ACADEMIC EFFICIENCY IN COLLEGIATE AND DISTANCE EDUCATION

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Preface

The term efficiency to the satisfactory utilization of the facilities provided for turning the output with minimum wastage.

The educational inputs including students, teachers and various parts of Education production mechanism act and react up on one another. The efficiency of the mechanism is heartily dependent on the quality of human resources influenced by the social and economic environments of students and teachers.

The author of brings to lime light the four different meaning to the concept of efficiency such as efficiency of the total National effort, efficiency of the allocation of a given national budget, efficiency of expenditure over a sub- head of education and efficiency interms of actual output.

By efficiency the author means the achievement of students in four aspects such as academic subjects, fine arts and sports and games.

The author rightly pointout that their 16 correction between Academic efficiency and accountability.

Accountability is the binding and co-ordinary force of different factors which ensure the success of any assignment under taken. Absence of 'Accountability' shall tend towards deterioration of educational attainment.

The book is an invitation of the author to those who endeavour to impact education to the learning community to pay heed to the concept of `Accountability' and 'Education for Excellence!'

Content

ACADEMIC EFFICIENCY IN COLLEGIATE AND DISTANCE EDUCATION

INTRODUCTION

ACCOUNTABILITY is the binding and coordinating force of different factors which ensure the success of any assignment undertaken. It's presence is more essential in the field of education where the future of the country is shaped. But this very important force is not harnessed properly in the present educational system.

Accountability means the responsibility a person owes for the work he undertakes. Education of a child is a continuous process. It goes on at all times in school, at home and outside. For the sake of convenience the different levels of education are spoken as primary, secondary, higher secondary, college and university. At the end of each stage an average pupil is expected to pass out with the requisite knowledge, skill, understanding and application ability prescribed to be achieved at that particular stage. But now the progress of a pupil is measured in terms of the number of years spent and the number of classes passed.

The word ‘accountability' is very interesting because it is such a pervasive feature in many of the human relationships. Wittengenstein (1998) suggested that the *usage* of *the* term "accountable" is quite extensive. The accountability includes

a) giving an account of and
b) being answerable

Viewed in this way, it may be easily concluded that ‘accountability’ on account of its inherent virtues is always helpful in bringing improvement into the functioning of a system. Thus the concept of accountability and its implications are quite complex from both theoretical and practical perspective. This complexity may be partly due to the term's origin and a review of its etymology revealed considerable variation in its meaning.

Lessinger (2001), a leading proponent of accountability pointed to a new trend in the movement the frequent use of modern business as an ideal model for management and accountability. Teachers should be accountable for "results". Their primary concern is with the actual outcomes of education as evidenced by student performance. Of the various forms of accountability proposed for education, the concept of performance contracting is often coated as the most effective strategy of assure "accountability for results". The crucial factor in all these is that their determinate quality generally refers to the practices in which teacher's performance is evaluated in terms of student's performances and rewarded.

SIGNIFICANCE OF ACCOUNTABILITY IN EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

By this we mean, the maintenance of a system in which each of the students, parents, members of the community, teachers, educational administration and the government and the public funding system feel their responsibilities to the extent of being accountable to each other for the proper realization of the set objectives of teacher education. Demand for greater accountability in education and the proposals that accompany them are often directed towards teachers. The concept of accountability associated with work ethics is shrouded in the ancient Indian heritage. From the time immemorial in the history of mankind, work ethics has had a place in one shape or the other. In an organization, every individual has the duty or responsibility to perform. According to Pagare (1992), once an individual is assigned responsibilities and the authority to perform certain task he is accountable for proper performance of the assigned responsibility. The academic community of scholars recognized the fact that authorities and people have every right to judge their performance. For some, accountability includes setting right goals, assessing their degree of realization and accepting responsibility for any results that are perceived inadequate. For others, it may also require an explanation for the lapses on the part of those responsible for the implementation of the programme. It is pertinent to mention that institutional evaluation need not confine only to

students' evaluation. It may also encompass other indicators of institution quality such as community and students served by the institution, vision, personnel in the institution, material resources, educational programmes, school achievements and the like. All this would require a fairly high level of sophistication on the part of teachers. Gnanam Committee Report (1990) stated that the society is entitled to demand that the members of the academic community individually and collectively be made accountable in concrete and visible terms.

FACTORS CONTRIBUTE TO ACCOUNTABILITY

The tendency of teachers is to shift the accountability to somebody else thereby implying that they themselves are not responsible for the poor performance of their pupils.

There are five factors that contribute to accountability in education. They are the teacher, the pupil, the management, the parent and the society as a whole in order of their importance.

The teacher factor is by far the prominent one that contributes to accountability in education. When a child is entrusted to the care of a teacher who is more knowledgeable and responsible of the two, it is his duty as well as sacred responsibility to take all possible measures and see that the knowledge of the child is improved up to the mark prescribed. For achieving this, he should not only be thorough with his own subject matter but also know thoroughly the child he deals with. His personal attention helps him understand the child properly and devise methods and procedures to be adopted in imparting the requisite knowledge.

He should be sympathetic because he may find the child wanting in certain items related to the previous class of study. The teacher should fill up the gaps and prepare the child for the present course of study. The teacher's close observation of the child will also help formation of good habits and character in the child which will definitely influence his progress and personality.

The necessity for close care and correction decreases as the child grows and goes up to higher classes where a hint or a constructive suggestion will suffice. There should also be a provision for the teacher's evaluation of the pupils' knowledge at the commencement of the academic year and for taking corrective steps. This will bring all the pupils of the class to a uniform level on which the teacher can build up

DIMENSIONS OF TEACHERS' ACCOUNTABILITY

The dimensions of teachers' accountability may consist of:

- Classroom Instruction
- Research Pursuits
- Moral and Ethical Obligations
- Tests, Examinations and Evaluation
- Co-curricular activities and Extension services
- Personal Guidance to Students
- Resource Mobilisations
- Self-growth and personal development
- National Integration
- General life enrichment
- Contribution in resolving social issues, institutional issues
- Utilisation of Institutional infrastructure
- Feed-back of students

The knowledge is related to the subsequent year of study. This practice will surely put an end to the complaints stating that the teachers of the previous class of study had not done justice to the students and hence the present performance is affected. Given the inequalities in the intelligent quotient and the environmental variations of the students, it is unrealistic to expect the teacher to elevate all of them to the requisite level of knowledge. Yet if that can be achieved at least in the case of the' pupils of average intelligence it can be said that the teacher has passed the test of accountability successfully.

The second factor is the pupil. But his responsibility is smaller because of his dependent nature. When the teachers teach and guide him, it is his responsibility to work hard, show progress and acquire at least the minimum requisite knowledge.

His performance therefore depends on his interest, sincerity and industry. In the absence of a high level of intelligence also he can shine considerably if he shows' tenacity and hard work. But these qualities in turn depend upon his environmental background, parental advice, encouragement, level of motivation and counseling he receives from different sources both inside and outside the classroom. In the present system of automatic promotions and no detention which is adopted to counteract stagnation and dropping out, students have lost a very effective means of motivation in the stipulation of a compulsory pass in the terminal examinations.

Pupils are promoted to the next class even though they have not learned what they are expected to learn and hence they find it difficult at the time of public examinations. Their anxiety to pass the final examination prompts them to take recourse to malpractice and shortcut methods. The result is that even though they pass, they lack in knowledge.

In the present system, the best the teachers can do is to impress upon the pupils from the beginning that it is better for them to attain the prescribed level of knowledge. They should be encouraged to complete the syllabus and assignments during their holidays and come up to the mark. Coaching centres can complete and concretise knowledge and skills of the class from which the students have passed out. If teachers prepare students at the commencement of the academic year and coaching centres take up the above mentioned measures it will work wonders in bringing up the academic excellence of students. Parents can themselves take up these measures in the interest of their children. It is also the responsibility of the students to impose upon themselves self-discipline.

The third factor that contributes to the accountability in education is the management. By management we mean both the Government and the private bodies that run the institutions. When once an educational institution is established, the management is under obligation to provide the necessary infrastructural facilities for the teaching work to be carried on effectively. These include suitable accommodation, furniture, laboratory, library, reading room, play ground and so on. Provision should be made adequately for the maintenance charges and replacement costs. But now Governments alone are no longer in a position to open new schools. Blanket permission is given to all the existing schools to admit students that seek admission regardless of the facilities available. Permission is also given to private bodies to start new schools liberally on their simple promise that the required facilities will be provided in due course and on an undertaking given to that effect. Except in case of a few committed managements, the running of schools has become mostly commercial. When once an institution is permitted to be opened, it is very difficult for the Government to cancel the permission even on valid grounds for fear of public dissent and other pressures. So, most of the schools and colleges are ill-equipped, ill-accommodated and ill-provided. Coming to accountability, it cannot be fixed on the teachers where the teacher-pupil ratio is very high.

The next factor in accountability in education is the parent. As management is to the institution in providing good working conditions, a parent is responsible to the child in providing conducive home environment. He has to take care of the nutrition and health of the child and also provide the required facilities for the child for effective academic work and learning such as supply of textbooks, stationery, reference books and other instruments necessary for classroom study. Above all he should give the child a feeling of security, show love and care as well as understanding of the child's problems which vary as the child advances in years. He should give the child encouragement and also advice of fortitude to face failures and jolts.

The fifth factor in line is the society at large. We find people commenting on the failure of teachers in inculcating good habits and improving academic standards in children. But they conveniently forget that such an achievement can be the result of a concerted effort by the teacher, the parent and the society. After all the pupils spend six hours at the most, on the premises of the school, under the supervision of the teachers. What about the various influences that works on them at home and outside? The visual and the print media have an immense and immediate influence on the thinking process of the youngsters.

Another important aspect of accountability is the apportioning of it among the five factors mentioned earlier which if done will give a scientific understanding of the problem. Education in general is the combination of the teaching and learning process.

The most important elements that make education are the teacher, the taught and the subject. These are the core elements. Other things like infrastructure, aids, equipment, books etc. play a supporting role. Among the three, the teacher who handles both the students and the subject occupies a pivotal place. Hence his importance and responsibility are great.

To the good work done by the teachers and the managements, support should come from the parents in shaping their children on right lines. Society should also contribute its bit of good work in maintaining conducive and exemplary atmosphere to the students who watch very carefully the words and deeds of the elders and leaders in society:

Also the Government which is the law enforcing authority and dispenser of efficient administration can also take several measures to curb the unbecoming influences that corrupt the young minds.

Conclusion

It is strongly recommended that teachers must have accountability to the subject, profession, and colleagues and society at large. We have to ensure that

knowledge, skills and attitudes which comprise each subject must not be distorted, suppressed or injured. Thus the integrity of their discipline is upheld and that students develop positive attitudes and confidence towards their subject, their capacities, educational system and its use in society.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

Services are defined as "Deeds, process and performances". Intangibility, Perishability, Variability and Inseparability are some of the unique characteristics, which differentiate services from physical goods.

Intangibility: If we are going to buy a car, we can take it for a test drive; if we are going to pursue higher education in an educational institution, we do not know what we will receive until we have experienced instruction.

Inseparability: As in most services in education also, both the service provider (Teacher) and the customer (Student) must be present for the transaction to occur. The infrastructure in a college may be outstanding, but if the teacher has a poor attitude or provides uninteresting instruction student will down-rate the overall learning experience.

Variability: The quality of education is highly variable. The quality depends on who provides them and when and where they are provided.

Perishability: Services which cannot be stored are perishable. A 60 seat M.B.A. business school that only admits 40 seats on a particular year cannot carry over the 20 vacant seats and admit 80 students next year. The revenue lost from not admitting those 20 seats is gone forever because of service perishability. If service has to maximize revenue, itmust manage capacity and demand. It is important to the success of educational institutions.

These unique characteristics of education lead to specific problems of educational institution and strategies have been advocated to deal with them. One of the major problems faced by the service provider is to control quality and offer consistent service.

Among the definitions of Service Quality (SQ) that measure the external perspective, the one given by Parasuraman, Zeithamal, and Berry (1985) is

particularly useful. They define service quality as the degree and direction of discrepancy between consumer's (students) perceptions and expectations in terms of differentials. The concept that service quality is a function of the expectations – (minus) performance gap was reinforced by a broad based exploratory study that was conducted by the above said researchers.

The 'SERVQUAL' is the most extensively used service quality measurement instrument. It is easy to use with high reliability and validity. To measure the service quality of educational institutions, various researchers have adopted a new EduQUAL.

BENEFITS OF EduQUAL

1. Student satisfaction is high towards the educational institution.
2. Top priority by the Recruiters.
3. Strong Alumni support in terms of employment, supported Infrastructure development and brand building.
4. High Teaching Faculty Retention, Low drop–out and High student morale.
5. Providing quality Human Resources to the Nation and efficient use of resources.
6. Positive Word of mouth and increased number of admissions.
7. Quality is the most important admission decision factor influencing the parent and student's admission decisions and increased profitability and return on Investment.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

The following are the objectives of the study:

1. To find out Service Quality Gap along each of the EduQUAL dimensions in colleges affiliated to Madurai Kamaraj University.
2. To understand the relationship between Gender of the respondents, Age of the Institution, College Education System (Aided and or self financed) , Nature of the Course (Pure Science and Applied Science) and EduQUAL dimensions in colleges affiliated to Madurai Kamaraj University.

3. To measure the academic efficiency in collegiate and distance education system.

HYPOTHESES

1. There is no significant relationship between gender of the respondents and their perception about the EduQUAL dimensions.
2. There is no significant relationship between age of the institution and EduQUAL perception of the respondents.
3. There is no significant relationship between nature of the course and students' perception about the EduQUAL dimensions.
4. There is no significant relationship between college education system and student's perception about the EduQUAL dimensions.

RESEARCH DESIGN

The researcher has selected descriptive research design for the study. The researcher has planned to get the information by a questionnaire and schedule.

PRIMARY DATA

The primary data were collected from the students pursuing their final year U.G and P.G and Alumni of these institutions

METHOD OF DATA COLLECTION

The data were collected from the respondents by administering a Questionnaire and Schedule. A seven point Likert's type scale (1. strongly disagree and 7. strongly agree) questionnaire is framed by the researcher based on the existing SERVQUAL questionnaire models.

SAMPLING DESIGN

The researcher took 336 (from 26 self financed colleges and 16 Aided Colleges) respondents as sample size on the basis of non- probability Quota Sampling. Around 8 students were selected representing each college.(U.G. Final Year-Pure science-1,U.G. Final Year- Applied science- 1, P.G. Final Year-Pure science-1, P.G. Final Year-Applied Science – 1, U.G. Alumni Pure science –1,U.G.

Alumni-Applied Science –1, P.G Alumni-Pure Science –1, P.G Alumni-Applied Science –1, Total =8).

STATISTICAL TOOLS

Arithmetic Mean, and Standard Deviation are calculated to compare the mean score of EduQUAL dimension of different colleges. The researcher has used independent T-test, and One- way ANOVA Test to test the hypotheses.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Other than Time and Money constraints, this study is focused only on Colleges affiliated to Madurai Kamaraj University. So, the results cannot be generalized.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

The following table represents the Perceived, Expected and Gap Value of EduQUAL in the colleges affiliated to Madurai Kamaraj University.

TABLE NO.1 MEAN SCORE OF EduQUAL FACTORS

EduQUAL Dimensions	EduQUAL Factor	Perceived EduQUAL (P)	Expected EduQUAL (E)	Service Gap(D) P-E=D
Learning Outcomes	Training on State of the art technology	5.02	6.48	1.46
	Practical orientation in education	5.94	6.73	0.79
	Adaptability to modern Technique	5.78	6.44	0.66
	Design of course structure-based on job requirement	5.13	6.88	1.75
	Problem solving skills	5.98	6.03	0.50
	Sense of social obligation	5.88	6.45	0.57
Responsive-ness	Staff's prompt service at service areas	4.89	6.55	1.66
	Staff's courteousness and willingness to help	4.87	6.64	1.77
	Transparency in norms and rules	5.90	6.80	0.90
Physical Facilities	Well Equipped Laboratories	6.01	7.00	0.99
	Comprehensive learning sources	5.89	6.84	0.95
	Academic, residential, and recreational facilities	5.98	6.22	0.24
	Training in well equipped communication laboratory	4.89	7.00	2.11
	Opportunities for Campus training and placement	5.03	7.00	1.93
Personality Development	Encouragement of sports, games and cultural activities	5.99	6.45	0.46
	Extra academic activities	5.98	6.68	0.70
	Recognition of the students	5.48	7.00	1.52
Academics	Adequacy of subject teachers	4.99	7.00	2.01
	Available student's consultation	5.01	6.84	1.83
	Close supervision of student's work	4.99	6.46	1.47
	Expertise in subject and well organized lectures.	5.87	7.00	1.13
	Good communication skill of academic staff	5.07	7.00	1.93

Source: Primary data

HYPOTHESIS TESTING 1.GENDER AND EduQUAL DIMESIONS

Null Hypothesis: There is no significant relationship between gender of the respondents and the perception about the EduQUAL dimensions.

TABLE NO:2. T-TEST FOR GENDER AND EDUQUAL DIMENSIONS.

EduQUAL Dimensions	Male	Female	t-value	P-value
	Mean	Mean		
Learning Outcomes	5.43	5.39	0.22	0.875
Responsiveness	5.25	5.19	0.71	0.652
Physical Facilities	5.87	5.71	0.08	0.921
Personality Development	5.84	5.01	0.84	0.031*
Academics	6.11	6.02	1.02	0.453

Note: * Denotes significance at 5% Level.

Since P-Value is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected with respect to Personality Development. Hence, there exists a significant difference between Male and Female with regard to Personality Development. But, for other service quality dimensions, there is no significant difference between male and female respondents since P-Value is greater than 0.05. It is also observed that female respondents perceive that colleges have discrimination in respect to personality development dimension of EduQUAL.

AGE OF THE EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION AND EduQUAL PERCEPTION.

Null Hypothesis: There is no significant relationship between Age of the institution and EduQUAL perception of the respondents.

TABLE NO:3 ANOVA FOR AGE OF THE EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION AND EDUQUAL PERCEPTION.

EduQUAL Dimensions	F-Value	P Value	Age of the Education Institution			
			Below 5 years	5-10 years	10-20 Years	> 20 years
Learning Outcomes	2.399	0.068	4.89	4.87	5.09	5.23
Responsiveness	1.802	0.147	4.95	5.42	5.39	5.29
Physical Facilities	7.471	0.000*	5.44	5.02	5.84	5.61
Pers. Development	0.991	0.397	5.56	5.57	5.42	5.17
Academics	0.209	0.890	6.12	6.08	6.06	6.02

Note: * Denotes significance at 5% Level.

Since P-Value is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected at 5% level of significance with respect to Physical Facilities. There is a significant difference between the Age of the institution and EduQUAL perception of the respondents. But, for other service quality dimensions, there is no significant difference between the educational qualifications of the respondents with respect to perception about the dimensions of service quality, since P-Value is greater than 0.05. It is also observed that compared to other respondents, the students of institutions older than 10 years are having a slightly higher satisfaction in respect of Physical Facilities.

NATURE OF THE COURSE AND EduQUAL DIMENSIONS

Null Hypothesis: There is no significant relationship between Nature of the Course and students' perception about the EduQUAL dimensions.

TABLE NO: 4 T-TEST FOR SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE NATURE OF THE COURSE AND EDUQUAL

EduQUAL dimensions	t-Value	P.Value	Pure Science	Appl. Science
Learning Outcomes	0.84	0.006*	4.09	5.84
Responsiveness	0.71	0.652	5.15	5.23
Physical Facilities	0.74	0.009*	5.97	5.01
Personality Development	0.22	0.875	5.50	5.36
Academics	1.02	0.453	6.05	6.07

Note: Significance at 5% Level.

Since P Value is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected at 5% level of significance with respect to Learning outcomes and Physical Facilities. Hence, There is a significant difference between the Nature of the course of the respondents and EduQUAL perception. But, for other service quality dimensions, there is no significant difference between the Nature of the course and EduQUAL, since P-Value is greater than 0.05.

COLLEGE EDUCATION SYSTEM AND EduQUAL DIMENSIONS

Null Hypothesis: There is no significant relationship between College Education system and student's perception about the EduQUAL dimensions.

TABLE NO: 5. T-TEST FOR COLLEGE EDUCATION SYSTEM AND EDUQUAL

EduQUAL Dimensions	F-Value	P.Value	Self Finance	Aided and Self Finance
Learning Outcomes	0.26	0.865	5.14	5.21
Responsiveness	0.76	0.639	5.44	5.41
Physical Facilities	0.36	0.699	5.97	5.66
Personality Development	0.29	0.775	5.43	5.33
Academics	1.19	0.389	6.12	6.21

Note: Significance at 5% Level.

Since P Value is greater than 0.05, the null hypothesis is accepted at 5% level of significance. Hence, There is no significant relationship between College Education system and student's perception about the EduQUAL dimensions.

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

1. There is a gap in Learning Outcome dimension of EduQUAL. Training on State of the art technology and Design of course structure-based on job requirement cause maximum gap. The students perceive that adoption of modern technology and design of course structure based on job requirement is not adequate in affiliated self -financed colleges of Madurai Kamaraj University.
2. There is a gap between expectation and perception of the respondents with respect to Responsiveness dimension of EduQUAL. Prompt service and staff's empathy towards students produce the maximum gap. The students of this self- financed colleges perceive that administrative staff's empathy and willingness to serve students are low among affiliated self financed colleges of Madurai Kamaraj University.
3. There is a gap in Physical facilities dimension of EduQUAL. Language Laboratory and Campus Placement are causing maximum gap. The students perceive that Language Training lab and Campus Placement are very essential but presently students are not satisfied with these attributes of physical facilities. But most of the students were satisfied with Academic, residential, and recreational facilities provided by the affiliated self financed colleges of Madurai Kamaraj University.
4. Most of the students were satisfied with personality development dimension except the system for reward and recognition of the students.
5. There is a gap in Academics dimension of EduQUAL. Almost all the factors, such as adequacy of subject Teachers, Student's consultation, Close supervision of student's work, expertise in subject and well organized lectures creates vast gap in the perception among the students of this colleges. Most of the students perceived that Academic dimension of this EduQUAL is very low in these colleges.

6. There is a significant difference between the perception of Male and Female students with respect to Personality Development dimension of EduQUAL. This clearly indicates that female respondents perceive that colleges have discrimination in respect to personality development dimension of EduQUAL.
7. There is a significant difference between the Age of the institution and physical facilities dimension of EduQUAL perception of the respondents. But, for other service quality dimensions, there is no significant difference. It is also observed that respondents, the students of institutions age more than 10 years are having a slightly higher satisfaction in respect of Physical Facilities.
8. There is a significant difference between the Nature of the course of the respondents and EduQUAL perception with respect to Physical Facilities and Learning outcomes. But, for other service quality dimensions, there is no significant difference between the Nature of the course and EduQUAL.
9. There is no significant relationship between College Education system and student's perception about the EduQUAL dimensions.

SUGGESTIONS

1. Adopting new Technology based teaching aids is the need of the hour. Continuous Evaluation System is essential to understand the impact of these technological teaching aids. Industry -Institution and Industry – University interface are essential to design the syllabus and course structure.
2. 2.A training for Administrative and Office staff to handle the students is very essential. Periodic feedback of students' opinion of office staff is essential. A grievance handling system managed by stakeholders of institution is essential.
3. A Language Lab for students' communication development must be developed in all the colleges to enhance students' communication skill and employability. It is the role of the university to make this provision statutory in all its affiliated colleges. A Campus Placement program at

university or college level is expected by most of the students. It is the responsibility of the university to bring employers to recruit the students of its affiliated colleges. The colleges located in rural areas can join together to organize this campus interview in the selected strategic venues.

4. Student recognition programs have to be developed in every affiliated college. Creating an opportunity for knowledge upgradation through organizing Industrial Exposure Training, Seminar, Symposium and Workshop will be fruitful.
5. It is the responsibility of the university to ensure that there is adequate number of subject teachers to teach the subjects. Other responsibilities of include student's counseling, periodical and close supervision of student's work.

CONCLUSION

Quality in education ensures quality in individual. It is necessary that the society educates all its citizens, but it not also provide quality education. The present study explored the various gaps in the expectation and perception of the students of colleges affiliated to Madurai Kamaraj University. It is essential that all the stakeholders of higher education must understand their responsibility to provide quality education to the people of this country. This is a way to generate quality in individual life and the society.

SHIFTING PARADIGMS

Education, particularly higher education as the instrument of individual, societal and economic transformation is well recognized now more than ever. Consequently, there have been greater interest and investment in higher education the world over with the concomitant increase in the number of students who opt for higher education. This demand for higher education form a sizeable portion of the population is going to continue during the years to come. In addition to the need for the expansion of higher education, there are a number of political and socio-economic factors that affect the development of the system

of higher education in any country. In order to cope with these challenges effectively and efficiently, it is essential that the educational institutions have a realistic understanding of the emerging trends and the role they have to play to build a better future.

REFORMS IN HIGHER EDUCATION

The higher education system is witnessing significant transformations and reforms, including the emergence of new types of institutions and the higher education landscape are changing very fast. Today, there are universities without building or classrooms or even a library. There are universities located thousands of miles away from its students in a different continent. There are higher education institutions (HEIs) open 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and 365 days a year.

There are HEIs that offer degrees with a catalogue of hundreds of courses. These developments that seem to be imaginative are indeed realities. Soon the system may introduce degrees valid only for five years after graduation and colleges willing to reimburse its students if they do not find a suitable job within six months after graduation. With the developments in WTO and GATS we will soon have countries whose main exports earnings come from the sale of higher education services. There are also changes in patterns of financing and governance, establishment of external quality assurance mechanisms, reforms in curriculum design, and technological innovations for teaching-learning. In this rapidly changing scenario, the higher education institutions are expected to quickly adopt to emerging developments and plan for a better future. The prerequisite to plan for a better future is an understanding of the changes and their impact on the system of higher education.

An analysis of the changing context reveals the following trends, most of which are likely to permeate through the educational policies and practices of the next few decades:

Trend I

1.1 Shift from elitist to mass education

1.2 Continuing quantitative expansion

Trend II

2.1 Decreasing funding from governmental sources

2.2 Debate on higher education as a non-merit item

2.3 Increasing demand for non-formal and life-long learning

2.4 Socio-political pressure based on demographic, political, and socio-economic changes

2.5 Increasing private initiatives

2.6 Increasing influence of market forces

Trend III

3.1 Focus on science and technology

3.2 Shift from mono- to multi- and inter-disciplinary approach.

3.3 Rethinking the role of universities

Trend IV

4.1 Quality Assurance

QUALITY OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN INDIA

In the current shuttered environment, the quality of education and research in Indian universities has been in consistent decline and they continue to lose their best students to universities abroad. Unsurprisingly, on every measure higher education in India lags behind. Even though we have IITs and IIMs many students are not able to serve in India. The flood of Indian students into universities in the United States, Britain, Australia and Singapore indicates that given half a chance Indian students would exit the system. The country's premier economic research institution, the Delhi School of Economics, has limited number of students registered in M.Phil programmes and relatively an even smaller number of Ph D students. Another indicator of the rot in higher

education is that Indian research publications account for only 2 to 5 percent of papers published worldwide.

The entry of foreign universities into India is likely to prove a boon for higher education Opening the door to foreign institutions of higher education is a necessary first step towards breaking down the massive wall between Indian students and quality higher education. It would be ironic to allow foreign companies to sell us cars, phones, toothpastes and lipsticks, but deny their participation in the provision of education which is far more crucial to improving the quality of life of Indians.

There can be no doubt that higher education has made a significant contribution to Economic Development, social progress and political democracy in independent India. It is a source of dynamism for the economy. It has created social opportunities for people. It has fostered the vibrant democracy in our polity. It has provided a beginning for the creation of a knowledge society. But it would be a mistake to focus on its strengths alone. It has weaknesses that are a cause for serious concern. There is, in fact, a quiet crisis in higher education in India that runs deep. It is not yet discernible simply because there are pockets of excellence, an enormous reservoir of talented young people and an intense competition in the admissions process. And, in some important spheres, we continue to reap the benefits of what was sown in higher education 50 years ago by the founding fathers of the Republic. The reality is that we have miles to go. The proportion of our population, in the age group 18-24, that enters the world of higher education is around 7 per cent, which is only one-half the average for Asia. The opportunities for higher education, in terms of the number of places in universities, are simply not enough in relation to our needs. The quality of higher education in most of our universities requires substantial improvement.

It is clear that the system of higher education in India faces serious challenges. And it needs a systematic overhaul, so that we can educate much larger numbers without diluting academic standards. This is imperative because

the transformation of economy and society in the twenty-first century would depend, in significant part, on the spread and the quality of education among our people, particularly in the sphere of higher education. It is only an inclusive society that can provide the foundations for a knowledge society.

PARADIGM SHIFT IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Various developments both locally and globally, in areas such as post modern science, people power, social formations and moves towards new environmental ethics are signs of an important paradigm shift. *Higher Education Pendulum Swings* From To

• Liberal-classified	Industrial –Commercial
• Liberal Education	Vocational Emphasis
• Academic Independence	Industrial relevance
• Total societal access	Restricted access
• New selective access	Selective access
• Personal Development	Manpower planning regions
• Basic research	Applied/Strategic research
• High value of Humanities and arts	Utility of subject
• Research for knowledge	Directive research
• Specialisation	Broader/Multidisciplinary
• Government financed	Self financing

ACTIONABLE INITIATIVES BY INSTITUTIONS

At present India has five hundred and forty million youth under the age of 25 which will continuously be growing till the year 2050. In the coming decades, India needs large number of talented youth with higher education for the task of knowledge acquisition, knowledge imparting, knowledge creation and knowledge sharing. Between now to 2050, two important events will be taking place in our country, India would have become a developed nation by 2020 through an integrated development plan in 5 key areas where India has core

competence. India would also have realized Energy independence by 2030. During this period, the youth population which accounts for 54% of the total population of the country will be continuously growing till 2050, which will be unique to India. The youth power is indeed a great power, particularly the ignited mind of the youth is the most powerful resource on the earth, above the earth and under the earth. This presents an opportunity to develop a "Global Human Resource Cadre" which will be an essential resource for not only for India but for many countries in the world. NIT will have to work towards increasing education system from the existing 10% to 15% by the year 2015, 20% by the year 2020, 25% by the year 2025 and 30% by the year 2030.

The new form of knowledge production poses an immense challenge to existing institutional structures of the higher educational system. There is a clear shift of the process of knowledge production, where the university or for that matter, institutions of higher education are not on the focus, but individuals and competencies become the central categories of analysis. The challenge is further made more difficult since there has been an expansion of the higher education system, where not only the kinds of institutions engaged in this business have increased but also the very numbers of universities has grown. It is not the size of these institutions that pose a challenge but the varied functions of these new kinds of institutions. The two varied functions to be undertaken by the Higher Education institutions are:

Capacity building among students:

"Learning gives Creativity, Creativity leads to thinking, Thinking provides knowledge and Knowledge makes you great"

When the students come out of the educational institutions certain capacities are required to be built in them to deal with the real world, particularly to grow in their professional career and participate in the national development. The ingredients for capacity building must be embedded right from the beginning of the students life from primary education to higher

education. A good educational model is the need of the hour to ensure that the students developed as enlightened citizens and also participate in National development missions. For participating in the Nation building tasks: the capacities required to be built among the students in their formative years by the educational institutions are:

a) The capacity for research or inquiry
b) The capacity for creativity and innovation
c) The capacity to use high technology
d) The capacity for entrepreneurial leadership and
e) The capacity for moral leadership.

Research and enquiry

The 21st century is about the management of all the knowledge and information we have generated and the value addition we could bring to it. We must give our students the skills with which they find a way through the sea of knowledge that we have created and continue with life- long learning. Today we are empowered by technology to teach ourselves beyond classrooms and become life-long learners. This is indeed required for sustained economic development of the Nation and also individual prosperity.

Creativity and Innovation

The management of knowledge in the 21st century is beyond the capacity of a single individual. The amount of information that we have around is overwhelming. The management of knowledge therefore must move out of the realm of the individual and shift into the realm of the networked groups. The students must learn how to manage knowledge collectively and to work in multidisciplinary teams. When the information is networked the power and utility of the information grows multifold. Information that is static does not grow. In the new digital economy, information that is circulated across enterprise, creates innovation and eventually contributes to National wealth.

Capacity to use high technology:

Every student in our schools and colleges should be brought in contact with technology to aid their learning process. Educational institutions should be equipped with adequate computing equipment, laboratory equipments, and Internet facilities with high band width connectivity and provide an environment for the students to enhance their learning ability. In the midst of all of the technological innovations and revolutions we cannot think that the role of the teachers will be diminished. In fact the teacher will become even more important and the whole world of education will become teacher assisted and would help in "tele-porting" the best teacher to every nook and corner of the country and propagate the knowledge. The teacher becomes a facilitator and knowledge manager.

Entrepreneurship:

The aptitude for entrepreneurship should be cultivated right from the beginning and in the educational environment both in the Schools and the Colleges. We must teach our students to take calculated risks for the sake of larger gain, but within the ethos of good business. They should also cultivate a disposition to do things right. The inner being must be illuminated with righteousness. This capacity will enable them to take up challenging tasks later.

Moral leadership:

Moral leadership involves two aspects. First it requires the ability to have compelling and powerful dreams or visions of human betterment. Moral leadership requires a disposition to do the right thing and influence others also to do right things. There is a need for inclusion of "moral science" class as a part of education in all the schools and colleges. If we develop in all our students these five capacities, we will produce "Autonomous Learner" a self-directed, self controlled, lifelong learner who will have the capacity to both respect authority and at the same time is capable of questioning authority, in an appropriate manner. These are the leaders who would work together as a "Self-organizing

Network" and transform any Nation into a developed Nation in a time bound manner.

Employment-oriented education

A sea change is likely in the approach to taking education to everyone cutting across social, gender and geographical barriers in the Eleventh Plan. The Plan will focus more on improving secondary school education, enhancing employable skills at all levels and give a thrust to science education, which is being overshadowed by the growth of technical education.

***To reach these ambitious goals*:**

- Private players

The government will increase its allocations manifold and at the same time involve the private players who have become crucial in increasing the intake capacity and that too at the required pace. The thrust will definitely be on involving them in taking education to every doorstep and only to those who are "not-so-business minded" would be encouraged.

The importance of private players' role could be gauged from the fact that during the 10th Plan, the share of private unaided higher education institutions increased from 42.6 per cent in 2001 to 63.21 per cent in 2006. Their share of enrolment also increased from 32.80 per cent to 51.53 per cent. With their participation in the education sector inevitable now in view of the changes across the globe, the growth is bound to increase.

Spending on education by the government will also witness a quantum leap. In the 11th Plan, the projected allocation for education is Rs. 2,74,228 crore and it will be 19 per cent of the total allocation, while it was just Rs. 62,461 crore under the 10th Plan and the amount was just 7.68 per cent of the total budgetary allocation. The enormous increase mean to the students by providing Quality and employable education to more people and getting a chance to study in world-class institutions.

- **Restructuring**

  The system will be restructured to impart competitive skills and capabilities of global standards. But again those who have been denied access to education due to various factors would be getting a prime share in the government spending. Reduction in regional and social disparities, support to institutions located in border, hilly, remote, small towns and educationally backward areas, support to institutions with larger students population of Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, Other Backward Classes, girls and minorities and provision of scholarships, fellowships, hostel facility and remedial coaching to neglected sections will be the top priorities. So the financial assistance will be increasing enormously. While the urban students will get exposure to quality education through establishment of 30 Central Universities, students residing in the backward areas will get 370 additional degree colleges.

- **Women's education**

  About 6,000 colleges that are not getting UGC funds now will be financially helped to improve standards. And the good news for women is that construction of hostels will be taken up in a big way in the colleges and the universities thus bringing education closer to them. Top priority is being given for this project understanding the need to include women in the growth of the Nation. The focus of 10th Plan was on primary education but now the time is to strengthen secondary education, and as part of it, 6,000 model schools would be created apart from polytechnics. These will be done in public-private partnership with an idea to reach the neglected areas.

- **Focus on sciences**

  The diminishing interest in pure sciences due to job potential in the technology sector was a matter of concern and the government agreed to establish three new Indian Institutes of Science Education & Research (IISER) in addition to the existing ones at Pune and Kolkata. These would come up in Bhopal and Thiruvananthapuram while one has already started at Mohali and

with focus on research in sciences. These are apart from the IITs and NITs. But the plans will take shape only if the Gross Enrolment Ratio is increased to the targeted level of 15 per cent. The whole effort of allocating huge amounts to the education sector is to increase the GRE on par with the world average of 22 per cent.

CONCLUSION

The challenges that confront higher education in India are clear. It needs a massive expansion of opportunities for higher education, to 1500 universities Nationwide, that would enable India to attain a gross enrolment ratio of at least 15 per cent by 2020. It is just as important to raise the average quality of higher education in every sphere. At the same time, it is essential to create institutions that are exemplars of excellence at par with the best in the world. In the pursuit of these objectives, providing people with access to higher education in a socially inclusive manner is imperative. The realization of these objectives, combined with access, would not only develop the skills and capabilities we need for the economy but would also help transform India into a knowledge economy and society. The cornerstone of successful education, training and certification is the effective use of assessments. The 21st century offers a real opportunity to use technology to make assessments more widely.

Higher Education Institutions need to

- Network with user agencies, society etc.
- Evolve short term knowledge cum skill oriented programmes.
- Reduce quantity on the long term conventional academic programmes
- Evolve research to generate knowledge for local specific needs

EMERGING TRENDS

Change is the elixir of life. Change is inevitable. In the context of liberalization, privatization and globalization there is a world wide competition in every walk of human activity. It is highly imperative to be alert to face the world full of competitions. Whatever we want and try to achieve should have a direct bearing on the quality standards. Educationists should become

increasingly aware of the process of change and try to design courses, curricula and content. The objectives are likely to be realized by revamping the skills of teachers by enhancing the quality of teaching, class room communication, and the quality of team efforts thereby ensuring by the of all stake holders of educational endeavours.

In the globalised context, the learner is the customer. Educational managers do well to ensure the product quality and service quality. All individuals have to contribute to the quality of product, namely the learners, service and management ensuring the overall credibility of the institution. In the educational setting, service quality means focusing the attention on all educational services, particularly the interface between the institute and industry and between the teacher and learner. The global perspectives of educational sector are analyzed here:

Quality assurance:

Globalization has promoted the quality of institutions. A student seeks admission with the hope of getting quality education in the educational institution which is chosen by him. Quality teaching, quality learning, experiential learning and blended learning are mantras which highlight the quality of education, Internal quality assurance cells are established in colleges.

It takes care of quality course curriculum and content quality methods and strategies of communication to achieve the course objectives and quality methods. It will also develop quality methods and strategies of testing and evaluation. The quality cell ensures enhancement of the quality of life and status of the members of the staff as individuals and as members of groups in an educational institution. The quality of the life of the learners is of paramount importance.

The quality assurance cell also strives hard to ensure the quality performance of the learners. The end results alone will not be taken into account

for quality assessment. The means or processes through which the final results are achieved are given importance and weight.

The quality organization ensures healthy relationship amongst the members of the organization. Quality life also is ensured among the teachers and the learners. Alumni associations acts as a link in ensuring quality life of the learners even after the learners complete their course of study. It will result in greater mutual benefits.

Placement assurance:

Almost all institutions of higher education are aware of placement assurance. They appoint a placement officer who looks after the job opportunities of the students. The placement officer has contact with industries and corporate sectors. He arranges campus interviews in the institution for not only for his own students but also for students from other educational institutions.

Tie-up for placement and MoU:

Globalisation has also given the possibility of creating tie up with industries for placement and also promoted Memorandum of Understanding with industries. The companies who conduct placement interview want to know what the students actually desire to become. They select by screening techniques, such as written test, group discussion and interview. Establishing MoU with corporate sectors is a credit to the educational institution.

Infrastructure:

Globalization has given a chance to improve the infrastructure of institutions. Both parents and students are eager to know about the infrastructure of the educational institution before they seek admission in colleges. Spacious and airy classrooms with lighting facilities are their expectation. Science students want to know about the laboratory facilities with modern sophisticated instruments and chemicals. Good hostel facility, sports facility, library facility and toilet facility are the other things they expect. An

institution with good transport facility is also preferred by the students. A canteen which serves the student with hygienic food is always welcome by them. Drinking water is a very important factor which is a part of the infrastructure of the institution. Protected and purified drinking water is given to students who are the clients of the educational sector.

Teaching aids like OHP, LCD power point projectors and computers have become essential for all the departments of educational institutions. Internet browsing centre, photo copy centre, students' rest room, teachers' rest room and gymnasium are provided to students in almost all educational institutions of higher education. The infrastructure of the educational institution also determines the quality of the organization.

Because of globalization the libraries are well stocked with books and journals both National and International. Students have the opportunity of getting standard international books and journals for their reference and they also have the opportunity of getting research materials and literature through internet. Globalization is a boon for the development of infrastructure of the institution.

Conducting training programmes:

After globalization because of the development of competition among the educational institutions, the institutions have started rendering training programmes for the learners. Training in soft skill development, paper presentation, group discussion and techniques interview are conducted regularly for the betterment and job opportunities of the learners. Each institution tries to print a quality brand to attract more learners towards it. It also improves the business service of the institution.

Social responsibility:

Blood donation programmes, Aids awareness programmes and Environment awareness programmes are arranged periodically by Institutions. Red Cross Club and Red Ribbon Club engage the volunteers in social service.

Nearby villages are adopted. Health awareness camps are conducted in the adopted villages. Students have the opportunity of coaching economically backward children in the villages by conducting week-end classes. All these inculcate a social responsibility in the learners who understand life and adjust with the difficult situations which they come across in their student life.

Increase of competition:

Globalisation has increased the sense of competition among the educational institutions. Every institution wants to introduce new courses which are job oriented. Examples are the Introduction of Computer Science, Information Technology, Bio-technology, Bio informatics, Genomics and proteomics, genetic engineering, gene-technology, Microbial biotechnology, Fashion technology, Hotel Management and Catering Science and Computer application. Universities and Colleges offer MBA programmes with specialization in Finance, Marketing, System analysis, Banking and Hospital Management. The healthy competition among the institutions keeps the academic metabolism of the institutions very active.

Positioning and accreditation:

The Central Government and State Governments insist upon getting a credit to institution. Based on the norms and guidelines of NAAC and AICTE the institutions are accredited. To get accredited institutions strive hard to improve the quality and to boost up the image with the credit awarded to it. Both the teachers and the learners are willingly taking part in the accreditation of the institution. Even after the accreditation they work hard to maintain the quality and achieve excellence in performance. An institution gets the position according to the credit given to it. Positioning keeps the institutions always vigilant about their processes of maintaining the quality of the teachers and the learners.

Choice based credit system and value added education:

Many autonomous institutions have introduced choice based credit system and value added education in their curriculum. A science student can

select his favourite subject in arts and the arts student can select his subject of interest in science. This improves the interdisciplinary growth of the learner and also helps for the all round development of his personality. The value added education helps the learner to achieve his objectives and attain values necessary for leading a complete life.

Part-time Certificate Courses:

Globalisation has also helped the institutions of higher education to conduct part-time institutional certificate courses and university certificate courses on their campus. A learner gets the chance of improving and developing his knowledge in other subjects also. At the same time the certificate courses also help the learners for getting better placement. The learners have also felt the need of gaining knowledge in different subjects which will uplift their personality and lay a strong foundation for their successful and prosperous life in future.

Study abroad:

Globalisation has opened the way for the learners to continue their higher studies abroad. Many foreign universities have reduced their fees for the courses offered by them. They also give scholarships to the learners. Countries like England, Australia, Germany, New Sealand and Russia have reduced their tuition fees.

Value Ethics:

All educational endeavours are built upon a sound and solid foundation of highest ethical standards, virtues and values. They have thoroughly understood the need to build up modern India with their learners endowed with ethical virtues and values. It is also a welcoming factor which will strengthen our Nation and promote National integrity.

Communication skill in foreign languages*:*

English has been established as a language of global communication and a language of opportunities. A high degree of proficiency in English and excellent

communication skills enhance the employability of students. In view of the increasing importance of English for career purposes, universities and institutions are offering courses in communication skills as part of their general English course. Globalization also has promoted the learning of other foreign languages like German, French, Japanese, Spanish and Chinese. If a learner is interested in developing his communication skills, he can join courses offered by universities and colleges. Learning one more foreign language will make the chances of the learner bright for employability.

Promoting Research activities*:*

Formerly learners had to go to a university for higher studies after completing their post graduation in colleges. But now research facilities are available in colleges themselves. The learner can very well pursue his research work in the college as all a resources are available there. Facilitating research activity in colleges is the positive outcome of globalization. Quality guides are guiding the research work of their research scholars. Some of the institutions are publishing their our journals to promote research activity of the learners.

'E'learning facilities:

Globalisation has made possible 'E' learning. Many resource materials are available in 'E' form. Development of Information Technology has made it very easy to access 'E' learning. Online examinations are also conducted. Many institutions have established 'E' libraries.

CONCLUSION:

Globalization has changed the total educational scenario. The change occurring in educational institutions has led them towards achieving their goals and objectives resulting in the enhancement of quality of environment. It has resulted in the enhancement of the quality of infrastructure of the organization and the quality of the life of the members of the system.

DEVELOPMENT OF SOFT SKILLS

Soft skills are very important in higher education. It is essential to be technically sound, but one should also have the ability to convey the idea to the masses in the simplest possible manner. Planning is necessary but execution is also equally important. And it takes soft skills to execute any idea because it involves dealing with people directly.

"It has been said that your IQ (Intelligence Quotient) is fixed from birth. But your EQ (Emotional Intelligence Quotient), your IPQ (Influence and Persuasion Quotient), your MQ (Motivation Quotient), and any other type of "Q" that you want to invent can be improved.," says-. Al Duncan

There is a lot of argument in the industry as to whether it is possible to enhance soft skills in a few hours of training, especially when one considers the fact that a person has lived with those traits all his life. It has been proved possible to train men and women in soft skills. A professional who wants to do well in his/ her career does not really have a choice, she has to learn then. Training on soft skills becomes all the more relevant in a country like India where the education system does not have personality development as part its curriculum.

Every student, irrespective of his/her type of education,(general, professional or technical),needs to possess soft skills which will enhance their hard skills and improve their employability. One needs to have a good learning platform, where one can make mistakes without losing face and losing the next job. The classroom is an ideal learning ground, where one can practice alternative ways of dealing with people and facilitating learning and transferring knowledge in an interactive rather than prescriptive form. Using the classroom as a learning ground for these skills is important.

In the initial years of students' career, their technical abilities are important to get good assignments. However, when it comes to growing in an organization, it is their personality that matters, more so in large organizations

where several people with similar technical expertise will compete for a promotion.

A separate program for soft skills training is essential because we do not have it in our academic curricula. The skills and expertise of lecturers to develop and implement curricula that interweave soft and hard skills is generally lacking and needs to be developed through learning processes in which they engage over a time span of at least a year.

Various surveys state that only 20 to 30 percent graduates passing out from India are employable. Most of the graduates remain unemployed because they suffer from poor communication skills, lack of self confidence and low self esteem.

It is appropriate to explain 'Soft Skills' and their components. Soft skills is a sociological term which refers to the cluster of personality traits, social graces, facility with language, personal habits, friendliness, and optimism that mark people to varying degrees. Soft skills complement hard skills, which are the technical requirements of a job.

The six major soft skills for every professional

Behavioral training experts say there are several soft skills required. Some of them include:

(i) Interpersonal skills
(ii) Team spirit
(iii) Social grace
(iv) Business etiquette
(v) Negotiation skills /Communication skills
(vi) Behavioral traits such as attitude, motivation and time management.

Interpersonal skills-The term "interpersonal skills" is used often in business contexts to refer to the measure of a person's ability to operate within business organizations through social communication and interactions.

Team spirit-The spirit of a group that makes members want the group to succeed.
Social grace-A cluster of socially accepted habits like diplomacy, politeness, decency, etc
Business etiquette-Etiquette is essentially presenting oneself in a fashion that conveys a fine civil sense. It is important to understand that social skills are important to create the right impression on the person with whom we are likely to have business dealing or just to have interaction. It ranges from dining etiquettes to technological and cultural etiquettes.
Negotiation skills-"A negotiation is an interactive communication process that may take place whenever we want something from someone else or another person wants something from us."
Attitude is a construct that represents an individual's likes or dislikes for an item. Attitudes are positive, negative or neutral views of an "attitude object": i.e. a person, behaviour or event.
Motivation is defined as communicating to an internal force that actuates a behavioral pattern, thought process, action or reaction. Negative forces or positive forces can act as actuators..
Time management is a set of principles, practices, skills, tools, and systems that work together to help one get more value out of time with the aim of improving the quality of life.

There are two major experimental studies which help any researchers to identify the process of imparting soft skills successfully. The first is developing soft skills in higher education as mentioned by Jurgen Hagmann et al.

In a workshop, a group of researchers and deans of agricultural universities in eastern and southern Africa concluded that university graduates require far more personal skills, complementing the disciplinary theory and expertise, than is recognised in today's mainstream education (Patel et al.,2001). The 'ideal' graduates would have the capacity to integrate across disciplines and skills (hard and soft skills). They would be creative and critical thinkers, team

players, take responsibility for their own development, and be able to facilitate learning in groups and communities. They would also have substantial management capacities and excellent communication skills. Most of these 'soft skills' are not at all considered in the present curricula, disciplines and major reorientation programmes are required to enable graduates to practise effective facilitation of participatory processes.

The development of soft skills was articulated as a major challenge for these mostly technically and disciplinary oriented universities. To develop these competencies, educational institutions need to go way beyond agricultural sciences to include learning theories, social psychology and behavioural science communication, facilitation (including group dynamics), and organisation and management science. Even more critical than cognitive abilities are elements of personal development.

These need to be understood conceptually and mastered practically. Incorporating elements of personal development in the curriculum calls for teachers/lecturers with new ideas and competencies. This does not necessarily mean replacing existing disciplinary courses with soft skills oriented courses, or introducing separate courses in soft skills but interweaving them with existing courses.

This paper describes two processes which were designed to integrate personal mastery/soft skills development into different academic settings. The first setting is a PhD programme at Wageningen University in the Netherlands. The second is a two-year long learning process on personal mastery for research, training, and consultancy,involving university lecturers at Makerere University in Uganda. Both experiences provide very encouraging lessons and insights for 'learning participation'.

Yet another work of significance is by Bard Elderge, tilted the growing need for soft skills.

In the American job market, the need for technical skills is clear. President Bush's American Competitiveness Initiative commits $50 billion over the next ten years to educational and research programs that will allow the U.S. to "remain a leader in science and technology."

As important as technical skills remain, American employers increasingly cite another challenge in workforce recruitment: a shortage of applicants possessing "soft skills"

A survey of manufacturers found that the most common reason companies reject applicants for hourly production jobs was inadequate basic employability skills, such as attendance, timeliness, and work ethics.

It is an indicator of the importance of such skills that Chicago public schools now offer a program in soft skills, in addition to traditional curriculum.

The consensus definition of soft skills seems to be skills that involve the ability to interact and communicate positively and productively with other people. An Internet search for "soft skills," yields results such as leadership, listening, negotiation, and conflict management. The Center for Career Opportunities at Purdue University defines soft skills as "the cluster of personality traits, social graces, facility with language, personal habits, friendliness, and optimism that mark each of us to varying degrees."

Their list of soft skills includes work ethics, courtesy, teamwork, self-discipline, self -confidence, conformity to prevailing norms, and language proficiency. Employees' soft skills, or lack thereof, can affect a firm's bottom line. Benjamin Schneider's research shows that "in operations as diverse as bank branches, insurance company regional offices, credit card call centers and hospitals employees' ratings of service climate predicted customer satisfaction, which drove business results."

In other words, customer focused soft skills can make a big contribution to profitability, even in industries considered highly technical.

Labor economists Richard Murnane and David Levy assert that to earn a middle class wage, high school students need several hard skills and "two kinds of what we call soft skills, the ability to communicate effectively both orally and in writing, and the ability to work productively with people from different backgrounds."

The research on soft skills and the data on their current demand in highly technical occupations calls for a renewed emphasis not just on technical training, but on training in interpersonal and communication skills at all levels of the educational system and in the workforce.

How the training should be done for the students:

The training should be done through a mixture of lectures by trainers using Power point presentations, making the students participate in- Situational talks, short extempore speeches, role plays, games that enhance interaction. They should cover all the dimensions mentioned under the definition of the operational term 'Soft Skills'.

The following steps can be taken by students and trainers to improve themselves:

Be your own trainer!

(i) Listen/Don't just hear/We use our ears for hearing but our brains for listening
(ii) Read, read, read-good journals/Newspaper/weekly magazines
(iii) Watch English TV Programmes-news , talk shows, quiz programs
(iv) Content is important for communication
(v) Ask your family & friends to list your positive & negative traits
(vi) Face criticism positively/Don't be defensive
(vii) Learn to give feedback also/Be constructive while doing so
(viii) Be assertive, not aggressive

(ix) Analyse your strengths & weaknesses based on this.
(x) Work on your positive traits to enhance them
(xi) Work on your negative qualities to reduce them
(xii) Take part in some community activities/NGO activities/Quality circle/Toastmasters clubs
(xiii) After every activity, analyse your group behavior
(xiv) Practice time management
(xv) Ethics is essential/Be transparent
(xvi) Cultivate good values/beliefs
(xvii) Be enthusiastic about whatever you do

HOW THE PROGRAM MUST BE ADMINISTERED:

A self-appraisal checklist/rating scale can be given to all the students prior to the training to assess the level of soft skills in all the dimensions. The training program is given for a specific period will improve the students. The self-appraisal checklist/rating scale should be administered again after the training to assess the improvement.

TIME DURATION:

Six months

Teachers of all subjects should have soft skills training in their curriculum and should also be trained to induce such soft skills to students. Apart from subjecting the curriculum to change in the name of reforms, things would improve only if there was a matching effort from the teaching fraternity to alter its perspective in tune with the changing times.

Funding should be taken over by the respective institutions. Allotment of time in the daily timetable of the students for the program should be done by the institutions.

Conclusion

This work emphasizes the importance of training students in soft skills even when they are in their first year of higher education so that there is no

mismatch between demand and supply of knowledge and skills in this era of globalization.

This training in soft skills will help in improving them achieve academically which correlates positively with self-esteem and negatively with stress.

DISTANCE EDUCATION

THE SETTING

The traditional meaning of education was that it was the process of imparting information to the young for a specific period in a formal set up. To-day the meaning attributed to education is very vast and complex. It is not restricted to mere 'instruction of the young but considered as a life-long process of drawing out and developing all in an individual's potentialities. It includes life-long education, in school education, out of school education, informal education, non-formal education, continuing education, recurrent education, general education, professional education, vocational education, leisure-time education and any other activity that can help develop the potentialities of individuals. Thus the major conceptual change that has occurred in modern educational thinking is the shift from the ideas of initial training for a specific period to life-long continual learning. This concept of life-long continual learning presupposes that individuals are capable of learning independently the knowledge that is significant to them. They would be able to work at their own pace, level and rate and they can assume responsibility for their own learning.

Education is no longer the privilege of an elite. It is no more considered as a preparation for life but it is a dimension of life itself. Education has been uniformly recognized as one of the fundamental human rights and there is growing demand for more education, longer education, better education, and higher education for more and more people all over the world. This is explicit in the form of a massive increase in school attendance and continuing tendency to prolong studies and an even greater share of material resources being allocated for education. Population growth, Economic development, knowledge explosion, social transformation and increasing aspirations are some of the causes of this expansion. In India in the decades of planned development since 1951, the

number of educational institutions have more than doubled, the number of teachers and students have become threefold, expenditure on education has shot up form 153 crores of rupees in the fifth plan and estimated to be more than Rs.2524 crores in the successive plans.

In spite of the phenomenal expansion of the formal sector, there is a huge gap between educational opportunities provided and the educational opportunities demanded. The Indian Education Commission (1964-66) observes that if the present rate of expansion of 10per cent is continued for the next 20 years, there would be seven to eight million people who would be demanding higher education and an economy like ours cannot provide the funds to expand higher education at this rate. With the advent of Independence a new awakening was seen among the people of India and an increasing demand for higher education came from

- Youth who were deprived of educational opportunities because of socio economic compulsions and geographic isolation.
- Men and women who wanted to learn while busy earning.
- Those who had the need to update their knowledge and reinforcement in their fields of specialization.
- Those who needed new adjustments in life, new social understanding, and new skills for economic improvement and social advancement.
- Unemployed youth to better their prospects.
- Those who could not meet the exhorbitant costs of former higher education are rural employed, semi employed, housewives, widows, physically handicapped, the old retired people.

In 1960, K.L. Shrimali, the then Education Minister initiated the move to start education by correspondence to meet the increasing demands for higher education. A committee was constituted under the chairmanship of D.S. Kothari and this committee recommended that education by correspondence at higher levels would be the most viable scheme in the context of National development of India. Delhi University launched the scheme in 1962 and Punjab University, Mysore University, Himachal Pradesh, Bombay, Madurai, venkateshwara, Andhra, Meerut and Kurushetrea followed suit.

In this context it is relevant to mention that such demands for higher education has been universal and the facility of 'learn while you earn' was extended in many countries like USA, USSR, Sweeden, Japan, Australia, Great Britain, Germany and France even during the thirties through correspondence education. The Open University, London which emerged in 1969 and 'University without Walls' programme of USA are the different versions of the same learning system and they have given great impetus to our efforts in India.

DEVELOPMENT OF DISTANCE EDUCATION IN MADURAI KAMARAJ UNIVERSITY:

The Institution of correspondence courses of Madurai Kamaraj University was established in the year 1971 and about a thousand students joined the institute. In a decade of development, the enrolment in 1982 was around 50,000 a fiftyfold increase. During the years 1972-'75, with the introduction of Pre-university course with a number of electives led to a great spurt in expansion. The introduction of Tamil, medium was a milestone in the history of the institute and the increase in enrolment went up by 70per cent. Post graduate courses in Tamil, History, English and Economics were started through the years 1977-'82 and we find the enrolment doubled in these five years.

Another landmark in the growth of the institute in the recent years is the introduction of teacher training to satisfy specially the demand for trained postgraduates to teach in the higher secondary classes. Postgraduate course in education which ensures two increments or lump sum grants to the serving high school teachers has also been a great attraction. With the sponsorship of the U.G.C., a course in Gandian thought has been instituted in 1982. Candidates from the other southern states are also eligible to join the course.

The subject in demand currently is commerce and we find B.Com course students constitute 50per cent of the students enrolled in undergraduate courses in 1982. Of the students enrolled in Postgraduate courses, about one-third have joined M.Com. Course. Since the inception of the institute of correspondence course, nearly one lakh candidates have gone through this learning system and

we can confidently say that about 25per cent of them have successfully completed the courses.

THE LEARNING SYSTEM

The learning system comparises several inter-related programme, such as home study courses, contact classes, home assignments, radio broad casts and feedback system. The home study courses are designed and packaged for self instruction. Study packages are mailed directly to the students. These self instructional packages are written in clear, readable language so that it is easily understood by all the candidates.

The contact seminar classes have fixed by study schedules. These are held usually during week ends in all the five centres in Tamil Nadu, at Madras, Coimbatore, Trichy, Madurai and Tirunelveli and other states. Participants of this learning system may attend the seminars in any of the centres according to their convenience. These periodical contact seminars are held to enable interaction among the teachers and students and to clarify doubts.

The study centres provide library facilities to the students. Reference books, journals and other learning resource materials such as maps and charts are provided in study centres.

The instructional packages include response sheets and assignments. The candidates are expected to complete the assignments and send the response sheets at regular intervals. The response sheets are corrected, valued and suggestions for improving the assignments are fed back to the students.

The information centre at the University campus in the city as well as the extension centres at other places during the contact seminar classes, provide student support services.

This learning system was started in Madurai Kamaraj University in 1971 and has been serving a whole lot of people from all walks of life for the past forty years.

STAFF:

The Distance Education is headed by a Director who is assisted by deputy directors of academic departments and the administrative wing. The academic wing of each department has regular staff, appointed by the university authorities. Besides the regular staff, part time staff and tutorial staff are recruited for helping the regular staff, for conducting contact seminars and correcting response sheets and home assignments.

STUDENTS:

In almost all the courses, the distribution of males is much higher than that of women. Enrolment of men students ranges from 63.18Per cent to 94.44Per cent and women students from 5.56Per cent to 36.81Per cent . It is understandable that men students take more advantage of Distance Education than women students in our social set up.

COMMUNITY:

It can be seen that the community which has taken greatest advantage of correspondence education is the backward community. Only 4per cent among the scheduled classes and hardly 2 in a thousand of the scheduled tribes seem to take advantage of this second chance education. The weaker sections need to be encouraged further. The general pattern is repeated in almost all courses, more men students enrolling than women, more backward community students taking advantage than the scheduled community.

It is clearly seen that the pass percentage in all the post graduate courses are below fifty percent. It is also seen that the women fare better than candidates generally.

RESEARCH IN DISTANCE EDUCATION

Reviewing research done in the area of distance education, it was found that a few studies have been conducted in UK, USA, Australia, and Germany and that most of the studies have focused on areas such as effectiveness of distance education, performance for distance course students as compared to regular

students, incidence of wastage and drop out, causes of wastage, personal characteristics of students of distance education and effectiveness of the methodology of distance learning system.

PERFORMANCE:

Parson (1957) compared two groups, correspondence study group and a regular classroom group. These two groups were taught identical subjects. It was found that performance of the correspondence course students was significantly better than that of the regular students; Child's (1964) study also confirmed the same. Spencer (1964) compared the grades of the students completing college credit through correspondence and by regular courses. It was found that the grades of the correspondence courses students were better than the full time students at the Pennsylvania state University. Another longitudinal study was undertaken by Kennelly (1962-65) in which he analyzed the performance of the correspondence course students in their subsequent college career. They did better than the regular college student population.

Sheath (1967) found that at the University of New England, Australia, the over all pass rate in examination as well as merit passes of the internal and correspondence students were almost identical.

The overall finding is that correspondence students perform as well or significantly better than the regular students.

DROP OUT:

The problem of drop-out in Distance Education system is universal. Schramm (1967) in this research identified that out of 15000 entrants to high school level correspondence courses in Japan, 57per cent dropped out by the fifth year. Peters (1965) found that in West Germany, 72per cent dropped out and sheath (1965) found that almost a third of students enrolled dropped out from the University of New England.

CAUSES OF WASTAGE:

James and Wedemeyer (1959) identified that lack of time was the major cause for non completion of correspondence courses in Wisconsin University. The other factors identified for withdrawal from the correspondence courses were change in career, illness, death in the family etc. Sloan (1966) doing a survey of non completers in the University of Kentucky also found that lack of time was the single most important cause.

Sheath (1965) in his study in (New England) also found that insufficient time for study as the most frequent cause. 10 per cent the reasons arose from weaknesses in the correspondence method.

Hughes (1955) studying the correspondence students of the university of Florida found that possession of clear vocational or academic objectives, previous experience of college level work, the need to complete work by a definite date and certain features of study techniques were significantly related to successful course completion.

We can conclude from the studies cited that the main factors leading to drop out from Distance Education courses are insufficient time, ill defined goals, defective study techniques and lower level of entering behaviors and other accidental factors were illness or changes in career.

Grace Donehower (1968) studied the variables associated with correspondence study enrolment at the University of Nevada and her findings confirmed the importance of motivational level and good clarity in successful completion of courses through correspondence.

James and Wedemeyer (1959) found that the students' motivation and success in course depended upon family attitudes and study conditions.

PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS:

Studies were done by Johnston and Rivera (1965) with a large scale sample survey of the educational activities of American adults. The study reported that participation in correspondence courses was heavily dominated by men. Correspondence students in America tended to be young compared to other forms of adult education, with 55 percent under 35 years. Peters (1965) found that students in West Germany were younger than students in America, with 56 percent of them under 30 years.

But students of correspondence courses were found several older than full time students, most of them married with children, in full time employment and a high proportion of them were teachers as graduation meant some special allowance or upgrading in career.

In India correspondence education was started in many universities from the year 1961 and it is found that sufficient number of studies has not been done as yet.

The first National seminar on correspondence education held at Mysore University in 1972 recommended that U.G.C. should undertake a research study on the state of correspondence education in India. The National conference of the Directors of correspondence course held Delhi in 1974 and the National seminar on correspondence education held in Patiala in 1976 also stressed the need for adequate research in the functioning of correspondence institutes. We find that two studies have been done on teaching of English through correspondence by Manjeet-Singh (1974) and Balasubramanian (1976). Balasubramanian (1976) has reported that percentage of students who had successfully completed raged from 39per cent to 43per cent from 1973 to 1976 and there was a decline in the drop out rate.

While presenting his paper in the National seminar on correspondence education, Bakshish Singh (1976) pointed out that 'there is a great diversity in the functioning of various correspondence course institutes in India and as such

there is an urgent need for a central co-ordinating body to ensure a planned development of correspondence course in accordance with our National policies and the also regretted that so far no serious attempt, had been made for finding out to what extent these courses have been successful.

The centre for educational technology has taken up some studies in correspondence education. It completed its first study in 1981 on correspondence education offered by Patrachar vidyalaya, Delhi and a second study on the correspondence education programme of the Board of secondary education, Rajasthan (1983). This study has done an extensive survey of the correspondence education offered by the Board of secondary education, Rajasthan (1983). This study has done an extensive survey of the correspondence education offered by the Board of secondary education, the characteristics of the students, and reasons for taking correspondence course, administrative procedures, the lesson materials, contact programmes and assignments.

his study has also recommended that an analysis about the restructure of organizational and administrational management in distance education should be done.

Correspondence education has been recommended as an alternate model for meeting the ever increasing demands for more educational opportunities and to give a second chance to those who have been deprived of educational provisions earlier to improve their qualification.

The present study attempts to find out how far distance education of Madurai Kamaraj university has fulfilled these hopes, what is the impact of this learning system, what benefits have been derived by the participants and how effective is the performance of the learning system.

OBJECTIVES:

1) To analyze the fee structure of distance education system for the post graduate courses is the Madurai Kamaraj University.
2) To estimate the impact of Distance Education in terms of economic, social occupational and psychological indicators.
3) To examine the responses of the participants regarding the performance of the components of this learning system.
4) To study the response of some non participants, some elites as well as some students of regular colleges, towards Distance Education.
5) To suggest, on the basis of the findings, suitable measure for better functioning of the programme.

IMPACT

A man-induced change is called an effect; the harmful and beneficial consequences are called 'Impacts'. However a change/effect/ impact is usually given in terms of its nature, its magnitude and often its significance.

In this study, 'Impact is used to mean significance of an effect. The effect may be psychological, economic, sociological, cultural or educational. Its magnitude is furnished in terms of frequencies of responses identified through indicators.

IMPACT INDICATOR is an element or a parameter that provides a measure of the significance of the effect.

DISTANCE EDUCATION is a viable alternate system for extending the reach of education to a large number of students who cannot attend formal institutions of education for one reason or another.

PERFORMANCE is the actual accomplishment of the system. In this study the performance of the system is analyzed in terms of the criteria of 'usefulness of each component of the system'.

Limitations- The study had time constraints and financial limitations. Hence it could not be an exhaustive study.

METHODOLOGY

DATA GATHERING TOOLS:

Following were the tools employed for data collection:

1. Questionnaire
2. Performance rating scale
3. Interview schedule
4. Opinionnaire

A questionnaire was structured to identify the derived benefits of the candidates who have completed their courses through distance education. The benefits derived were grouped under impact categories.

DEVELOPING IMPACT INDICATORS:

Candidates derive benefits after successfully completing their education through correspondence. These benefits are categorized broadly into economic, social, psychological, cultural and educational benefits.

As these categories are broad and general, they are disaggregated into variables which are measurable and relevant. For example, the economic well being is made specific in terms of increase in income.

Education, does lead to better opportunities, promotions, improvement of one's business, fulfillment of job demands and change in occupation. The occupational category is made specific with the following indicators.

Category	Indicator
Occupational	
1. Promotions	
2. Improving business	
3. Demands fulfillment	Better job opportunities

4. Occupational changes

Education has always had social prestige attached to it and the category of social well being included indicators such as status improvement and utilizations of leisure time to advantage.

Category	Indicators
Social well being	1. Status improvement
	2. Leisure utilization

The concept of 'life long education' includes instilling the desire to learn further, develop involvements and attain a sense of satisfaction and achievement.

Category	Indicators
Psychological well being	1. Desire to learn further
	2. Proficiency in expressing Oneself through writing.

Education is also associated with obtaining degrees and diplomas as a symbol of academic achievement. Much more than obtaining degrees and diplomas, opportunities to pursue further one's own field of interest is the real mark of educational well being. The category of educational well being had the following indicators.

Category	Indicators
Educational well being	1. Improving qualification
	2. Learning in the field of interest

The impact categories of economic benefits, occupational benefits, social benefits, educational benefits and psychological benefits were expressed in terms of indicators which in turn serve as parameters to identify impact. The respondents had to check those benefits that have been derived by them in the questionnaire given to them.

DEMOGRAPHIC DATA:

The questionnaire included items to identify the respondents in terms of their sex, marital status, number of children community, and type of employment.

RATING SCALE:

A rating scale was designed to identify the efficiency of the performance of the various components of the learning system, the lesson scripts, contact classes, response sheets, assignments, radio programmes and study centres. The respondents had to rate the usefulness of these elements on a three point scale. A slightly modified questionnaire was given to those who were undergoing the various courses through Distance Education.

OPINIONNAIRE:

An opinionnaire was designed to study the opinion of non participant elites residing in Madurai Kamaraj University area regarding the usefulness of Distance Education course and their views regarding the performance of the Distance Education system.

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE:

Interview schedule was framed to contact students who were regular college student to find out why they did not choose Distance education.

SAMPLE:

A sample of the candidates who have successfully completed Distance education and also the students who were undergoing Distance Education programme.

Around 400 candidates, from these two groups were randomly selected as the sample of the study.

Around 50 elites from all walks of life residing in Madurai Kamaraj University area and four hundred graduates from Arts and Science colleges were non participant sample.

DATA COLLECTION

In order to randomize the entire population of Distance Education students, who are were undergoing Distance Education programme in the recent past 3 years were contacted randomly when they were attending contact seminar classes in various centres. Their responses on the rating scale were collected.

Though the questionnaires were sent along with self addressed stamped envelopes, only 29.3% responded and 10% of the questionnaires were returned with the remark that addressed were not residing in those addresses. The investigators had to contact some of those who had successfully completed the course personally.

200 graduates who were trying to get post graduate admission in regular colleges for the various courses were asked as to why they did not prefer to study through Distance Eduation. 50 elites from all walks of life residing in the Madurai Kamaraj University area were interviewed. Some of them were parents who had their wards in regular colleges and some whose sons and daughters were learning through Distance Education. Their responses regarding the performance and usefulness of the Distance Education were collected.

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION:

ANALYSIS OF DEMOGRAPHIC DATA:

In the sample taken for the study, men participants constituted two third proportion and women participants, the remaining one third.

Regarding the marital status of the participants, about 46 percent were no t married, 53 percent of them were married and the remaining one percent came under the category of widows and Widowers.

About 45 percent of the samples were from backward classes, 50per cent were from open classes and the remaining from scheduled castes and tribes.

Nearly one third proportion of the married student had two children, twelve percent of them had more than five children. This confirms the saying that more that education level less the family size.

DISTRIBUTION OF STUDENTS INCOME IN SCALES

Regarding their income structure, nearly 10 percent of them were drawing a monthly salary of less than four thousand rupees. Around 19per cent were drawing more than Rs.4000/-a month. Two third proportion of the sample was drawing between Rs. 6,000 and Rs.16,000 a month we can safely say that the majority of the Distance Education students are from middle income groups.

The income distribution indicates that Distance education does serve people from different Economic strata of the society.

AGEWISE ANALYSIS

Nearly two third of the students are between the age of 20 and 30 and 37per cent are in the age group of 30 to 40. Only 5per cent are above the age of 40.

Thus we can see that Distance Education does serve people older than the normal college going age group. It is interesting to note that the candidates who study through Distance Education in the western countries are much older than their counter parts in Madurai Kamaraj University.

Occupational distribution of Distance Education students in percentages we can see that people from all walks of life, viz administrative staff, defence services personnel, bank employees, business people, teachers, non-teaching staff of educational institutions, technical personnel, engineers and scientists, self employed people, housewives and unemployed people take advantage of this learning system. Nearly one third of the candidates are unemployed people and

one fourth are teachers. In Milton Keyes 'open University of England' also a bulk of the candidates are teachers. That teachers take advantage of this system and continue to be life long learners is very encouraging.

Nearly 7per cent of the sample are housewives; that women are now having the opportunity to continue their education is another heartening fact to note self employed people, retired; people and people in business also pursue further learning clearly point out that we are well on the way towards the goal of 'a learning society'.

SOME SPECIAL BENEFICIARIES

In eight central jails in Tamil Nadu, there are thousands of life prisoners. Among them are convicts, who serve imprisonment from a few years of jail term to life term, many of them have committed crimes more in moments of strong emotions and then repent all their lives. They pine for a second chance in life, Rev. N. T. Noah retired, professor of Tamil, American College, Madurai, founder president of the Tamil Nadu prisoners welfare association gave the information that the association was helping 200 convicts in the eight central prisons in the state to continue their education through Distance Education of Madurai Kamaraj University. The association was organizing free coaching for the prisoner-students through professors for three days a week. The necessary text books and stationery were supplied free of cost by the association. Thus Distance Education learning system has been able to provide a second chance to prisoners to continue their education which in turn would lead to social transformation of their personalities, an upliftment of their minds and finally to a more meaningful and purposeful living.

CATEGORYWISE DISTRIBUTION OF BENEFITS OF THOSE WHO HAVE SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETED THE DISTANCE EDUCATION

Of the benefits derived by the sample, a social benefit tops the list. The next important category is educational benefits tops the list. The next important category is educational benefits. It is very strange to see that hardly 9per cent of

the benefits derived according come under the category of 'Occupational'. It is generally believed that people continue their education through correspondence more for economic or occupational reasons, but our study indicates that by continuing their studies the candidates attained more of social prestige through better educational qualifications. The ultimate aim of any educational process, it is claimed is social well being of the society in general and individual in particular. Our study justifies this claim.

SOCIAL IMPACT:

Indicators:

1. Improvement of status 17.77%
2. Utilization of leisure time 13.83%

31.60

The respondents after successfully completing the courses, for which they signed up, feel a sense of pride and self esteem, as well as esteem of others. They feel a visible raise in their status in their community; Of all the indicators, this indicator gets the maximum frequency.

The respondents also feel that they have been able to utilize their leisure time fruitfully and with a sense of purpose; 14% of the frequency is assigned to this indicator.

EDUCATIONAL IMPACT:

Indicators:-

1. Improvement in qualification 24.12%
2. Opportunity to pursue their field of interest 5.80%

29.92%

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24 per cent of the impact is assigned to 'improvement in educational qualification'. Some of the respondents have reported that through the correspondence learning system they have been able to pursue their interest areas. Nearly 6% of the frequency is given to this indicator.

OCCUPATIONAL IMPACT:

Indicators:

1.	Job opportunities	3.35%
2.	Career promotions	6.38%
3.	Business improvement	1.29%
4.	Demands fulfillment	4.17%
5.	Occupational changes	2.55%

		17.74%

Career promotion seems to be the most important impact in this category. The correspondence education system has helped 4 Per cent of the respondents in fulfilling the demands of their jobs. Better job opportunities have been offered for 3 Per cent and changes in occupation have been possible for 2.61Per cent. Just 1Per cent has been able to improve their business because of the knowledge they gained by the education.

PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPACT:

Indicators:

1.	Desire to learn further	7.79%
2.	Satisfaction of coherent writing	3.68%

		11.47%

11.5 Per cent of the impact accounts for the 'Psychological well being' category. 8Per cent of the respondents say that correspondence education enables them to fulfill their desire to learn further. Thus we find given a second

chance, people would continue to learn and keep on continuing to learn thus fulfilling the most important meaning of education as life long learning. 3.7per cent felt that learning through correspondence, which demanded that they write assignments, helped them to improve their writing ability.

ECONOMIC IMPACT:

Indicator:

Financial benefits 9.18%

Economic impact is rated as the last category; only one eleventh of the impact is accounted by the financial benefits derived. The misconception that people continue to study only for financial betterment is cleared by this finding.

INDICATOR WISE ANALYSIS

Percentage of benefits derived indicator wise

This table shows that by learning through correspondence respondents are satisfied that they improved their qualification and their status improved because of their qualification, they also managed to get financial benefits due to the improved qualification and status and they also learned to utilize the leisure time with purposeful and directed learning. These findings justify the importance of this learning system.

A further analysis to find out whether there were any difference among the responses of those who finished the courses through correspondence and those who were undergoing the courses recently 1981-'82 revealed the following.

HOPES OF STUDENTS WHO WERE UNDERGOING DISTANCE EDUCATION

There is not much of a difference excepting for the fact that benefit of getting educational qualification is higher and accounting for nearly 40per cent of the hopes. It is satisfying to note that these students also do not undergo learning through Distance Education, hoping just to get jobs but they care more for social prestige and ego satisfaction.

INDICATOR WISE ANALYSIS OF THE HOPES OF THE STUDENTS WHO WERE UNDERGOING DISTANCE EDUCATION

The hopes of the respondents to improve their qualification ranks first, desire to learn further ranks next. These students do hope to get financial benefits, but hopes for job opportunities seem to be, very small-only 3.64per cent. That these students, most of them unemployed have joined Distance Education course as they have a desire to learn further is indeed a good pointer that the objectives of life long drawing is being fulfilled.

THE DISTRIBUTION OF DERIVED BENEFITS OF PROFESSIONAL STUDENTS WHO HAD SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETED THEIR COURSES THROUGH DISTANCE EDUCATION ARE AS FOLLOWS:

Here also we find that candidates felt that learning through Distance Education helped them to get professional qualification which in turn led to better job opportunities, changes in occupation, career promotions and fulfilled the demands of their jobs.

THE HOPES OF THE STUDENTS WHO WERE UNDERGOING PROFESSIONAL COURSES DURING RECENT YEARS ARE AS FOLLOW:

This sample also continue their education through correspondence in professional courses to get the professional qualification and hopes to improve their economic status, social status and get psychological satisfaction. It is gratifying to note that the value of professional education is realized by both the samples and that educational benefits can lead to other benefits.

INTERVIEW WITH NON PARTICIPANT ELITES

So far, analysis of the responses of those who had gone through the Distance Education learning system as well as those who were undergoing the system has been reported. The investigators were keen to find out the opinion of the non-participants, some elites as well as the students of regular colleges

regarding the correspondence learning system, its performance, and the benefits it brings to people in general.

Fifty elites from all walks of life to mention some lawyers, Engineers, Doctors, college teachers, school teachers, chartered accountants Bank officers, some people in politics and social welfare were interviewed. All of them are unanimous in their view that Distance Education learning system has provided an opportunity for people in general to improve their qualification and hence gain social prestige. In a degree crazy society, some such open learning system is absolutely essential according to most of them. The ladies engaged in social welfare activities were all praise for this system as this system had helped quitted a few ladies –housewives-to continue their interrupted education at their own pace and in their own free time and enhance their qualification, social prestige and job opportunities. They have also pointed out that this system had helped a number of handicapped people.

Another benefit that has been pointed out by these people is that learning through correspondence has helped the middle income group specifically. Those students who were not eligible for fee concession; scholarship, stipend etc, and whose parents could not afford to pay the exorbitant fees of some of the colleges were provided the opportunity to continue their education in a less expensive way. Thus Distance Education does satisfy the social necessity of providing equal educational opportunity. The general feeling of this sample which represents the cream of the society is that Distance Education system is greatly beneficial to the society in general and that it should expand further with improvements in the functioning of the system. The suggestion given by them will be discussed in this section.

INTERVIEW WITH NON PARTICIPANT STUDENTS

150 graduates who were between the ages of 20-26 years, who were appearing for interviews in regular colleges for their postgraduate admission in

Arts courses were interviewed to find out why they preferred regular colleges and what their opinion was about Distance Education.

The most important reason, according to this group for wanting to join regular colleges was that they needed personal contact with teachers, to listen to lectures and directed to do assignments. They said that they did not have the confidence that they would be able to learn by themselves and that they wanted to be bound by a time frame to do their work.

PERFORMANCE OF THE SYSTEM

Usefulness of the components of this learning system was rated by the participants on a three point scale, most useful, useful and least useful.

DISTRIBUTION OF USEFULNESS OF THE COMPONENTS

The chief medium of instruction in Distance Education is the 'printed word' in the form of lesson scripts, especially in our country where other technological medium such as T.V. Video cassets, tape recorders , linguaphones etc are not still very popular. We find 81per cent of our respondents have found the 'lessons scripts' as the most useful component and 15.5Per cent 'useful'. Thus 97Per cent reported that of all the components, lessons scripts were most useful. 38Per cent have reported that contact classes as most useful, i.e., a total of 89Per cent consider contract classes as most useful. All the other components. Namely assignments, response sheets, radio programmes and study centre have been rated as most useful only by 5 to 10Per cent of the respondents. Less than 40Per cent of the respondents find the assignments and response sheets as contributing to the success of the programme. It seems the study centres do not really help the students as 80Per cent have rated them as 'least useful'.

THE DISTRIBUTION OF USEFULNESS OF THE COMPONENTS RATED BY THOSE UNDERGOING THE COURSE

Here also we find that 98Per cent of the students consider the lesson scripts useful, 96Per cent find the contact classes useful and about 60 to 70Per

cent find the other components useful. There is definitely improvement in the rating of the usefulness of assignments, response sheets and study centres. This may be due to the fact that in some of the professional courses, these components have been made compulsory and students are able to see the usefulness only when they go through it.

SUGGESTIONS OF THE RESPONDENTS FOR MAKING THE DISTANCE LEARNING SYSTEM, MORE BENEFICIAL AND MORE USEFUL

An open ended column welcoming the suggestions of the respondents for both the samples had been included and these responses are now analyzed.

The suggestions covered all aspects of this system, right from admission procedures to the examination system.

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS:

1. Large number of candidates should not be admitted as the efficiency of the functioning of the system is affected.
2. Information gaps should be avoided, Each department should nominate a contact staff who could be reached by phone
3. Fees in Madurai Kamaraj University are slightly higher than the other universities. Fee concessions for deserving students of lower income group should be given.

CONTACT CLASSES

1. Due to the large number of students turning at the contact classes, there is no 'contact' as such but only a large group lecture. Hence the number of students, at the contact classes must be regulated.
2. The number of contact classes should be made compulsory.
3. A certain number of contact classes should be made compulsory.
4. Discussion time should be provided during contact seminars for clarifying doubts and more interaction with the staff.
5. Timing of the contact classes should take into account the convenience of people coming from distant places.

6. Efficient and more able faculty should be appointed for taking contact classes. They should be clear in their expression and capable of engaging the class in an interesting manner.
7. Personal touch can be established by having some teachers in various subjects be available at the contact classes for discussion with the students.

ASSIGNMENTS, RESPONSE SHEETS:

1. Response sheets should be returned properly with suitable comments at the earliest.
2. Response sheets should be corrected, only by those faculties who deal with the subject.
3. Credits may be assigned to response sheets and weightage could be given to them as internal assessments.
4. To avoid copying by the students, a variety of response sheets may be prepared for the same subject.
5. Particular time may be allocated by each staff of the directorate for the students to have individual discussion on their assignments, response sheets etc.

STUDY CENTRES:

1. More study centres should be opened in all major cities of Tamil Nadu in some reputed colleges.
2. More technological aids such as language lab, Video casetts, linguaphone records, recordplayers, softwares, etc. should be made available in these centres.
3. Over and besides book material, other learner resource material such as filmstrips, slides, charts, CDS and other audiovisual material should be available in the study centres.

EXAMINATIONS:

1. Periodical revision tests and model examination should be organized during contact classes to give the students some practice in writing the final examinations.
2. Postponement of examinations and inordinate delay in publishing results should be avoided.
3. The minimum requirement of passing should be the same as in other universities.
4. Communication regarding the examination results are to be sent individually on time, through email and mobile phones.
5. Un-usual delay in sending the grade sheets after the announcement of the examination results is to be avoided.
6. Model question paper with answers should be supplied, to help the students in their self study.

TUITION FEES:

1. Tuition fees should be reduced. Some fee concessions on the basis of merit cum means should be introduced for the learners of the system.
2. All defence personnel should be given exemption from tuition fees.
3. Remittance of fees should be acknowledged by the University authorities promptly.

GENERAL:

1. Every letter that a candidate writes to the institute should be replied without any delay.
2. Communications about the contact seminars, campus programme etc. should be more regular and well in advance.

Besides the suggestions given for improving the system, some general suggestions for making this learning system more beneficial to the society were also given by the respondents.

1. Instead of merely confining Distance Education to the traditional courses, some job oriented, and non traditional, inter-disciplinary courses, relevant to the needs of the people of Tamil Nadu should be started.
2. Summer vacation should be utilized to increase the duration of campus programme and Contact courses, especially for professional courses.
3. A beginning can be made in offering technical education and science courses through Distance Education by providing theoretical instruction through written lessons and requesting the regular colleges to help conduct practical sessions during summer vacations.
4. The teachers of Distance Education should be given training in formulating proper questions, evaluating and presenting the important information in a condensed form while lecturing.
5. Periodical review of the working of the system should be made and improvements on the basis of the review should be made.
6. Comprehensive survey should be made to assess the educational needs of the people
7. The institute of Distance Education courses should set up research and evaluation units and should be continuously engaged in evolving new techniques of instruction and testing them.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION:

Distance Education has been recommended as an alternate model for meeting the ever increasing demands for more education and to give a second chance for all those who have been deprived of educational opportunities earlier due to various reasons.

Results discussed in the previous section show that the primary beneficiaries of the learning system are more men than women, between the ages of 20 and 40 years mostly from middle income group and belonging more to the forward and backward communities' rater than scheduled communities.

More of teacher and unemployed people take advantage of this system. Some of the special beneficiaries are prisoners and disabled people.

According to people who have successfully completed the courses through Distance Education, they have benefitted most in gaining social prestige as they could improve their education qualifications. They are also very satisfied that they could beneficially use their leisure time.

The impact is more in social and educational than the economic category. The candidates undergoing the courses also hope that by becoming better qualified, they would gain social status and financial benefits.

The professional students report that by obtaining professional qualifications, they have been able to get better job opportunities and promotions in their career. The impact is more educational and occupational than social and economical.

The response of the non participant elites shows that the objective of the correspondence learning system namely providing a second chance to people who were deprived earlier is being achieved successfully.

This owns time; self instructional system has benefitted the weaker section of the society-housewives, handicapped and lower income groups.

According to the respondents, lesson scripts are the most useful next to the contact classes. The functioning of the other components namely, assignments, response sheets and question pattern need to be improved.

DISCUSSION

INTRODUCTION

The present study was an attempt to find out the extent of relationship seen between unit cost and Efficiency in ten selected colleges of Madurai Kamaraj University. The results of the analyses are presented have chapter V. In this chapter the investigator has discussed the results according to the objectives and hypothesis and the conclusions drawn on the basis of them.

UNIT COST OF DIFFERENT COURSES

The first objective of this study was to find out the unit cost of various courses in the different colleges. Tables 4.1 to 4.10 presented the unit cost of different courses in the ten selected colleges. To have a comparative picture of each course among the different colleges the percentage share of unit cost to the total was presented in Table 4.11 and 4.12.

It can be noticed from Table 4.11 and 4.12 that sixteen different courses are being offered at both the under-graduate and post-graduate levels in the selected colleges.

Post graduate Degree course in Tamil is offered in autonomous college A02, autonomous college A03 and autonomous college A04.The unit cost of this course in percentage is 12.44 for autonomous college A02, 8.92 for autonomous college A03 and 15.44 for autonomous college A04, to the total cost. From this autonomous college A03 was found to be spending less than other colleges. The course was available at a lower unit cost in autonomous college A03 among the three colleges.

Degree courses in English is available in autonomous college A02, autonomous college A03 and autonomous college A04. The unit cost was 6.60 in autonomous college A02, 9.13 in autonomous college A03 and 6.68 in autonomous college A04. Both the institutional and student cost were found to be lower in autonomous college A02. Autonomous college A04 which accounted

for the highest percentage of unit cost for English was found to be having the maximum institutional cost.

Post graduate Degree course in History is taught in autonomous college A03 and non autonomous college A07. The unit cost arrived at came to be 5.98 for A03 and 26.02 for non autonomous college A07in percentage. It was seen that autonomous college A03 spent less than the other colleges. The student cost was also found to be lowest in that college. The course was the cheapest in autonomous college A03.

Post graduate Degree course in Economics is available in autonomous college A01, autonomous college A02, autonomous college A03, autonomous college A04 and non autonomous college NA07. Both the institutional cost and student cost were higher in autonomous college A01.

The post graduate degree course in Commerce is available in all the colleges except autonomous college A01and autonomous college A04. Autonomous college A03 was found to be incurring the lowest institutional cost. The unit cost seems to be having the highest percentage of 47.29 to the total in non autonomous college NA08, (Vide Table 4.12).

Post graduate Degree course in Business Administration is offered in autonomous college A03 and non autonomous college NA09. Total cost was found to be having 12.90 and 22.29 percent of unit cost for this course alone to the total in the autonomous college A03 and non autonomous college A09 respectively. The unit cost is lower in autonomous college A03.

The post graduate degree course in Mathematics is offered in three autonomous college and three non autonomous colleges included in the study. The share of the unit cost to the total for this course was 17.91, 8.87, 11.17, 24.63, 52.71 and 10.94 percent in autonomous college A01, autonomous college A02, autonomous college A04, non autonomous college NA06, non autonomous college NA08 and non autonomous college A09 respectively. The unit cost was

the highest in non autonomous college A08. The unit cost is the lowest in autonomous college A02.

Post graduate Degree course in Physics is available in four autonomous colleges and two non autonomous colleges. The percentage of unit cost was the lowest with 8.36 in autonomous college A02. The highest unit cost is represented by non autonomous college NA10 with 49.91 percent.

Post graduate Chemistry degree course is taught in four autonomous colleges only. This course is offered in autonomous college A02, autonomous college A03, autonomous college A04 and autonomous college A05. The percentage of unit cost for this course is 8.40 percent, in autonomous college A02 12.4 in autonomous college A03, 12.06 in autonomous college A04 and 22.79 in autonomous college A05. The total unit cost was the lowest in Autonomous college A02, Autonomous college A05, incurred much for this course.

Post graduate Zoology degree course is offered in autonomous college A02 and autonomous college A05. Autonomous college A02, had the lower institutional cost and student cost (Vide Table 4.11). Likewise autonomous college A05 had the higher institutional cost and student cost. This course had a unit cost of 7.55 percent in autonomous college A02, 22.39 percent in autonomous college A05. Autonomous college A02 had the lower unit cost for this course.

Post graduate Botany degree course is available in autonomous college A02 and autonomous college A04. The percentage of unit cost to the total was 7.78 in autonomous college A02, and 10.77 for autonomous college A04.

Post graduate degree in Micro biology in offered in autonomous college A02, autonomous college A03 and non autonomous college NA09. The unit cost for this course was 10.61, 10.60 and 15.37 in percentage for the colleges respectively. The unit cost is low in autonomous college A02 and in autonomous college A03. The cost is higher in non autonomous college NA09.

The post graduate degree course in Computer science in available in four autonomous colleges and three non autonomous colleges. The unit cost for the above colleges is given in 4.11 (vide table 4.11). The lowest unit cost is 12.82 in percentage to the total cost in autonomous college A02. The highest unit cost with 32.83 percent is recorded in Autonomous college.

The post graduate degree course the Computer application is available in non autonomous college NA09 only. The percentage of unit cost is 14..36 for the above course. For the above course comparison is not possible.

In general, it was noted that the unit cost was the lowest in autonomous college A02, autonomous college A03 and autonomous college A04. As the above colleges are running a good number of courses it was possible for this college to provide education comparatively at a cheaper cost. The study of the Indian statistical Institute (1966) revealed that the cost of education per student as Rs.106.86 excluding expenditure on guardian's share towards books and stationery. Datt (1967) found that the unit cost were the highest in the Government colleges. This finding is contradictory to the present finding.

Gulkarni's (1969) study revealed that the unit cost per student increased from Rs.316 toRs.433 during the period 1962 to 1966. The other studies done on unit cost revealed the different aspects of unit cost. Therefore comparisons with the present findings are not possible.

EFFICIENCY OF DIFFERENT COURSES

The second objective of this study was to find out the efficiency of the different courses available in the colleges included in the study. Tables 4.13 to 4.22 presented the efficiency score of different courses in the colleges included in the study. To have comparative picture of each course among the different colleges the efficiency scores of all the courses have been presented in terms of percentage to the total in Table 4.23 and 4.24.

The percentage of efficiency for the post graduate degree course in Tamil was 7.86 percent in autonomous college A03, 8.84 percent in autonomous college A02 and 11.05 in autonomous college A04. Autonomous college A04, showed better performance in this course than other colleges.

The efficiency percentages for the post graduate degree courses in English were 9.71, 6.71 and 11.18in autonomous college A02, autonomous college A03, and autonomous college A04 respectively. It indicates that among the colleges offering Branch XII English, the performance is better in autonomous college A04.

History degree course accounted for an efficiency percentage of 7.11and 28.42 for autonomous college A03 and autonomous college NA07 respectively. It means that the performance is better in autonomous college A03 and it is the lower in autonomous college A03.

The efficiency score in percentage was higher in autonomous college NA07 for the post graduate degree course in Economics. It was 26.97 percent in autonomous college A09 and 8.94 percent in autonomous college A03. It indicates that among the colleges offering Economics autonomous performance is better in non autonomous college NA 07.

The efficiency score for post graduate degree course in autonomous college A01 for Philosophy was 20.50 percent. As the other colleges are not offering this course it was not possible to give a comparative picture among the colleges.

The efficiency score for the degree course in Commerce was 10.63 in autonomous college A02, 13.54 percent in autonomous college A03, 28.00 percent in autonomous college A05, 35.96 non autonomous college NA06, 29.36 in autonomous college NA07, 52.28 in autonomous college NA08, 14.11 in autonomous college NA09 and 44.33 in autonomous college NA10. Non autonomous college NA10 shows the highest efficiency.

The efficiency score of the post graduate degree course in Business Administration was 16.28 percent in autonomous college A03.

The efficiency score in terms of percentage for the degree course in Mathematics was 20.16 in autonomous college A01, 9.26 in autonomous college A02, 14.22 in autonomous college A04, 35.96 in non autonomous college NA06, 47.92 in non autonomous college NA08 and 11.74 non in autonomous college NA09. Autonomous college NA08 showed the highest efficiency for this course when compared with other colleges.

The efficiency score for the degree course in Physics was 23.60 percent for autonomous college A01, 8.97 for autonomous college A02, 8.88 for autonomous college A03, 13.73 for autonomous college A04, 14.52 for autonomous college NA09 and 27.98 for autonomous college NA10. the highest efficiency source goes non autonomous college to NA10.

Post graduate Chemistry degree course had the highest efficiency score of 25.25 percent in autonomous college A05. the lowest efficiency is represented by autonomous college A02.

The efficiency score for the degree course in Zoology was 7.94 percent in autonomous college A02, 26.38 autonomous college A05. Autonomous college A05 accounted for a higher proportion of efficiency.

The efficiency score for Botany was 7.40 percent in autonomous college A02 and 14.56 in autonomous college A04.

The efficiency score for the commerce post-graduate degree course was 10.63, 13.54, 28.00, 35.96, 29.36, 52.28, 14.11 and 44.33 in autonomous college A01, autonomous college A03, autonomous college A05, non autonomous college NA06, non autonomous college NA07, non autonomous college NA08, non autonomous college NA09 and non autonomous college NA10 respectively. The highest efficiency scores in 52.28 percent in non autonomous college NA08.

In the related literature, though a handful of studies on efficiency were found, the natures of the findings were different from the present one. Hence for discussion such studies were not taken into account.

COST EFFICIENCY INDEX OF DIFFERENT COURSES

The cost efficiency index for Tamil was almost the same in autonomous college A02, autonomous college A03 and autonomous college A04. It was 2.88 in autonomous college A02. In autonomous college A03 it was 2.90 and 2.17 in autonomous college A04. Hence it can be concluded that for the expenditure spent on education all the colleges are producing good results.

The cost efficiency indices for English were 5.98 in autonomous college A02, 2.42 in autonomous college A03 and 2.03 in autonomous college A04. Therefore autonomous college A02 had the highest cost efficiency index for English.

The post graduate course in History accounted for the highest percentage of cost efficiency index in autonomous college A03. It was found to be 7.45 percent.

The post graduate course in Economics had a cost efficiency index of 5.42 in autonomous college A02, 3.29 in autonomous college A01, 3.57 in autonomous college A03, 3.70 in autonomous college A04 and 3.89 in non autonomous college A09.

Philosophy course accounted for a cost efficiency index of 3.11 in autonomous college A01 and 2.02 in autonomous college A04.

For the post graduate course in commerce the cost efficiency index was 5.34 in autonomous college A02, 3.54 in autonomous college A03, 3.46 in autonomous college A05, 3.13 in non autonomous college A06, 3.92 in non autonomous college NA09, 2.73 in non autonomous college NA08, 2.91 in non

autonomous college NA09 and 4.30 in non autonomous college NA10. The cost efficiency index for autonomous college A02 was the highest. This showed that autonomous college A02 faired well to the expenditure spent.

The cost efficiency index for the degree course in Mathematics was 3.49 in autonomous college A01, 4.24 in autonomous college A02, 3.87 in autonomous college A04, 3.40 in non autonomous college NA06, 2.24 in non autonomous college NA08, 2.50 in non autonomous college NA09. This showed that autonomous college A01, which incurred the highest institutional cost also accounted for the highest cost efficiency index.

The post graduate course in Physics offered in autonomous college A01 had a cost efficiency index of 19.44.

The efficiency index was 8.40, 12.64, 12.06, 22.79 and 1.87 for the post graduate degree course in Chemistry in autonomous college A02, autonomous college A03, autonomous college A04, autonomous college A05 and non autonomous college NA10 respectively. Non autonomous college NA10 which had the lowest percentage of unit cost showed the highest cost efficiency index.

The cost of efficiency index was 3.86 in autonomous college A02 and in autonomous college A04 for Botany course.

Cost efficiency index for4 business administration was 4.25% in autonomous college A03 and 1.99% in non – autonomous college (NA09). Hence (non – auto) college (NA 09) had the highest cost efficiency index for business administration.

The post graduate course in computer application accounted for the highest percentage of cost efficiency index in autonomous college A03 the 10.34% whereas it was 2.39% in non – autonomous college NA09. It would be concluded that non – autonomous college NA 09 had the highest cost efficiency index.

The post Graduate course in microbiology had a cost efficiency index of 3.23% in autonomous college A02, 2.14% in autonomous college A03 and 1.57% in non – autonomous college NA 09. For the post graduate degree course in zoology ha the cost efficiency index of 4.27% in autonomous college A02 and 3.20% in autonomous college A05.

Since this analysis of cost efficiency index was an attempt made by the present investigator no comparison could be ma`de as it is not found in the related literature.

SIGNIFICANCE OF COST EFFICIENCY INDICES

The fourth objective of this study was to find out the differences existing between the cost efficiency indices of various courses in each one of the colleges. For this the investigators setup the hypothesis that there was no significant difference in the cost efficiency index of each course in the selected colleges. Tables 4.26 presented the result of the chi-square test for Autonomous college A01. The investigator worked out the chi-square values for the other colleges. In Table 4.27the obtained chi-square values were presented. To draw inferences the investigator compared the obtained chi-square values with the corresponding table values for their respective degrees of freedom. The obtained values of chi-square were significant at 0.01 level for Non autonomous college NA 06 and Non autonomous college NA 08. (vide Table 4.15). In respect of other colleges the hypothesis was not confirmed. That is no significant differences in the cost efficiency indices existed between the different courses. In the case of the other colleges the difference were found to be insignificant and led to the confirmation of the hypothesis set up by the investigator. From this it is safe to conclude that differences exist among colleges in achieving efficiency with respect to the expenditure incurred for different courses.

In the related literature similar findings could not be traced to compare the present results. From the above discussion the following findings have been arrived at.

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN UNIT COST AND EFFICIENCY

The fifth objective of this study was to find out the relationship between the unit cost and efficiency for the different courses in the selected colleges. The hypothesis set up was that there is no significant relationship between unit cost and efficiency of different courses in the selected colleges.

The relationship between unit cost and efficiency was found to be positive for four colleges includes in the study. The values of correlation coefficients obtained were presented in Table 4.29. It implies that there is significant positive relationship between the unit cost and efficiency of different courses in Autonomous college A02, Autonomous college A03, Autonomous college A04 and Non Autonomous college NA09.

Datt (1972) found that the percentage of Arts to science students admitted was statistically significant as it yielded a positive correlation coefficient. No such study as to find out unit cost and efficiency among the different courses could be traced from the related literature. Hence comparison has not been done.

SIGNIFICANCE FOR THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN CORRELATION COEFFICIENTS

The sixth objective of this study was to find out the difference seen between the correlation coefficients. The hypothesis setup was that there is no significant difference in the relationship between unit cost and efficiency of different courses in the selected colleges.

For testing this hypothesis the method of finding out the significance between the 'r's as suggested by Garrette (1971) was followed. Table 4.31presented the results obtained in this regard. To draw inferences the investigator compared the obtained values with the corresponding table values for their respective degree of freedom. The obtained values of correlation coefficients were significant at 0.01 level. From table 4.31 it was inferred that

significant differences existed between the correlation coefficients in six cases. They were (1) Autonomous college A02 and Autonomous college A03 (2) Autonomous college A02 and Autonomous college A04 (3) Autonomous college A02 and Autonomous college A09 (4) Autonomous college A03 and Autonomous college A04 (5) Autonomous college A03 and Autonomous college A09 (6) Autonomous college A04 and Autonomous college A09. The differences were found to be insignificant in the following cases namely (1) Autonomous college A01 (2) Autonomous college A05 (3) Non Autonomous college NA06 (4) Non Autonomous college NA07, Non Autonomous college NA08 and Non Autonomous college NA10.

It was found that the colleges differed in their relationship between unit cost and efficiency of different courses.

CONCLUSION

Now everyone is talking in terms of the accountability of the money spent even in education. Qualitative improvement of education is the slogan of the day. It is nothing but the efficiency concept emphasized in education. The products of educations institutions are the students who come out successful from them. When there are constraints for allocating funds for education, it is the duty of administrators to see that the funds allocated are utilized for the purpose for which they are intended. These products are the indicators of the level of efficiency of each institution. The need for a study of the efficiency level of each institution with respect to its products tuned out is being felt now. A comparison of unit cost of education per student of different colleges is helpful in ascertaining whether it is possible to achieve greater efficiency when cost increases. For studying the level of efficiency of educational institutions the study of unit cost is inevitable. Considering the importance of efficiency studies on educational institutions at the present juncture, the present investigator thought that it was appropriate for her to take up a project on “UNIT COST AND

EFFICIENCY FO CERTAIN COLLEGES OF MADURAI CITY".

The present investigator had the following objectives in mind while taking up this study.

(i) To find out the unit cost of different courses among the selected colleges of Madurai.
(ii) To find out the level for efficiency for different courses among the colleges.
(iii) To find out the cost-efficiency index of the different courses within a college.
(iv) To find out the relationship between unit cost and efficiency of the different courses in the selected colleges. and
(v) To compare the different colleges for their relationship between unit cost and efficiency of the different courses among the colleges.

The following hypothesis was formulated.

1. There is no significant difference in the cost efficiency index of each course in the selected colleges.
2. There is no significant relationship between unit cost and efficiency of different courses in the selected colleges and
3. There is no significant difference in the relationship between unit cost and efficiency of the different courses among the colleges.

METHODOLOGY

The present study aimed at finding out the existing relationship between unit cost and Efficiency of Five Colleges of Madurai City. The study had four variables namely institutional cost, student cost, opportunity cost and institutional efficiency. The first three variables constituted the variable known as unit cost in this study. The last one namely, institutional efficiency was the criterion variable. The level of efficiency of the colleges includes aspects like achievement in academic subjects, fine arts, competitions and sports and games.

For the present study statistical techniques were to be applied for finding out the relationship between unit cost and efficiency. For calculating the student cost arithmetic mean was found. The proportion of unit cost of each course to the total unit cost was calculated for the different colleges included in the study in terms of percentage. The proportion of efficiency of each course to the total efficiency was found out for each one of the colleges included in the study in terms of percentage. By taking the ratio of efficiency to unit cost the investigator calculated the cost efficiency index of each course offered in the different colleges in terms of percentages. To find out the significant differences existing if and between the cost efficiency indices of various courses within a college the investigator applied chi-square test. The relationship between unit cost and efficiency was obtained by means of pearsonian correlation analysis. To test the significance of the difference between correlation coefficients the investigator applied the test of significance of the difference between correlation coefficients.

ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

From the analysis of data the following results have been arrived at.

COMPARATIVE UNIT COST IN TERMS OF PERCENTAGE FOR DIFFERENT COURSES

Table 4.11 presented already has been presented below to provide the percentage unit cost of the different courses in the colleges included in the study.

Table

Comparative Unit Cost in terms of percentage for Different course in Autonomous Colleges

Sl.No	Course	Degree	A01	A02	A03	A04	A05
1.	Tamil	M.A		12.44	8.92	15.44	
2.	English	M.A		6.60	9.13	16.68	
3.	Economics	M.A	16.85	8.50	8.26	11.84	
4.	Commerce	M.Com		8.07	6.62		21.99
5.	Philosophy	M.A	20.47			10.66	
6.	History	M.A			5.98		
7.	Social Work	M.A					
8.	Business Administration	MBA			12.90		
9.	Mathematics	M.Sc	17.91	8.87		11.17	
10.	Physics	M.Sc	19.44	8.36	12.00	11.38	
11.	Chemistry	M.Sc		8.40	12.64	12.06	22.79
12.	Botany	M.Sc		7.78		10.77	
13.	Zoology	M.Sc		7.55			22.39
14.	Micro biology	M.Sc		10.61	10.60		
15.	Computer Science	M.Sc	25.39	12.82	12.95		32.83

From the above table it is seen that the unit cost of the different courses very widely among the different colleges. The lowest unit cost is identified for the Branch History in Autonomous college A03 of 5.98 percent and the highest unit cost is for computer science in college A05 (32.83 percent).

Table

Comparative Unit Cost in terms of percentage for Different course in Non-Autonomous Colleges

Sl.No	Course	Degree	NA06	NA07	NA08	NA09	NA10
1.	Tamil	M.A					
2.	English	M.A					
3.	Economics	M.A		14.24			
4.	Commerce	M.Com	26.70	15.38	47.29	11.29	29.33
5.	Philosophy	M.A					
6.	History	M.A		26.02			
7.	Social Work	M.A					28.76
8.	Business Administration	MBA				22.29	
9.	Mathematics	M.Sc	24.63		52.71	10.94	
10.	Physics	M.Sc				11.45	49.91
11.	Chemistry	M.Sc					
12.	Botany	M.Sc					
13.	Computer Application	MCA				14.36	
14.	Micro biology	M.Sc				15.37	
15.	Computer Science	M.Sc	48.67	44.36		15.30	

From table 4.12 it is observed that the unit cost of the different courses differ widely among the different colleges. The lowest unit cost is for Mathematics (10.94 percent) in Non Autonomous College NA 09. The highest unit cost is for Mathematics (52.71 percent) in College NA 08.

COMPARATIVE EFFICIENCY IN TERMS OF PERCENTAGE FOR DIFFERENT COURSES.

Table 4.23 presented already has been given here to show the efficiency of the various courses in the selected colleges in terms of their respective percentages

Table

Comparative Efficiency in terms of Percentage for Different Courses

Sl.No	Course	Degree	NA06	NA07	NA08	NA09	NA10
1	Economics	-	-	26.95	-	-	-
2	Commerce	-	35.96	29.36	52.28	14.11	44.33
3	History	-	-	28.42	-	-	-
4	Social Work	-	-	-	-	-	27.89
5	Business Administration	-	-	-	-	18.16	-
6	Mathematics	-	35.96	-	47.72	11.74	-
7	Physics	-	-	-	-	14.52	27.78
8	M.C.A	-	-	-	-	14.72	-
9	Micro biology	-	-	-	-	10.35	-
10	Computer Science	-	28.08	15.27	-	14.40	-

From the table above it is seen that the highest efficiency score of 47.72 is identified for Mathematics in Non autonomous college NA08 and the lowest efficiency score of 10.35 for microbiology in Non autonomous college NA 09. The efficiency scores are moderate for all the courses offered in all the colleges.

COST EFFICIENCY INDEX OF DIFFERENT COURSES IN THE SELECTED COLLEGES

Table 4.25 presented already has been given below to show the cost efficiency index of different courses of the colleges included in the study.

Table

Cost Efficiency index Different Courses in the Selected Autonomous Colleges

Sl.No	Course	Degree	A01	A02	A03	A04	A05
1.	Tamil	M.A	-	2.88	2.90	2.17	-
2.	English	M.A	-	5.98	2.42	2.03	-
3.	Economics	M.A	3.29	5.42	3.57	3.70	-
4.	Commerce	M.Com	-	5.34	3.54	-	3.46
5.	Philosophy	M.A	3.11	-	-	2.02	-
6.	History	M.A	-	-	7.45	-	-
7.	Social Work	M.A	-	-	-	-	-
8.	Business Administration	MBA	-	-	4.28	-	-
9.	Mathematics	M.Sc	3.49	4.24	-	3.87	-
10.	Physics	M.Sc	3.77	4.36	2.44	3.67	-
11.	Chemistry	M.Sc	-	4.44	2.92	3.46	3.01
12.	Botany	M.Sc	-	3.86	-	4.11	-
13.	Computer Application	MCA	-	-	10.34	-	-
14.	Micro biology	M.Sc	-	3.23	2.14	-	-
15.	Computer Science	M.Sc	2.19	2.61	-	-	1.58
16.	Zoology	M.Sc	-	4.27	-	-	3.20

Table 4.25 presents the cost efficiency index of different courses offered in the selected Autonomous Colleges. The highest cost efficiency index is for English with 5.98 in college A02. The lowest cost efficiency index is for computer science (1.58 percent) in college A05.

Table

Cost Efficiency index Different Courses in the Selected Non-Autonomous Colleges

Table 4.26 presented already has been given below to show the cost efficiency index of different courses of the non autonomous college included in the study.

Sl.No	Course	Degree	NA06	NA07	NA08	NA09	NA10
1.	Economics	M.A	-	3.89	-	-	-
2.	Commerce	M.Com	3.13	3.92	2.73	2.91	4.30
3.	History	M.A	-	2.24	-	-	-
4.	Social Work	M.A	-	-	-	-	2.76
5.	Business Administration	MBA	-	-	-	1.99	-
6.	Mathematics	MSC	3.40	-	2.24	2.50	-
7.	Physics	MSC	-	-	-	3.37	-
8.	Chemistry	MSC	-	-	-	-	1.87
9.	Computer Application	MCA	-	-	-	2.39	-
10.	Micro biology	MSC	-	-	-	1.57	-
11.	Computer Science	MSC	1.34	0.71	-	2.19	-

Table 4.26 presents the cost efficiency index of different courses offered in the selected Autonomous Colleges. The highest cost efficiency index is for English with 5.98 in college A02. The lowest cost efficiency index is for computer science (1.58 percent) in college A05.

CONCLUSION

From the analysis of the results the following conclusion have been derived.

1) In autonomous college A01 the unit cost was the lowest for the degree course in Economics and highest in computer science.
2) In autonomous college A02 the unit cost was the found to be lowest for English and highest for computer science.
3) In autonomous college A03 the unit cost was found to be the lowest for commerce and highest for Business Administration.

4) In autonomous college A04 the unit cost was found to be the highest for English and lowest for philosophy.
5) In autonomous college A05 the unit cost was seem to be the highest for computer science and high in commerce.
6) Autonomous college A01 had a greater percentage of efficiency for the degree courses in philosophy.
7) Autonomous college A03 was found to be having the highest efficiency for the post graduate course in History.
8) Autonomous college A01 showed the lowest cost efficiency index for the degree course in computer science 2.19.
9) Autonomous college A02 produced the greatest cost efficiency index for the post graduate degree course in Economics.
10) Autonomous college A01 showed the highest cost efficiency index for the degree course in Mathematics
11) High score of efficiency on difference course in autonomous A01 was higher for physics and lower for Economics.
12) High score of efficiency on difference course in autonomous A02 was higher for economics and lower for potany.
13) High score of efficiency on difference course in autonomous A03 was higher for commerce and lower for English.
14) High score of efficiency on difference course in autonomous A04 was higher for Botany and lower for Philosophy.
15) High score of efficiency on difference course in autonomous A05 was higher for Commerce and lower for Computer science.
16) High score of efficiency on difference course in non autonomous NA06 was higher for Commerce and Mathematics lower for Computer science.
17) High score of efficiency on difference course in non autonomous NA07 was higher for Commerce and lower for Computer Science.
18) High score of efficiency on difference course in non autonomous NA08 was higher for commerce and lower for Mathematics.

19) High score of efficiency on difference course in non autonomous NA09 was higher for Business Administration and lower for Commerce.
20) High score of efficiency on difference course in non autonomous NA01 was higher for Commerce and lower for chemistry.
21) It was found that the colleges differed in their relationship between unit cost and efficiency of different courses.

EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

The various educational inputs including students, teachers and various parts of educations production mechanism act and react upon one another. The efficiency of the production mechanism is heavily dependent on the quality of the human resources influenced by the social and economic environment of students and teachers, the habits, the attitudes they bring with them and the incentives within and outside the system that motivate them.

With all these in mind and from an analysis of the findings of the present study it is safe to state that generalization cannot be made at this stage. Before making any specific recommendations the investigator submits that the present study was pertaining only to the five colleges selected for the purpose of the study.

Yet the conclusions of the study have direct implications for the educationists, educational administrators, economic planners and the general public. From this study it was found that in certain colleges the costs of some of the courses were found to be low whereas for some other courses they were costly when compared to other colleges. If the parents take note of these factors they can be benefited by admitting their wards in the respective colleges for the specific courses according to their ability to pay for them.

Compared to the aided colleges the Government College was found to be having greater efficiency in many subjects. Moreover some of the colleges produced high efficiency for a lower cost in certain courses. But in some other

colleges it was noticed that the efficiency was low inspite of the fact that the cost was high for them. The educational administrators and economic planners will have to prove the causes for these phenomena. It is an ideal and welcome trend to produce high efficiency at a low cost. But the reverse should not happen.

It was found that there exists significant relationship between unit cost and efficiency in certain colleges. It was inferred that if the unit cost is increased there is a possibility that the efficiency of the respective courses in the colleges may be on the up trend. It is up to the principals, management and administrators to ponder over these findings and their implications.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. Increasing enrolment at all courses is appreciated. However, there are courses such as Philosophy, Social work and Value education totally ignored by institution to mention, discipline should be the most important and prime factor in the over all development of students.
2. In some colleges, there are some hidden costs that are calculated for various activities. Those costs should be brought to books for audit purposes.
3. Relatively speaking, Arts courses and cheaper than the science courses, as a result it is seen that science students are more productive than arts students.
4. In Autonomous colleges compared to Non – Autonomous colleges award of marks relatively high and it seems they are boosted up. There most be uniform scale (or) yard stick to measure the performance of students.
5. In some Pos graduate courses the numbers of papers are less and in some other, they are more. There must be uniformity in the number of papers of study.
6. Students should be well informed about the examination pattern.
7. If the semester system is already a fait accompli – and sadly such appears to be the case – then the university cannot avoid the task of radically revising the content of existing syllabi to fit the semester structure and its distinctive philosophy; and it cannot afford to forswear consultation and consensus with college faculty on these new syllabi and their pedagogies. It will do well to

find ways to both minimize the number and vary the nature of the exams it proposes to conduct centrally, especially from the point of view of the global model it so coverts. Ultimately a large public university like Delhi University, with a student population of over 2, 00, 000 can only depend to a limited extent on the model of private universities in the west. It has to show considerable independence and creativity if it is to retain its size and at the same time achieve comparable standards of excellence. More immediately to the point, Delhi University is itself a model central university for the rest of the country, and the responsibility it bears for the proper education of hundreds of thousands of young people is not one it ought to take lightly.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

There is need to examine the relationship between cost efficiency and develop programmes which would bring the highest possible quality for a given level of input. The investigator suggests that further analysis/study could be undertaken in the following areas.

(1) In the institutional cost, the capital cost of education could also be taken in to consideration.
(2) The opportunity cost could be included while finding out the unit cost.
(3) A study to find out the unit cost and efficiency of more number of colleges may be taken up. This may be helpful to generalize the findings.
(4) Separate studies to find out the cost
(5) Of instruction for Engineering Colleges, Medical Colleges and other Professional Colleges could also be attempted.

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