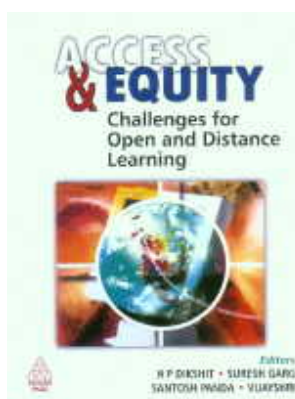# ACCESS AND EQUITY:
Challenges for Open and Distance Learning

Edited by H.P. Dikshit, Suresh Garg, Santosh Panda and Vijayshri. New Delhi, Kogan Page India, 2002, xii, 332pp., ISBN 81-7554-180-6.

TOJDE

"The emergence of the system of open and distance education is an inevitable and phenomenal evolution in the history of educational developments internationally. While the formal system of education continues to be the mainstream of educational transaction, it has its inherent limitations with regard to expansion, provision of access and equity and cost-effectiveness. On the other hand, the growth of information and communication technologies has facilitated the expansion of distance mode of education. It is now possible to adopt flexible, constructivist, learner-friendly and multi-perspective approaches to teaching-learning, so essential for nurturing creativity, leadership, scholarship and integrated development of human personality.

"*Access & Equity: Challenges for Open and Distance Learning* crystallizes the emerging concerns of the open and distance learning institutions the world over. In the past few decades, a proliferation in the number of ODL institutions and courses/programmes offerings has resulted in exponential growth in student enrollment in the system. The system is poised for further expansion in the coming years as its virtually unlimited potential to impart education to anybody, anywhere and anytime is being recognised by educationists, policy makers and planners. There is however a large body of learners that have yet to be reached and providing access to them while ensuring equity poses definite challenges for the ODL system. The ODL system has the capacity to integrate the state-of-the-art technologies with the time-tested methodologies.

"To address the issue of access and equity from four different, yet related, perspectives—ODL system: imperatives and responses; curriculum, pedagogy and programmes; research, training and quality assurance; and appropriate technology—international scholars met and shared their experiences recently in an international conference hosted by IGNOU. With their long experience in open distance learning, the editors have collated in the present volume, the best practices and experiences of distance educators the world over, for effective social intervention and national development. It is hoped that contemporary and future practitioners of ODL will benefit from the critical analyses of various issues and initiate further debate and reflections in all areas of concern."

CONTENTS OF THE OOK

PREFACE