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**Title**

**DISTANCE EDUCATION AND CONVENTIONAL EDUCATION:  
A CASE STUDY THROUGH REVIEW OF LITERATURE.**

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**ABSTRACT:**

There are broadly two modes of education system one is conventional and the other is distance education system. For ages the conventional education system has remained the dominant way of spreading education where the construct of the school or the institute is very specific. But with time things change as well as the concepts. The latest trend in the education system is distance education where the students can enjoy utmost freedom in the process of learning. You can remain engaged in all other works including the course you want to pursue. This is the major difference between the distance education and conventional education systems. It would be better to state that the whole conception of online education holds a difference in the core that separates it from conventional education. You won't have concrete classrooms in distance education where you can find a bunch of students attending lectures of their respective teachers

The concepts on the basis of which distance education operates distinctly distinguish it from the traditional educational system are i)Learner-centeredness/learner autonomy ,ii) Learner-centeredness iii)Education in real-life setting. This paper will discuss these issues in the light of relevant case studies. The present paper is taken from the research work of the author's Ph.D thesis.

**Keywords:** Conventional Education System, Distance Education System, Learner-Centeredness, Learner-Centeredness, Education in Real-Life Setting

**Introduction:**

**Conventional Education** sometimes referred to as 'traditional education', 'school education', 'textbook education' or even 'schoolbook education', conventional education is a method of teaching, which is at the root of by far most modern schools. It puts a high emphasis on textbook knowledge and repetition of facts. A second emphasis is on discipline.

**Distance education** or **distance learning** is a field of education that focuses on teaching methods and technology with the aim of delivering teaching, often on an individual basis, to students who are not physically present in a traditional educational setting such as a classroom. It

has been described as a process to create and provide access to learning when the source of information and the learners are separated by time and distance, or both. Casey and Lorenzen has given four broad reasons why educational institutions might embrace distance learning:

**Expanding access:** distance education can assist in meeting the demand for education and training demand from the general populace and businesses, especially because it offers the possibility of a flexibility to accommodate the many time-constraints imposed by personal responsibilities and commitments.

**Alleviate capacity constraints:** the system reduces the demand on institutional infrastructure such as buildings.

**Catalyst for institutional transformation:** the competitive modern market place demands rapid change and innovation, for which she believes distance education programs can act as a catalyst.

### **The reasons for founding the distance teaching universities in the 1970s and 1980s are mainly:**

- The need felt in many countries to increase the offer of university education;
- A realization that adult people with jobs, family and social commitments constituted a large group of prospective part-time university students;
- A wish to serve both individual and society by offering study opportunities to adults, among them disadvantaged groups;
- The needs found in many professionals for further training at an advanced level; and
- A belief in the feasibility of an economical use of educational resources by mediated teaching.

### **SIGNIFICANT ASPECTS OF DISTANCE EDUCATION:**

- i) The teacher and the learner are separated from each other and this central characteristic of this form of education.



- ii) Distance education is an institutional kind of educational system. It is, therefore, distinct from private study which may result from private reading or watching TV or attending a talk, etc.
- iii) Distance education makes use of the various technically advanced media such as printing, telephone, audio-video, broadcasting, computer, etc.
- iv) It is two-way communication because the student is able to respond through assignment-responses or other media and therefore can receive feedback. The student thus enters into a dialogue with the institution.
- v) Each student is separated from his/her peer group in the sense that although the learners form a fairly sizable population they do not have face-to-face interaction among themselves. Thus distance education becomes a highly individualized learning system. In this sense, it remains one of the most individualized of all educational systems. Even though study groups may be formed under distance education learning programmes, these may not be compulsory and the student is free to work entirely on his/her own.
- vi) Distance education is a specific answer to a specific need. It is the developed industrial society that has created a need for a more capsular kind of education. At the same time, it is the same society that has developed the necessary technology to be able to structure an educational system that will cater to such a specialized kind of need for education.

### **COMPARISON BETWEEN DISTANCE EDUCATION SYSTEM AND CONVENTIONAL EDUCATION SYSTEM:**

Distance education, in comparison with the conventional educational system, is a wider system in terms of both connotation and denotation. Its connotation is wider because it works in a much larger learning situation: a situation in which many factors remain indeterminate and inchoate. It has a wider denotation in that it covers a considerable distance in order to effect academic communication. However, this does not mean that open/distance learning can be defined in any precise manner. It has as many critics as it has enthusiasts. It remains imprecise and that perhaps enables it to accommodate many different ideas and aims. Perhaps as Keegan (1986) suggests, it cannot be used in an administrative context. It can be carried out both in face-to-face encounters

and at a distance. Many distance teaching universities have closed rigid structures and are slow to respond to the community's educational needs. And yet what makes distance teaching distinct is perhaps the fact that educational technology plays a major role in distance education. Education technology itself is a developing field which today includes audio-visual aids, the computer, the mass media, etc. it is this fact (i.e., that educational technology is a developing field) that helps make distance education dynamic and exciting.

Along with distance education, one can also list various other non-traditional forms of education. These are extension programmes which make available the expertise of a university or of a college to new populations; adult programmes which provide non-traditional learning to adults in selected areas, and extended campuses that provide lectures at various locations which are far removed from the official campus. Nevertheless, following Keegan, one can use 'distance education' as a generic term. It would then include a range of teaching/learning strategies referred to as correspondence education, home study, independent study, external studies or teaching at a distance.

**M.L. Figueroa (1993) National Independent University (Mexico), studied The Comparison of Conventional Education to Distance Learning and On-line Learning**

This study focused on the quality of learning process teacher-student relation, teaching efficiency of the teachers. The research led to the findings that there are no significances in the perception and comprehensions level of the learning material between the groups studying through distance and those studying through the conventional system. In this comparative study special difficulties were experienced in the use of quality research techniques during the examination of the students' learning process. Figueroa's research in its whole showed that distance students exhibited greater interest in their personal learning while they placed special value to the teachers' role as well as to the educational system whose part they are, although they involved in the learning process and had a more negative attitude towards the education as a whole. Furthermore, distance students perceived learning more as a personal experience than an academic obligation. Conventional students treated learning as a utilitarian process oriented in terms of practice, work and application.

**Robert M. Bernard and Philip C. Abrami, studied about How Does Distance Education Compare With Classroom Instruction?**

A meta-analysis of the Comparative Distance Education (DE) literature between 1985 and 2002 was conducted. In total 232 studies containing 688 independent achievements attitude, and retention outcome were analyzed. Overall results indicated effect sizes of essentially zero on all three measures and aid variability. This suggests that many application of DE outperform their classroom counterparts and that many perform more poorly. Dividing achievement outcomes into synchronous and asynchronous forms of DE produced a source what different impression. In general, mean achievement effect sizes for synchronous application favored classroom instructive while effect sizes for asynchronous application favored DE. However significant heterogeneity remained in each subject.

**Online Versus Face-to-Face Accommodations Among College Students With Disabilities this study was conducted by Lucy Barnard-Brak and Tracey Sulak**

**Baylor University (2010).** Although both the number of online learning opportunities and students with disabilities in higher education has increased over the last two decades, students with disabilities may be overlooked. The purpose of this study was to examine attitudes toward requesting accommodations in the online learning environment among college students with disabilities compared with requesting accommodations in the face-to-face learning environment. Accommodations refer to those adjustments and modification made to instructional and/or curricular requirements in order for students with disabilities to fully participate in a course (Rehabilitation Act of 1973). Results indicate that students with disabilities did not have significantly different attitudes toward requesting accommodations as a whole in the face-to-face versus online learning environments. Results, however, do indicate that students who report having visible disabilities appear to have more positive attitudes toward requesting accommodations in the online versus face-to-face learning environment compared with students who report having hidden disabilities.

**Another study on Online Versus in the Classroom: Student Success in a Hands-On Lab Class conducted by Ron Reuter Oregon State University-Cascades Campus**

This study compares learning success of online and on-campus students in a general education soil science course with lab and field components. Two terms of students completed standardize

pre-and post assessments designed to test knowledge and skills from the lecture and lab content of the course. There was no difference in over all grade or lab assignment grades between course formats. On line students outperformed on-campus students of the pre assessment in the first term and on the post-assessment in the second term; the two populations scored the similarly for the other assessment. On line students showed a 42% grade improvement from pre-to post-assessment; on-campus students had 21% improvement. On line students also showed better learning success in lab – related knowledge and skills based on individual assessment questions. The students in both populations successfully made the learning objectives for this lab-and field-based science course.

**The concepts on the basis of which distance education operates distinctly distinguish it from the traditional educational system are:**

- i) Learner-centeredness/learner autonomy
- ii) Indirect education
- iii) Education in real-life setting

#### **Learner-centeredness/learner-autonomy**

Unlike formal education, distance education puts the client, i.e., the student, first and then the institution. Distance education, in fact, lays emphasis on the needs and convenience of the learners while taking into account the individual diversity among them and indeed makes this an operative condition. It works on a concept of time which is not arbitrary in the sense that it permits individual variation in the time span required for purposes of study. Further, it does not advocate a definite time frame for any course of study. In that sense, it is a flexible find of system which adapts itself to the needs of the learners as they actually exist and arise from time to time and place to place. It does not distinguish between the young learner and the old learner, but provides them with a possibility that permits individuals to programme their specific course of study. If the programme is made suitable to the needs of the learners, it becomes learner centred.

**Diane M.Bender, B Jeanneane Wood, Jon D, in their study titled The Time: Distance Education versus Classroom Instruction**

This study presents time and task records of faculty and teaching assistants' time for comparable computer aided design courses at two state universities in the United States. Once course was taught at a distance and the other course was a conventional face to face course. Results indicate a distance course takes less time to teach than a traditional classroom course, if student enrollment and assessment procedures are not included in analysis, when analyzed on a per-student basis, both faculty and teaching assistant time was higher for the distance course.

**Namin Shin and Gordon Maxwell , The Open University of Hong Kong (2003)**

**Factors Related to Student Satisfaction and Motivation in Distance Science Learning: Case Study of a Foundation Course in Biology and Earth Science**

This paper presents a research study investigating factors related to student satisfaction and academic motivation in the area of distance science learning. By means of a questionnaire survey, data were garnered from students enrolled in the foundation course in Biology and Earth Science at the Open University of Hong Kong. An analysis of the data showed that 1) student's perception of practical work (lab work and field work, 2) student's perceptions of teachers' presence, and 3) student's chronological age, among other demographic background variables, were significantly correlated with the subject student's satisfaction with overall distance learning experiences at the institution as well as the level of their motivation towards the course subject. The implications of these findings are discussed in order to better understand the contribution of practical work to the learning of science by distance education. First, in terms of research, the positive relationships found between student's perceptions of practical work and the investigated constructs of student satisfaction and motivation add a piece of empirical evidence to the literature, legitimizing the place of face-to-face Day-school activities in a distance science course, particularly in the case of Biology and Earth Science course. Second, this study confirms the previous research that a student's perceptions of teacher's presence is affected by their satisfaction with and motivation towards distance learning. Third, that individual difference in terms of student demographic characteristics was not significantly related to the satisfaction and motivation variables.

**A comparative Study on the Motives of Mature Students of the British Open University and Conventional Universities Nunn (1998)**

Nunn arrived at the results 1) The distance education students relate personal learning to personal reliability independence and autonomy, whereas same are considered separate units by conventional students. 2) Conventional students place special emphasis on the importance marks 3) Distance students tend to study more over and above their institutional obligations as defined by their course of study 4) Distance students express a more personal and nationally oriented approach to learning, whereas the conventional ones adopt a more mechanical and technocratic view through subject demarcation from her research it became evident that the motives for systematic learning are affected by the students' experiences and the degree to which they wish to satisfy their personal desires.

### **Indirect education**

Indirect education suggests the existence of a form of education that is direct. Direct education may be understood as one which assumes the presence of face-to-face communication. In this context, distance education can be called 'indirect' education because the provision for face-to-face interaction here is minimal.

### **Q.M. Galid Ahsan and S.M. Miraj Ahmod conducted an analysis study entitled Analyzing Study Habits of Distance Learners: A Case Study of Bangladesh Open University**

This survey based study mainly focuses measuring the intensity of the study habits of the Distance learners and identifying the factors affecting their study habits can help the ODL universities in identifying the ways to improve the study habits of the Distance learners.

It is evident from this study that distance learners' study habits during the semester were mostly guided by the tutorial services the requirements of the assignments. Some learners had good study habits before joining and some learners had developed their self-study habits after joining the programmes under D.E system. However, tutor attitude frequent changes in pronounced schedules and assessment delays act as important demotivators for such learners, which need to be seriously looked into.

### **Democratizing Higher Education through Open and Distance Learning in India: Potential and Limitations of Self-learning Packages. Rajender Gojral and Ranjan Kumar**

This paper suggest that in a diverse country like India were accessibility to institutional infrastructure and technologies varies a great deal, uniform learning package being used at present which can only be delivered through institution based centers, have deprived people of many regions from the benefit of ODL. It also suggest different ways in which, by using tools and technologies accessible in different regions in the country, learning packages can be modified and made more self-instructional. Notwithstanding the digital divide of the people, this would help to bridge the inequity in this regard, increase flexibility and openers and improve access and quality of ODL in India

### **Education in real-life setting**

One feels that distance education does not have the kind of recognizable and apparent structure that formal education possesses. While it is true that it suffers from an absence of a certain kind of vitality which only the presence of a teacher can generate. The recent developments in the telecommunication and computer technologies have increased the possibilities of teacher-student dialogue and peer group interaction. Through e-mail and internet facilities, collaborative learning has become a reality. Given the access to these facilities, distance learners would feel less lonely and alienated.

### **Success in Distance Education: Do learning Styles and Multiple Formats Matter? Studied by John Battalio Boise State University (2009)**

Using data collected from 120 students enrolled in nine sections of an undergraduate technical communication course, this study found a number of statistically significant associations between students' learning styles, as defined by the index of learning styles, and nine measures evaluating both academic performance and student preference. The study also measured student performance in collaborative and self-directed version of the same course, as well as full and summer sessions. Reflective learners (prefer working on line) were found the most successful on line learners, excelling in collaborative, as well as self-directed versions of the course. Sequential learners (those who prefer live classes) also out performed global learners (prefer on series of on line course material) learning styles were not a significant factor in summer-session courses.

### **Salma Karim And Mahmud Zubayer, Bangladesh,(2008),Impact of Technology in Modern Education with Special Emphasis on Open and Distance Learning: SWOT Analysis as Perceived by the Stakeholders**

In the context of globalization, rapid technological changes and shifting market condition, the current educational system is challenged with providing increased educational opportunities for adults without increased operational expenses. Many educational institutes of the world today are facing this challenge by adopting distance mode of education system. At its most basic level, distance education takes place when the teacher and students are separated by physical distance and technology (i.e.; voice, video, data and print), often in concert with face-to-face communication, is used to bridge the “Instructional Gap”. This paper explores to identify the best available technologies to support and disseminate knowledge to the learners as a proper substitute of on-campus teaching, taking into consideration a model developed by Johansen (1991). In addition, in the present study the researchers have made efforts to determine the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats associated with the use of distance education technologies from the perspective of teachers, students, administrators, and professional support staffs in some private and public universities of Bangladesh.

### **CONCLUSION:**

The two modes of education that are conventional and distance mode. Conventional mode of education can not always meet the demand of education .thus situation is met by distance mode. It is however , desirable to compare the achievement of learners in both the mode. In the ancient times the process of educating people depended on a school where the single teacher/master gave lessons to the pupils on different subjects. Then gradually with the progress of the civilizations schools began to form with proper administrative systems where subjects were categorized and teachers were recruited accordingly. In this system of education a specific pattern of teaching began to be conventionalized. The process of evaluation after successful completion of the course was done through an examination system. For ages this has remained the dominant way of spreading education where the construct of the school or the institute is very specific. But with time things change as well as the concepts. The latest trend in the education system is distance education where the students can enjoy utmost freedom in the process of learning. You can remain engaged in all other works including the course you want to pursue. This is the major difference between the distance education and conventional education systems. It would be better to state that the whole conception of online education holds a difference in the core that



separates it from conventional education. You won't have concrete classrooms in distance education where you can find a bunch of students attending lectures of their respective teachers..

### **IGNOU IS THE BEST EXAMPLE OF DISTANCE EDUCATION SYSTEM.**

- IGNOU provides its students with broadcasts. A thrice a week, for an half hour from AIR Bombay and Hyderabad and from Shillong four times a week (IGNOU 1995).
- Telecast is provided by IGNOU and YCMOU, thrice, week and twice a week respectively. The duration of telecast is 30 minutes by IGNOU and 20 minutes by YCMOU ((Chaudhary, 1994). Since IGNOU's programmes are being telecast on national network the students of all state opne universities also have access to these programmes. Widespread interest is being shown in these national network telecasts of IGNOU which is evidenced by the opinions of the viewers reviewed by the university. The university has reacted to this interest by introducing a TV programme "Open Channel" the goal for which is not only to answer the letters but to bring both the university and distance education programmes closer to the students and general public.
- IGNOU has the distinction of having a school of distance education which looks into the self-instructional components of the print materials to check whether the materials are self-learning and stimulate independent learning. As a result, IGNOU has been recognized as a "Centre of Excellence" in distance education by the Commonwealth of Learning in 1993 (IGNOU—1994).
- IGNOU has reasonably good facilities for production of audio-visual materials. IGNOU can thus expand its national role and use this studio as national facility for all distance education institutions (IGNOU, 1995).
- IGNOU has regularized this one-way video and two-way audio teleconferencing facility which it started on an experimental basis in October, 1993.
- In IGNOU 10 percent of the total study hours required to compete a course are allotted for counseling alone. Each counseling session is of two to two-and-a-half hours duration. These counseling sessions arranged by IGNOU are not lecture sessions. Since the printed materials are self-instructional, the distance learners are supposed to read the course materials before coming to the sessions. In other words, the distance learner are supposed

to interact with the SIMs more effectively through the agency of counselors during the session. Also, the specific individual needs in the context of counselor's unique nature are attended to by the counselor (Manjulika and Reddy, 1995).

- IGNOU organized extended contact programmes for certain vocational/training based programmes spread over 10 days.
- IGNOU has been using labs in the existing conventional education institutes by renting them for practical work in science and computer application programmes.
- Assignments form one of the major devices used to keep up continuous interaction with distance learners. The Indian open universities have recognized the importance and need for providing two-way communication through assignments. The system of evaluation of student performance developed by the university requires that every student submits a certain number of assignments. For science and technology and vocational courses, there are practical assignments also. In IGNOU the assignments carry a weightage of 25 to 30 percent in the overall assessment of each course and in the term end examination 70-75 percent weightage.
- Both grading and marking systems have been adopted by open universities for the evaluation of student assignments. In case of grading IGNOU, follow a 5-point scale and though BRAOU does have a 4-point scale for conversion of marks into grades.

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