An Indian Scenario of ODL and Formal Education System

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ABSTRACT

Indian higher education system has undergone massive expansion in post-independent.Indian higher education system is the third largest in the world. It is divided into two main streams of the learning system, Open/distance education, and Formal education. India's open and distance learning system has emerged as an important mode for providing education to diverse sections of society. The student's enrolment in distance mode is more than the regular mode due to more benefits. Both modes of education are important and play important roles in the Indian education system.

Keywords: Education, ODL, mode, enrolment.

I.   INTRODUCTION

Higher education has always played a significant role in Indian history, from ancient Bharat to contemporary India. Ancient Nalanda, Taxila, and Vikramsila universities were renowned centers of higher study, drawing students from all over the nation as well as from distant nations like Korea, China, Burma (now Myanmar), Ceylon (now Sri Lanka), Tibet, and Nepal. One of the largest higher education systems in the world is currently run by India.

The current system of higher education can be traced back to MountstuartElphinstone's minutes from 1823, which emphasized the necessity for schools to be established to educate English and European sciences. Later, Lord Macaulay supported "efforts to make inhabitants of the land thoroughly proficient English scholars" in his minutes from 1835. The renowned Sir Charles Wood Dispatch of 1854, also referred to as the "Magna Carta of English Education in India," advocated for the development of a properly organized system of education from the elementary level to the university. It intended to promote indigenous education and envisaged the creation of an organized educational policy. The universities of Calcutta, Bombay (now Mumbai), and Madras were subsequently founded in 1857, while the university of Allahabad was established in 1887.

The Inter-University Board, which became the Association of Indian Universities subsequently, was founded in 1925 to support university operations by exchanging knowledge and working together in the areas of education, culture, sports, and related fields.The Report of the Central Advisory Board of Education on Post-War Educational Development in India, better known as the Sergeant Report, published in 1944 was India's first attempt to create a national educational system. In order to oversee the operations of the three Central Universities of Aligarh, Banaras, and Delhi, it advised the creation of a University Grants Committee, which

was established in 1945. The Committee was given the task of handling all of the then-existing Universities in 1947.Soon after India gained its independence, the University Education Commission was established in 1948 under the chairmanship of Dr. S Radhakrishnan "to report on Indian university education and suggest changes and extensions that would be desirable to suit the present and future needs and ambitions of the country." It was suggested that the University Grants Committee be reorganized along the general lines of the University Grants Commission of the United Kingdom, with a full-time Chairman and additional members to be chosen from among reputable educators.

The Union Government determined in 1952 that all cases involving the distribution of grants-in-aid from public monies to the Central Universities and other Universities and Institutions of higher education could be referred to the University Grants Commission. As a result, on December 28, 1953, the late Shri MaulanaAbulKalam Azad, the country's Minister of Education, Natural Resources, and Scientific Research, officially inaugurated the University Grants Commission (UGC).Integrating the most recent technological advancements would help India's higher education system alter paradigms. The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 and the changed system both emphasize the learners' inclusive growth. The major goal of NEP 2020 is to strengthen and execute technology-based, multidisciplinary education that is open to everybody.

II. METHODOLOGY

This is comparative research. The researcher tries to identify the differences between the Open/ distance education system and the formal education system. Comparative research is the act of comparing two or more things with a view to discovering something about one or all of the things being compared. The open and distance education system have some advantages, whereas the formal education system is equally important in its place. The researcher tries to identify the advantages and limitations of both systems.

III. THE LANDSCAPE OF THE INDIAN UNIVERSITIES OF HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM

Indian higher education is organized into three layers: universities, colleges, and courses. The regulatory and accreditation authorities and universities and colleges collaborate to give standardized education.According to the administration, universities are divided into Central universities, State universities, Private universities, Deemed universities, and institutions of national importance.

Landscape of University System in India
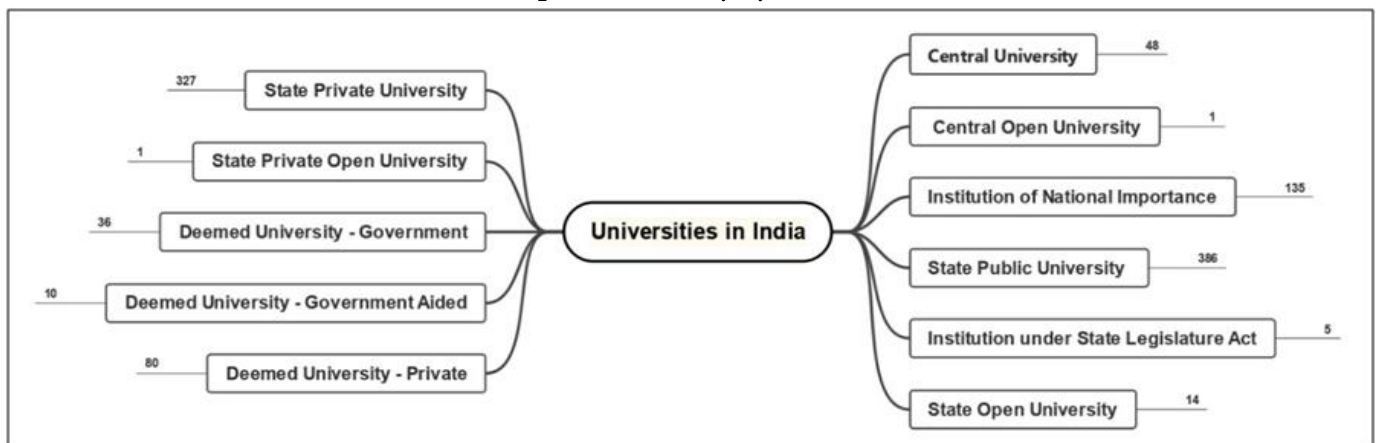
Source: AISHE Report 2019-20

All the above universities are engaged in providing education in a regular mode in India. Apart from regular education, from 1962the universities started offering education in open & distance modes, to enable those, who had the inclination and aptitude to acquire further knowledge and improve their professional competence. At present India has over 1000 universities. All universities are engaged in the work of providing education in regular mode. But as the open and distance education systems come into existence the reach of education increased. Let us try to understand the concept of an open and distance education system in India.

IV. ABOUT OPEN AND DISTANCE (ODL) EDUCATION IN INDIA

India's open and distance learning system has emerged as an important mode for providing education to diverse sections of society. Besides, the changing dynamics of the ODL system in the last six decades have been encouraging. With the proliferation of ICT, the boundaries of classrooms or campuses are becoming blurred. As it is said, the temporal and spatial boundaries have disappeared (Kulandaiswamy, 2011). The impressive number of ODL institutions in the country bear testimony to this fact. Single-mode open universities have increased from four in number during the 8th Plan period to 14 in the 10th Plan period. The number of dual-mode universities offering programs through the distance mode (DEIs) has risen to more than 200. This is due to the fact that the growth in the infrastructure for face-to-face instruction is unable to match the educational demands of the ever-increasing number of aspiring students. Currently, nearly 25% of students of higher education in the country are enrolled in the ODL system.

In the last six decades, the ODL system has registered phenomenal growth in the context of expansion and diversification of higher education. From a single institution in 1962 (Delhi University), the number of ODL institutions has reached approximately 250 including Central, State, Deemed-to-be, and Private Universities and many stand-alone institutions.

V. STUDENTS' ENROLMENT IN THE REGULAR AND OPEN/DISTANCE MODE

Total Student enrolment has been classified into 8 levels viz – Ph.D., M.Phil., Post Graduate, Under Graduate, PG Diploma, Diploma, Certificate, and Integrated. The highest number of students are enrolled at Under Graduate level across India. The student enrolment numbers for the last eight years in regular and distance modes have been given in the below table &chart.

Students Enrolment in Regular and Distance mode

Years	Student's Enrolment in Regular Mode	Students Enrolment in Open & Distance Mode
2012-13	26543159	3609258
2013-14	28406140	3930094
2014-15	2613728	3773527
2015-16	2885279	3803917
2016-17	2999447	4072837
2017-18	3292377	3973020
2018-19	3514727	3972068
2019-20	3851446	4286922

Source: AISHE Report 2012-13 to 2019-20
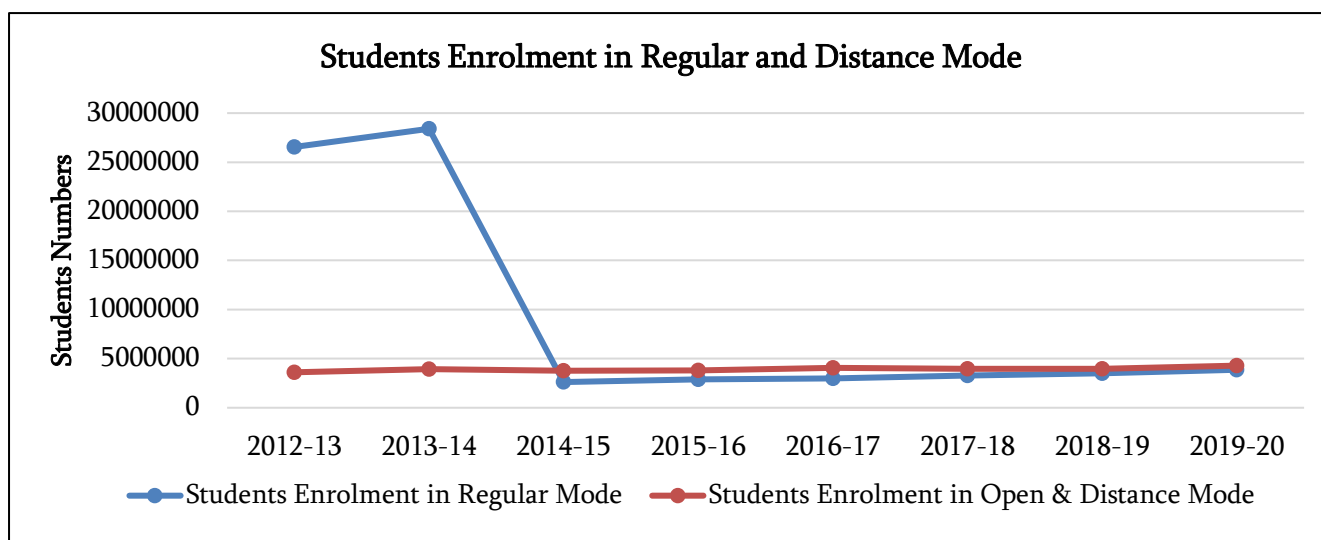
Distance education has become a useful mode of obtaining degrees for a large number of students who are staying in far-off and remote areas and for whom accessing universities on regular basis is still a dream.It is clear from the above graph thatthe distancelearning method is very popular among students and its popularity continues to grow. Whereas the regular education system shows high student enrolment in 2012-13 which later declined in 2014-15 and steadily grows up till 2019-20. The student's enrolment in distance mode is more than the regular mode due to more benefits. The benefits are as follows.

VI. BENEFITS OF OPEN & DISTANCE LEARNING SYSTEM OVER FORMAL EDUCATION

1. Location Independent

One of the most obvious benefits of open and distance learning is that it can be done from anywhere there is an internet connection. Moving to another town or city can be costly especially if it is a large capital and may not even be an option due to work or family responsibilities. Attending college in another country may also be difficult and costly due to visa restrictions.

2. Cost

Virtual courses can provide higher-quality education at a lower cost. Without the enormous overheads of campus, classrooms, equipment, offices, and administration, distance educators can pass these savings on to students.

3. Access to Cutting Edge Digital Content

Distance learning colleges can more easily adapt to the needs and realities of changing industries. This is particularly important in the digital sector where change is measured in weeks rather than years. The video content is recorded fresh after each iteration of theprogramme. This allows the academic and curriculum-lead lecturers to deliver the most up-to-date curriculum.

4. International Expert Guidance

By its nature, anopen and distance learning course brings together a more diverse group of students. This can provide students with exposure to cultural approaches in projects and work that they would not as readily receive in a conventional education environment.

5. Broader Networking Opportunities

A follow-on effect of this more diverse student body is that it provides networking opportunities outside of what a student could normally expect. Fellow students can become lifelong contacts and friends. As each progresses in their careers they create an ever more valuable network that often spans the globe.

6. Flexible Learning

Online learning allows students to study flexibly and balance work and home life. All lectures are recorded and available for participants to watch 24/7 online and anywhere they want.

7. Stay healthy and keep others safe

The COVID-19 pandemic taught us the importance of wearing masks and maintaining social distancing as a way of protecting public health. With distance learning, students can stay home when sick without missing out on too many lessons. Not only is this a more comfortable way to learn when they're under the weather, but it also shows the teacher that you value the well-being of the entire class.

VII. CONCLUSION

From the above study it is concluded that the open and distance learning mode is most popular among Indian students. The ODL mode shown small ups and down in enrolment of students. As the regular mode of education shows slow but steady growth. In comparison between ODL and regular mode education ODL show more numbers of enrolment than regular mode. But it there is no such evidence observe about effect of ODL on regular mode or vise-a-versa. Both modes of education are important and playing important role in Indian education system.

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