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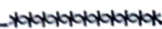
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Open and Distance Education: An Innovation in Interaction

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Abstract:

Distance education is not a stand-alone approach of teaching and learning activity. It is an alignment of numerous styles, approaches and methods on the basis of specific situational requirements. Open and Distance education meets various requirements of the society through its innovative approaches such as it helps in augmenting education in the working class adults. The emergence of distance education itself is innovation in teaching learning activity. Basically distance education has distinctive features such as the teacher and the learner are physically away from each other one can say in time and space; the interaction between teacher and the learner is through suitable medium; inclusiveness of the learning experience has significant impact on learning outcomes. In this paper an attempt is made to discuss about emergence of distance education which itself is an innovation. Significance of open and distance education is discussed. Further, innovations in interaction in open and distance education are discussed. In distance education study materials play a crucial role as it is the medium of interaction between the teacher and learner. In distance education counselling sessions instead of teaching (lecture method) are arranged for learners. Another innovative method of interaction in distance

education is assignments.

Keywords: Open Learning, Distance Education, Innovation, Interaction, Technology.

Introduction:

Connor in Kosemani (1995) has defined education as "an elaborate social mechanism designed by society to bring about in those submitted to it, certain skills and attributes that are judged desirable in that society". The education system is evolving. This evolution has brought lots of changes in teaching- learning process. The educational providers today cannot be completely dependent on the traditional process of teaching and learning and they cannot possibly survive if they remain restricted to the traditional chalk and talk method of imparting education (Ajvani 2014). So there is continuously a dire need for innovation felt in the education. The emergence of distance education itself is innovation in teaching learning activity. Derek Rowntree has defined open and distance learning as "Open learning as a philosophy or a set of beliefs about teaching and learning and distance learning as a method/ s or a set of techniques for teaching and learning. Open Learning is an arrangement to enable a person to learn at the time, place and pace which satisfies their circumstances and requirements. The emphasis is on opening up opportunities by overcoming barriers that result from geographical isolation, personal or work commitments or conventional courses structures which have often prevented people from gaining access to the training they need." A comprehensive UNESCO document entitled 'Open Learning' pronounces open learning as "Such systems are designed to offer opportunities for part-time study, for learning at a distance and for innovations in the curriculum. They are intended to allow access to wider section of adult population, to enable students to compensate for lost opportunities in the past or to acquire new skills and qualifications for the future. Open learning