

EDITORIAL

First of all, let me welcome the newly constituted Editorial Advisory Board (EAB) and Editorial Team (ET) of *Indian Journal of Open Learning* for the years 2015-2017. I am sure that the Journal will reach new heights in terms of quality and accessibility under the guidance and through the contributions of new members of EAB representing various parts of the world.

We present the combined issue which contains five research papers representing relevant themes directly connected with open and distance learning. One book review, one workshop report and abstracts of all the five articles in Hindi are also a part of the contents of this issue.

The first research paper by Manyanhaire Itai Offat and Chitura Miriam tries to examine supervisors' perceptions on the value of undergraduate research projects at the Zimbabwe Open University. The research paper titled *Perceptions of Supervisors on the Value of Distance Learning Undergraduate Research Projects in Zimbabwe*, discusses the views of supervisors who consider research projects as a valuable vehicle for the development of independent research skills and thus provide an opportunity to the supervisors and learners to specialise in the areas of their interest. Authors also feel that continuous training and workshops are vital to build capacity of supervisors.

The second paper titled *Transforming Teaching and Learning through Technology: A Case Study of the Institute of Extra Mural Studies of the National University of Lesotho* by Bothephana Makhakhane investigates the usefulness of technological devices in the Adult Education Programme being offered through distance mode. In the paper, the author highlights enormous challenges faced by the IEMS towards adopting and using desirable technological devices during teaching and learning process.

The third article by Niradhar Dey and S.V.S. Chaudhary titled *The Perception of B.Ed. Students on Printed Self-Learning Material and Learning Style in ODL* uses the descriptive survey method to discuss the perception of learners on this important area. In the study, the authors found a strong positive correlation among the scores of students in their perception on SLM and learning styles.

The fourth paper discusses blended learning and its design for optimizing learning outcomes. This paper titled *Design and Development of Blended Learning Course: A Pilot Study* by Manjari Agarwal provides a comprehensive picture of an online programme titled Post Graduate Diploma in e-Learning offered by IGNOU. She tries to assess the courses of the programme in terms of planning, development and delivery to support the theoretical postulations. Further, the author also attempts to summarise the results of the courses offered in blended mode.

The fifth paper titled *OER and Teacher Educators: Awareness and Barriers* by Tulika Bansal and Dhananjay Joshi talks about the level of awareness amongst the teacher educators about Open Educational Resources (OER) and tries to identify the major barriers in the success of OER. The paper also highlights the need and importance of campaigns, systemic strategies and workshops on OERs for the spread of the same among the masses.

We acknowledge and express sincere gratitude for the contribution of Dr. Pema Eden Samdup, Asstt. Professor, School of Humanities and Dr. Ali Asgar, Asstt. Professor, Staff Training and Research Institute of Distance Education (STRIDE), IGNOU for Language and Format Editing of this combined issue. We also acknowledge sincere efforts of all other members of the Editorial Team and our esteemed reviewers for their valuable suggestions and contributions.

We appreciate STRIDE faculty, printing, administrative and support staff for their continuous support in smooth publication of IJOL.

We are sure, like all our earlier issues, this issue of the Journal will be relevant and useful to researchers, practitioners and policy makers involved in the ODL system.

C.R.K. Murthy
Chief Editor