account for
86.2% of the total enrolment in distance education in the
country in 1991-92. Thus the remaining 25 institutions/
universities have an enrolment of 12225 which is 14.8% of the
total enrolment. There are 8 institutions (5000 to 10000
students) which account for 8.6%, 7 institutions (2001 to 5000
students) accounts for 4% and 10 institutions (less than 2000
enrolment) accounts for 1.2% in the total distance education
system.

The percentage of women enrolled in distance education is
33.5% (1991-92) in a country for an educational mode that is
only three decades old, is indeed very encouraging, in comparison
with about 33% (1991-92) for the conventional system which has
been in existence for so long.

It is noteworthy that in Maharashtra and Haryana more than
50% of the students enrolled in distance education are women,
Tamil Nadu follows with 41% and Madhya Pradesh with 39.5%. Surprisingly in one of the most progressive states of India,
namely Gujarat, the female enrolment is barely 11.31% and Delhi
even lower 11.09% of the total enrolment in distance education.

It is however significant that Tamil Nadu alone accounts for
45.0% of the female enrolment in distance education during the
period 1987-91.
In the conventional system, the highest female enrolment in 1991-92 is in the state of Kerala viz 53 % followed by Punjab 48.2 % and Haryana 42.2 %. The lowest female enrolment is in Bihar viz., 16.4 %.

Haryana has the distinction of having the highest percentage of women students both in the conventional education (42.2 %) and in the distance education system (52.8 %).

6.5.2 Objective - 2: 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.

Enrolment in Conventional vs Distance Education in Karnataka

In the State of Karnataka the enrolment has gone up from 225115 (1985) to 352914 (1992) in the conventional system as against this the enrolment in distance education system has gone up from 14935 (1985) to 25633 (1992). In other words the percentage of increase in the conventional system is 36.2 % as against 71.6% in the distance education system.

The enrolment at the UG level in the conventional education system was 219337 in 1985 and it has gone up to 344010 in 1992, whereas in the distance education system the enrolment at the UG level has increased marginally from 11629 in 1985 to 13144 in 1992. Thus the percentage of increase in the distance education system is 13.03 %, whereas in the conventional system it is 56.8% at the U.G level.

The enrolment at the P.G level in the conventional education has gone up from 5778 (1985) to 8904 (1992). Whereas in the distance education system the enrolment shot up from 3306 (1985)
to 12489 (1992). Thus the percentage of increase in the distance education is 277.8 % as compared to 54.1 % in the conventional system at the PG level.

In the conventional system the distribution of UG and PG students was 97.4 (UG) and 2.6 % (PG) in 1985. The same trend is noticed in 1992.

Contrary to this in distance education system, the percentage of enrolment at the UG level has come down from 77.8 % in 1985 to 49 % in 1992, whereas at the PG level it has shot up from 22.2 % in 1985 to 51 % in 1992.

In Karnataka State, the female enrolment in conventional system at the UG level has gone up from 65700 (1985) to 99787 (1992) as compared to distance education where the female enrolment has gone up during the corresponding period 2813 (1985) to 4650 (1992). Thus the percentage of increase during this 7 year period is 51.9 % in the conventional system as compared to 65.3 % in the distance education system.

During the same period, in the conventional system at the PG level the female enrolment has gone up from 1824 (1985) to 2789 (1992) whereas in the distance education system it has gone up from 791 (1985) to 3409 (1992). The percentage of increase in the distance education system during this 7 year period is 331 % (or 6 times).

The female enrolment in the conventional system in Karnataka has gone up from 67524 (1985) to 10256 (1992) which shows an increase of 51.9 %.

In the distance education system the female enrolment has gone up from 3604 (1985) to 8059 (1992) which shows an increase of 123.6 %.
The total number of scheduled caste and scheduled tribes (SC/ST) enrolled in the conventional system was 24528 (1985) and it has gone up to 45728 (1992). Thus the share of SC/ST has gone up from 10.9 % (1985) to 12.6 % (1992) in the total enrolment in conventional system. Contrary to this in distance education the SC/ST enrolment was 723 (1985) which went up to 2035 (1992). Thus the share of SC/ST has gone up from 4.9 % to 8.3 %, The share of SC/ST enrolment in conventional system over the 5 years period has gone up to 86.4 % whereas in the distance education it has gone by 181.5 %.

The share of the rural enrolment during the period 1990-92 is almost identical viz., 56 % of the total enrolment in distance education in Karnataka State. The rural enrolment at the UG level and PG level during the same period is higher than the urban enrolment. The rural enrolment in the diploma and certificate courses is negligible 2.2 % in 1992 and 1.2 % in 1991.

The increase in the rural enrolment during 1990-92 is 13.5 % at the UG level as compared to 15.6 % at the PG level.

The overall increase in the rural enrolment during 1990-92 is 14.6 %.

6.5.3 Objective 3: To examine the effectiveness of the functioning of distance education system in Karnataka:

ICCCE:

A. Media used for notification:

News papers (64.2 %) is the predominant media followed by the informal media, through friends (28.4 %) through which the respondents learnt about ICCCE. The same trend is
noticed with regard to target groups viz., women, rural and SC/ST respondents. An interesting fact is that more women (42.0 %) have used the informal media than men (17.2 %).

Only 4.5 % of the respondents are dissatisfied with regard to suitability of media and 9 % with regard to access to advertisement. All target groups are satisfied except for a few women.

With regard to adequacy and clarity of information given in the advertisement the percentage of dissatisfied respondents is rather small (11.9 % and 13.4 % respectively). The percentage of dissatisfaction among target groups is very negligible except for 18.4 % women with regard to clarity of information.

B. Admission Procedures:

The overall analysis shows that with regard to the admission procedures the level of dissatisfaction is almost negligible.

Regarding the criteria of selection adopted by ICCCE the respondents do not have any noticeable unfavourable attitude towards any of the criteria except for the criterion of reservation. Barely 26.9 % of the respondents are in favour of it.

C. Instructional materials:

More than 50 % of the respondents have not received course materials on time due to which 36.6 % did not read the material, 9 % could not attend contact sessions, 4.5 % could not attend examinations and 3 % dropped out from the programme.
In all respects, more than 80% of the respondents (31% good and 50% satisfactory) have expressed their satisfaction and 5.2% are not satisfied with regard to the instructional materials supplied by the ICCCE. 23.9% are not satisfied with the sequence of ideas and 31.3% with the explanation given and 28.4% with the questions of self-study in the course materials. The dis-satisfaction with regard to other aspects listed is negligible.

The statistical inference through chi-square has revealed that the students of ICCCE find the instructional material useful.

D Counselling:

91% of the respondents attended contact sessions and 83.7% of them found these sessions useful.

Most of those who have not attended contact sessions belong to the lowest income group (12.5%) and highest income group (25%). Secondly 19.2% of the absentees are non-graduates (19.2%) and some graduates (10.0%).

Majority of the respondents (65.7%) found the sessions useful because the lectures encourages them to do further reading and take more interest in the course.

The reasons given by the absentees for not attending contact sessions are demands of full employment (13.4%), family duties (10.4%) and venue of sessions is too far (9.6%). Majority of the rural (23.0%) and female (10.5%) respondents could not attend sessions due to family duties. Whereas majority of urban (13.0%) and male (20.7%) respondents could not attend sessions due to demands of full employment.
The statistical inference through chi-square has revealed that the students of ICCCE find the contact sessions useful.

More than 75% of the respondents only listened to the lecture/discussion and took notes without any active participation. 32.8% participated in the sessions by asking questions and interacting with co-learners. 60% of the respondents read the instructional materials before attending the sessions. Interestingly more women (71.1%) than men (48.3%) and more rural (69.2%) than urban (59.2%) students read the instructional materials. Less than 50% of the respondents have attempted self-check exercises. This trend is more pronounced in female (39.5%) students than male (44.8%) students. 46.3% listed their doubts before attending contact sessions.

E Assignments:

Assignment system does not exist in ICCCE, for the programmes included in this study.

F Term-end examination:

56.7% of the respondents have expressed satisfaction with regard to present examination system. Only 14.9% do not agree.

With regard to types of questions and its coverage in syllabus only 9.0% are dissatisfied and 61.2% are satisfied. Interestingly 32.8% felt that questions could be guessed based on the previous years question papers. Only 4.5% expressed that the questions are general and could be answered without preparation. 46.3% felt that the questions given in the examination are thought provoking 23.9% were not sure and 10.4% disagreed. 13.4% of the students found the questions difficult. However, 43.3% are not sure and 25.4% found the questions easy.
37.3% felt that the duration of three hours to write examination is sufficient. Similarly, 46.3% expressed that the time available for preparation of each paper during the examination is adequate.

IGNOU:

A. Media Used for notification:

The predominant media used by the respondents is news papers (56.3%) followed by friends (29.7%). Interestingly nearly 50% of the target groups namely women and rural respondents have got to know through friends whereas 80% of the SC/ST learnt about IGNOU through news papers.

With regard to suitability of media and access to advertisement, the percentage of dissatisfied group is only 3.1% and 7.8% respectively. Only a few women (4.2% and 8.2%) respectively are dissatisfied.

14.1% are not satisfied with the adequacy of information and 10.9% with the clarity of information given in the advertisement. All the target groups are satisfied except for 16.7% women who are dissatisfied with regard to adequacy of information and 12.5% women with regard to clarity of information.

B. Admission Procedures:

The overall analysis shows that more than 90% of the respondents are satisfied with regard to the admission procedures of IGNOU.

With regard to the criteria of selection 20% are opposed to the criterion of experience and 31% to that of reservation.
C. Instructional materials:

Two-thirds (67.2%) of the respondents did not receive the course materials on time because of which 28% did not attend counselling sessions, 51% could not submit assignments, 31.3% could not attend term-end examination and 3.1% dropped out from the system.

Around 95% of the respondents (56.5% good and 38.2% satisfactory) have expressed their satisfaction with the study materials supplied by IGNOU and 7.8% are not satisfied. 15.6% are not satisfied with the explanation of difficult concepts/ideas, 12.5% with the diagrams used, 10.9% with the sequence of ideas and 9.4% with the motivation to read the entire unit. The dissatisfaction with regard to other aspects is negligible.

The statistical inference through chi-square has revealed that the students of IGNOU find the instructional materials useful.

D. Counselling:

62.5% have attended counselling sessions and of them 78.7% found them useful. 35% of male and female respondents, 50% rural respondents have not attended contact sessions. Majority of the absentees are from the third income group (25 to 50,000) and fourth income group (above Rs. 50,000), (42.9% and 37.5% respectively). The most dissatisfied group is in the age group below 25 years (57.6%). Majority of absentees are also from the below 45 years age group.

The highest rating given by the respondents with regard to usefulness of the contact sessions is to the point relating
to meeting with fellow learners (45.3 %). As compared to the younger age groups the older age groups (above 45 years) have found counselling sessions useful because of the audio-visual aids.

The major reasons for not attending sessions mentioned by the respondents are venue is too far away (45.3 %), demands of full employment (29.7 %).

The statistical inference through chi-square has revealed that the students of IGNOU find the counselling sessions useful.

More than 45 % actively participated in the sessions by asking questions and interacting in group discussions and 40 % with their peer group. However, 50 % have listened to the lecture/discussions and took notes. Nearly 30 % of the respondents below 25 years have simply listened to the lecture/discussions, whereas in the older age groups (above 25 years) this percentage is very negligible. About 45 % did not read the relevant course materials before coming to sessions, and 60% did not bring questions for clarification. It is interesting to note more men read the instructional materials, but more women attempted the self-check exercises.

E. Assignment System:

Although the submission of assignments are compulsory, only 57.8 % have submitted all assignments. 39.1 % have partially submitted assignments and 1.6 % have not submitted at all. However, only 53 % have received their evaluated assignments back and 48.4 % have received feedback on their assignments through tutor comments and 37.5 % found these comments meaningful. The most dissatisfied group is from
below 25 years of age (45.8 %) and women (71 %). More than 90 % have felt that assignments help to a great extent in understanding the subject.

Majority of the respondents have observed that assignments help in preparing for term-end examination as only 4.7 % have disagreed. 48.4 % have also expressed that submission of assignments should be a pre-requisite to appear in term-end examination. 39.1 % expressed total disagreement and 10.9 % are not sure.

78.1 % respondents have expressed that assignments should carry weightage towards final results. The disagreed group is 14.1 %.

35.9 % felt that the questions in the assignments are too direct and therefore the students copy the course material. 32.8 % disagreed and 28.1 % are not sure.

50 % have found the time given for submission of assignments sufficient and 35.9 % have found it insufficient.

59.4 % felt that assignments should be compulsory as compared to 20.3 % who disagreed.

11 % of the respondents received their evaluated assignments within the specified turn-around time. Therefore, the purpose of providing distance tuition through evaluated assignments has not been served to the remaining 89 % of the respondents, although 67.2 % received them after the specified period. 17.2 % did not receive them at all.

Even though 78.2 % of the respondents received their evaluated assignments back, only 50 % were satisfied with the feedback received from the assignments.
F. Term-end Examination:

56.3% of the total respondents are not satisfied with the present system of term-end examination. 75% are satisfied with regard to periodicity of examination and only 7.8% are dissatisfied.

64.1% found that the questions cover the syllabus adequately and barely 12.5% have disagreed. 56.3% found the questions thought provoking as against 17.2%. The highest number of respondents who found the questions thought provoking are in the age group of 26 - 45 years. 17.0% felt that questions could be guessed and 9.4% they can be answered without any preparation. 26.6% found the questions difficult, 34.4% are not sure and 31.3% disagreed.

68.8% of the respondents found the duration of the examination adequate and 10.9% are not satisfied. 48.4% felt that the time available for preparation of papers in term-end examination is sufficient and 31.3% found it insufficient. Majority of the respondents who found it insufficient are below 25 years (33.3%).

6.5.4 Objective 4: To examine the relevance of Distance Education Courses to the learners' individual needs.

I.C.C.C.E

38.9% of the respondents are pursuing ICCCCE courses with the objective of improving their qualification. 25.2% in order to get better jobs. 14.5% to be eligible to apply for better jobs. 10.7% to get employment and 10.7% to get promotion.
There is no marked difference between UG and PG respondents except at the UG level with regard to getting employment and to become eligible to apply for jobs. On the other hand more PG students are pursuing their studies to get better jobs than the UG students.

Only 35.1% found the courses relevant to their occupational needs and 7.6% found them irrelevant. It is very interesting to note that 37.3% have not responded.

42% enrolled with the purpose of enriching their knowledge and 38.9% to improve their qualification and 17.6% in order to acquire an additional qualification.

Only 18.3% of the respondents are pursuing higher studies with the motive of improving their social status. Interestingly more PG students (23.5%) as compared to UG level (15.0%) are interested in improving their social status.

40.5% have sought admission of their own choice. Respondents who joined under social pressure due to economic necessity or under pressure from parents are very negligible.

IGNOU:

78.8% are pursuing higher studies at IGNOU with the purpose of improving their qualifications. 32.1% in order to get better jobs; 18.1% to be able to apply for certain jobs; 28.1% to get promotion; and 20.9% to get employment. Interestingly the UG and PG respondents hold similar views with regard to be able to apply for better jobs and to get promotion. More UG level (83.8%) are pursuing studies in order to improve their qualification as compared to PG level (74.1%). Similarly, more UG students (27%) are enrolled with the aim of getting employment as compared to PG students (14.8%). On the other hand more PG (55.6%)
students are pursuing studies in order to get better job as compared (48.6 %) to UG students.

71.9 % of the respondents felt that the courses offered by IGNOU are relevant to their occupational needs and only 15.6 % felt that they are irrelevant.

85.9 % have enrolled with the purpose of enriching their knowledge; 79.7 % to improve their qualification; and 35.9 % to acquire an additional qualification.

37.5 % are pursuing their higher studies to improve their social status. More respondents at the PG level (44.4 %) as compared to the UG level (32.4 %) have enrolled with this objective.

82.8 % have sought admissions of their own choice. The percentage of respondents who have enrolled under pressure from parents, society and economic necessity is very negligible.

6.6 IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY:

1. The distance education institutions attached to conventional universities with an enrolment of more than 10,000 should be upgraded into independent/autonomous open universities.

2. The regions/states having less distance education institutions should be considered on a priority basis for establishing open universities.

3. A distance education council should be set-up immediately in each state Govt. so as to coordinate the functioning of distance education Institutes/Directorates including Open
Universities with a view to determine standards of teaching, evaluation and research in distance education.

4. This study supports the recommendations made by the working group set up by the UGC, June 1993, to suggest measures for improving distance education, comprising of experts from Distance Education council, UGC and correspondence institutes; "Correspondence institutes be revamped and upgraded to the distance education mode."

5. More avenues should be provided for post-graduate and vocational, Science and Technology courses through Distance Education in Karnataka State in order to meet the growing demands.

6. The distance education institutions should use audio-visual modes in addition to printed lessons and extensive training of academic and administrative staff to mould them to make the functioning of the distance education system effective.

7. In order to reach the target audiences from remote/backward areas, apart from newspaper, the distance education institutions should make use of the modern telecommunication network.

8. The admission in distance education institutions should be based on the academic competency of individuals and not on educational qualifications, age, experience and other social priorities.

9. Providing instructional materials and facilities to distance learners on time (as scheduled) is an inevitable necessity for the effective functioning of distance education system. Delay in despatch of study materials would lead to poor attendance at contact/counselling sessions and term-end
examinations, non-submission of assignments and drop-outs from the system.

10. All distance education courses should have contact/counselling sessions component as they are found to be very useful.

11. Assignment component in the distance education system is positive in terms of motivating, rewarding and sustaining the learning process.

12. There is a need to strengthen the feedback through assignments as it is very beneficial for promoting and sustaining effective learning.

13. To facilitate remote/rural residents and weaker sections of the society, there should be study centres at closer vicinity so as to make the learner attend contact/counselling sessions and make optimum use of the support services. Also the subsidisation for transportation, as provided in the conventional education system be extended to distance education system too.

14. The learners interested in improving their qualifications find the distance courses relevant.

15. The distance education institutions should introduce vocation oriented courses so as to increase its relevance.

6.7 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY:

1. The study is confined to the state of Karnataka alone.

2. The period of study is confined to 1975 - 76 to 1991 - 92 at the all India level and 1985 to 1992 to the State of Karnataka.
3. Distance education in Karnataka has been studied at ICCCE from 1980 - 81 to 1991 - 92 and IGNOU, Bangalore Regional Centre from 1986 - 87 to 1991 - 92.

4. Data from distance learners have been collected from only one batch of students namely 1991 - 92 batch of ICCCE and IGNOU, Bangalore Regional Centre, excluding the IGNOU students registered at Goa Study Centre.

5. Although IGNOU is a National Open University with its operation spread throughout the length and breadth of the country, only one Regional Unit of IGNOU namely the Regional Centre, Bangalore has been studied as this study is confined to the Karnataka State only.

6. The study is limited to the post-graduate and under-graduate students of the ICCCE, Mysore and IGNOU, Bangalore Regional Centre.

7. The assignment system does not exist in ICCCE for the courses under study, hence only the assignment system of IGNOU has been studied.

8. In IGNOU no student at the P.G level has been selected from the below 25 years age group because the minimum age requirement for the P.G course (i.e., M.B.A) is 25 years of age (completed). Hence there are no students in the aforesaid group i.e., below 25 years.

9. The enrolment in distance education indicated for different Regions/States does not necessarily reveal that the students belong to the same region/state.

10. Data on rural/urban are much less firm because the classification does not follow the pattern of rural as defined in the census. However, on the basis of the residence of the student, the students have been classified as rural and urban.

6.8 SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH:

1. A study can be undertaken to evolve standard criteria to evaluate and appraise distance education institutions and courses in the Indian context.
2. A study can be undertaken to develop strategies of Coordination amongst the Open Universities and the distance education institutes attached to conventional universities so as to evolve a national system of distance education in the country.

3. Similar studies can be undertaken to trace the growth and development of distance education in different states in relation to the Indian Scenario.

4. Studies can be undertaken to find out the effectiveness of distance education systems, correspondence systems along with conventional systems taking learners' achievements as a criteria.

5. Experimental studies can be undertaken to find out the usability of latest telecommunication innovations like tele-conferencing, audio-conferencing, computer-aided learning, etc.

6. Case studies can be undertaken to study in-depth issues pertaining to assignment feedback, strengthening counselling, use of library facilities, etc.

7. Studies can be undertaken to find the cost-effectiveness and cost-efficiency for different distance education courses.

8. Studies can be conducted to identify the regional needs, relevance and viability of a course to the socio-cultural context of the region.