CHAPTER-II
REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

A careful review of related literature is one of the most important steps in the planning of any research study. The knowledge of the related literature enables the investigator to define and work out the finite details of his research problem.

Review of literature give an understanding of theory in the field to enable the researcher to place his question in perspective study the related literature makes one learn which procedures and instruments have proved useful. The success and failure of the previous studies provides insight for designing one's own study. A thorough study of related literature helps to avoid unintentional replication of previous studies. It also helps the investigator to explore the facts, which has remained unexplored in the previous studies. A synthesized collection of prior studies helps the researcher to identify the significant overlaps and gaps among the prior research works.

Review of related literature includes a vast array of things, thesis, dissertation, journals, magazines, reviews, abstracts, books, news papers, reports, original documents in print and non print media like microfilms, video cassettes, computer discs, floppies, movies, film strips and Internet. Hence, the meaning of “Literature” as applied here is quite comprehensive.

Reviewing the literature for the present study, the investigator has tried to explore various available sources (print and non-print). Besides, studies conducted by various researchers in the field were consulted and some of them were also contacted physically and electronically to obtain first hand information for their studies.

The objectives of the study stress to identify the needs and problems of distance learners enrolled with Directorate of Distance Education, Jammu University and Centre of Distance Education, Kashmir University at Under-Graduate and Post-Graduate levels. In this context, it is essential to understand to what extent the work has already been done in relation to present study.
The review of the related literature enables the present investigator to classify the literature as under:

- Studies related to distance education.
- Studies related to distance learners.
- Studies related to the strengths and weakness of distance education.
- Needs of distance learners and learner's satisfaction.
- Comparative studies on distance education programmes.

2.1 STUDIES RELATED TO DISTANCE EDUCATION

Holmberg (1983) pointed out that contact with students via print mode, multimedia, face-to-face tutorials and counseling promote study pleasure, motivation and feelings of personal relation. He again stated that "Quick handling with proper tutor comments on student's papers has proved essential for student's success".

Moore (1985) argued that most of the research published is descriptive and not general sable, which it is only marginally based in theory, that researchers seem not to take time to consult and refer to previous research, and he specifically regrets that experimental research under controlled conditions is practically non-existent. Calvert (1988) seems to agree with most of Moore's observations. She mentions as a problem that most of the research in distance education has been carried out by academics with little knowledge of pedagogical theory and without training in social science research methodology and design. Further, these practitioner researchers often have jobs where their research roles compete unfavorably with competing administrative demands (Calvert 1990). Moore (ibid.) comments that we have moved very slowly forward just because researchers neglect previous research and careful design of their projects. We would add that Moore's observation on the neglect of reviewing relevant research is a large problem, especially as new people continuously enter the distance education field. It is a danger of wasting time and money with little progress in understanding if new research projects do not build on what already has been done.
Holmberg (1986), with regard to face-to-face sessions in distance education, found that "face to face sessions are useful as opportunities to consult subject specialists and to exchange views with tutors and fellow-students," and thus help to stimulate and motivate student's learning (p.53).

Rowntree (1986) reported that the self instructional material must carry out all the functions a teacher carries out in the conventional situation. Self instructional material helps in guiding, motivating, intriguing expounding, explaining, provoking reminding asking questions, discussing alternative answers, appraising each learner's progress, giving appropriate remedial or enrichment help and so on.

Siqueira and Lynch (1986) in a study, 'National Open University' Venezuela found that parameters like age, means of transportation, time devoted to study, use of personal instructional package, frequency of visits to local study centres, concurrent attendance in other courses, working conditions while enrolled, main occupational activity, perception of the difficulty of written materials, assignment load, quality of reading material, academic advising assistance, counseling assistance and satisfaction with the course are significantly related to the academic outcome of distance learners.

Studies by Persons and Catch pole (1987) have reported that adding telephone counseling and tutorials, summer school, interactive computer conferencing for distance learners through distance education courses significantly raises the retention and academic achievement of students. Ostman and Wanger (1987) reported that high dropout's rate still persists among distance education despite of additional methods to supplement correspondence instruction

Bajteljmit's (1988) in discussion on the relevance of Tinto's model for explaining drop out from distance study and his proposal of another model stressed on external factors, such as job and family commitments, and student support measures, as more relevant for distance education.

Moore (1989) discussed three types of interaction essential in distance education. Learner-Instructor Interaction is a type of interaction that provides
motivation, feedback and dialogue between the teacher and student. Learner-Content Interaction is the method by which students obtained intellectual information from the material. Learner-Learner Interaction is the exchange of information, ideas and dialogues that occurs between students about the course in a structured or non-structured manner.

Keegan (1990) Stipulated that a distinguishing features of distance education is a form of education characterized by:

- the quasi-permanent separation of teacher and learner throughout the length of the learning process
- the influence of an educational organization
- the use of technical media
- the provision of two way communication
- the quasi-permanent absence of the learning group throughout the length of the learning process (Keegan 1990, 44).

Egan, Sebastian & Welch (1991) Threlkeld & Brzoska, (1994) in a study suggested that timely feedback regarding assignments is a critical component of learner support. Hillman et. al. (1994) have taken the idea of interaction a step further and added a fourth component, Learner-Interface Interaction. Learner-Interface Interaction involves the interaction between the learner and the technology to facilitate instruction which is a critical component in distance education.

Verma. R (1994) in a study reported, "The distance / correspondence education has multifunctional problems with respect to interaction, at input, process and evaluation level of their products. Many of correspondence institutes in India do not have distance education skilled staff; best teachers are not allowed to work in the institutes. Study material in the distance education institutes is prepared in traditional format, inadequate attention is paid to the evaluation of the assignments, majority of correspondence institutes have insufficient study centres. Personal Contact Programmes are non-seriously organized, considerable delay in the dispatch of the study materials, lack of
action oriented research in most of Distance/Correspondence Institutes has been
reported. The system lacks flexibility and is dominated by rigidities as in case of
the formal system, poor lab and library facilities are provided to promote distance
learning. The correspondence education lacks adequate physical facilities,
trained administrative staff for effective functioning of correspondence course.
The correspondence institutes are not sharing study centres, resources
personnel from the distance education institutions. Non existence of the provision
for migration of students from one correspondence institute to another
 correspondence institute or Open University on one side and migration from
conventional university department to distance learning institution on the other is
not freely applicable. The institutes of correspondence education in the country
are facing crises of identity of their own.

Verma. R in another study pointed out that directorate / school / institutes
of correspondence education/courses are facing the crises of identity and
autonomy because of inadequate distance education environment and culture for
distance learning. The facts that the correspondence courses / institutes have
been getting a raw deal as a result 50% of their income generated from the
student fee. The rest of the finance is expected to provide by the State
government / parent universities. The U.G.C provides funds to correspondence
institutes for certain specific purposes and that too generally for the initial five
years for particular Under-Graduate Courses. Most of the correspondence
institutes in the country are starved of funds, with the result that the fee charged
are comparatively high as compared to the fee charged in conventional
universities and colleges. Hegemony of the conventional departments over
 correspondence institutes within the university does interfere with the smooth
working of correspondence course institutes. It is felt that correspondence
education is a serious threat to conventional courses organized by regular
departments of the university. Besides, conventional departments talk of inferior
quality of the product of distance education product within the university. The
correspondence courses institutes also lack the facilities of research and
development. Distance education institutes lack of co-ordination, interaction,
sharing of study material, resource persons among the staff working in these institutes. Surprisingly, the conventional university courses are highly subsidized by the Centre and State Governments, whereas the distance education institutes are expected to be self-financing. Unfortunately, some correspondence institutes generates surplus due to massive enrolments even then they are not in a position to utilize the funds earned for their improvement.

Morgan.S. (1995) reported that distance learning texts “encourages reflection in learning” (p.59) and Hyland (2001) stated that satisfaction in distance learning context is based on feedback process and it plays a crucial role in opening and maintaining a dialogue between tutors and students and also serves an important function in motivating and encouraging students.

Srivastava (1995) in a study highlighted the effectiveness of distance education and compares the distance education with the traditional education, with regard to expansion and democratization of higher education in Karnataka State. He reports that relevance of distance education courses as per the learner’s individual needs. The study further reports that the distance education grew five times faster than the conventional (formal) education in thirty years.

Panda et. al. (1996) stated that the distance education training institutions need to have utilitarian potential of training research. Such research can bring tremendous value to a given institution and the discipline of distance education as a whole.

Reddy.V. and Manjulika, S. (1996) in a study stated that education is an important instrument of social and economic change and is an investment for better future. Distance education is an innovative flexible system of imparting education to varied target groups at different stages. The students of distant mode face many problems namely: unattractive curriculum, frequent changes in the syllabus, lack of hostel facilities, lack of encouragement for women student, poor quality of study material, lack of material, lack of trained personnel in distance education administrative sector, lack of establishment of guidance cell in the distance education institution and poor academic environment of study centres.
Sesharatnam (1996) while reviewing research activities in distance education in Andhra Pradesh found that research efforts have been made fragmentarily and in isolated form away from established theoretical perspective. According to Sesharatnam, most studies conducted till date in India have typically focused on issues at micro-level and were evaluative in nature.

Koul (1997), pointed out that most researches conducted in India to date tends to focus on descriptive surveys confined to comparisons of enrollment trends and academic achievement. The methodology used for these studies relied mostly on descriptive surveys approaches, experimentation for testing the efficacy of various approaches / models and qualitative data analysis techniques.

Evans (2000) reported that Open Universities have many things in their favour, but “research” is not one of them. Open Universities tends to be perceived as parasitical in the sense that they have historically relied on their host (i.e. “real” universities) to produce the knowledge for their course offerings, and train the ‘Open Universities’ academics who teach them. Conventional Universities though contribute the expertise for course development for Open University Systems. Evan’s argument implies that the process of research in Distance Education needs to be fundamentally different from that of conventional educational research. The researcher engaged in distance education research devotes attention to the issues of distance education, particularly in theoretical and methodological articles. Saba (2000).

Goel Aruna and Goel S.L (2000) in a study stressed the importance of making the distance education practically operational in perfect fashion. Distance education can provide general professional education economically. Continuous increase in the population and scarcity of infrastructure, financial, physical and personal resources, there occur some inherent and external problems in imparting formal education and training. Distance education by using latest technology can overcome these problems.

Powar (2000) reported, ‘The Key Words in higher education today are autonomy, flexibility, innovation, quality and partnership which are lacking in distance education. It is evident that India currently lacks both quality and quality
of research studies examining distance education research at national and international level of research also tends to be less sufficient.

Rao and Chandra (2001) in a study of needs of distance learner reported that periodical training and orientation programmes need to be organized for the counselors of distance education to make them familiar to the concept of distance education mode of teaching. Effective feedback should be provided to the counselors, the learners to ascertain their problems and solve the same at the earliest stage. Library facilities need to be provided for the learners. More attention should be provided for qualitative improvement of the courses.

Sahoo P.K (2001) reported that there is a gap between the needs and priorities of distance education research and actual attempts made so far to recover it. The researcher further points out that major emphasis of research on distance education technology in particular has focused almost exclusively an evaluation of different components of the distance learning system in terms of different criteria, while research studies on other aspects most remains isolated

Gupta S.P (2002) reported that distance mode of education is most convenient, cost effective, more suitable and attractive. There is a need to make serious efforts for establishing the creditability of the distance education so that aspirants of higher education accept it as a desired choice / alternative and not as a second grade alternative of getting education.

Sharma R.R (2002) in a study "Quality library services to Distance Learners in India with Special Reference to J & K State" reported that sufficient budget may be allocated to the libraries for adding latest books in the library collections. Postal delivery system and mobile libraries may also be introduced along with the computerization.

Sharma S.R (2002) in the study of Distance Education in Jammu Region reported that scattered habitations and far flung areas, presence of schedule tribes and mobile groups, militancy and service resources constraints the state of Jammu and Kashmir are facing difficulties. The conventional systems of education in the state have not been made able to provide access particularly to the neglected groups, expand services to keep pace with population growth and
stay abreast of latest developments. Therefore, a need to examine and develop alternative strategies to provide educational facilities to the masses and introduce measure to enhance the quality relevance and efficiency of the distance education system is eminent.

Beena Shah (2003), reported that distance education is currently at a turning point in its evolution as a result new technologies are reforming the concept of education and knowledge transmission at a distance. In view of the emerging scenario distance education institution has to enhance interaction level. The instructor and learners, technocrats, technicians and subject expert to satisfy the clientele needs in order to provide efficient teaching / instructions without sacrificing the foundations of social values and public education.

According to Moore, T D theory allowed the generation of an almost infinite number of hypothesis for research in to the interactions between course structure, dialogue between teachers and learners, of the learning process. (2007, p.101). Again according to Moore (1983, 2007, Moore & Kearsley, 1996), TD is determined by three factors and three variables. The three factors are teacher, learner and a means of communication. The absence of any one of these factors would lead to as absence of TD because there can be no educational transaction! (Moore & Kearsley, 1996, p.2000). On the continuum of dialogue (D) and structure (S), Moore (1983) classified four categories of programmes (-D-S, -D+S, +D+S, +D-S) that indicate the presence or absence of dialogue and structure in educational systems. He also hypothesized the relationship between dialogue, structure and TD. ‘As dialogue increases, transactional distance decreases:....... As structure increases, transactional distance also increases’ (Moore, 2007, p.94).

Sharma. L. and Melhan I.V (2008) in the Journal of Distance Education reported that the growth of open universities has provided opportunities to more people to access the facilities of higher education to greater number of students. Distance education being a flexible system of education, making a large number of people to undergo distance education courses in a wide range of subject areas. Learners of distance education courses however, do not enjoy access to
regular classes, research lab work and are deprived of constant help and guidance of the teachers. Contact classes and counseling sessions have been reported to be not sufficient to deliver the educational material and self learning lessons to update information in the relevant subject of study. Unfortunately, high quality of library and information services are not accessible to most of the distance learners due to inappropriate public library system in the country as a result, students do not find adequate reading facilities and information relevant to their educational needs and requirements.

2.2 STUDIES RELATED TO DISTANCE LEARNERS

Knapper and Wasilyucai (1982) surveyed 1283 correspondence learners and reports that they were equally divided by sex, tended to be married, in their thirties and were reported to be full time employed. Pillai and Mohan (1984) found that the beneficiaries of distance education in Madurai Kamraj University have been reported between 20 to 40 years, whereas, Kevin and Sudhakaran (1985) observed that majority of distance learners at University of Kerla were within age group of 20 to 30 Years.

Khan and Sahoo (1985) reported that majority of distance learners fall in the age group 16 – 25 years at under graduate courses whereas distance learners in the upper age group 20 – 60 years continued their studies at post graduate level.

Hezel and Dirr (1991) stated that median age of distance learners enrolled in tele-courses belonging to urban, sub-urban and rural localities of U.S. The study by Dille. B and Mezack (1991) reported that the average age of learners enrolled in the tele-courses at a South-West (U.S) Community College was 27 years whereas, the women learners outnumbered men in the tele-courses. The study by Gibson and Graff's (1992) reports that 80.3% distance learners in the University of Wisconsin System Extended Degree Programs belonging to the age group 25 - 45 years. About 60% of the learners were women; over 90% of the students in their study were reported to be employed out of which 75% were married.
Pugazenthi (1991) in a study on teacher education programme through correspondence system in Madurai Kamraj University reported that the age of distance teacher trainees ranges between 25 to 61 years and majority of them belong to rural background.

Robinson (1992) reported that almost all of the students enrolled in the Open College of Ryerson Polytechnical Institute in Ontario were between 31 and 46 years of age, out of these, 77.9% were female, 83.7% were employed outside the home (62.2% full-time) and 58.5% were married. Wong (1992) noted that 83% of distance education students at Memorial University of Newfoundland are 19 years of age or older. The 25 – 35 age groups seemed to be the largest in most organizations (Holmberg, 1995).

Taylor and Kiskup (1994) reported that enrollment percentages for women distance learners is larger distance education institutions viz; Open University, United Kingdom was 50.0% whereas, Indira Gandhi National Open University, India has 26.0% students. Fern Universitala, Germany has 27.4% learners. UNED, Spain has 54.3% learners the Open University of Netherland has 38.0% distance education enrolments.

Eastmond (1995) reported that distance learners belonging to fair sex outnumbered men in countries like New Zealand and Israel. On the contrary the reverse pattern existed in Britain, Germany and Spain. The study of distance students at Hawks College reports that 90% learners enrolled for distance education courses were employed full time, and 75% were married. Franks (1996) reported that three – fourths of the distance education students at the college of Rural Alaska were female. In 1995, MacBrayne explored the demographic characteristics of Rural distance learners enrolled in an associate degree education programme. He found that age range of students was 18 – 40 years, most of them were females. In Fjortoft’s (1996) study of a post-baccalaureate programme in pharmacy, 78% of the respondents were reported working more than 40 hours/week and the majority were married.

Wallace (1996) investigated the nature and magnitude of such changes at a Western Canadian University using enrolment data from past decade. He
observed that University distance education learners were typically presented as adults, studying part-time, often at a geographical distance from the campus. The independent study population had shifted towards younger students, local residence and full time course loads that combine independent study with on campus courses. These shifts indicate a convergence in characteristics of the independent study and on campus population, a trend that also appear to be shared by other Western Canadian Universities. The most important barriers pushing students towards registration in independent study is work commitments; the most important attractions relate to control of the time, place and pace of learning. Factor analysis of the reasons supports the validity of the barriers-attractions model. Institutional and programmatic implications include need of changes to instructional design, student support services, and policies regarding teaching resources and tuition fee distribution. Implications of this study for the field of distance education include a challenge to the assumptions that distance education students are largely part-time adult learners, and employment is a barrier to study only for adult students.

Studies by Gilliard, 1997, Guernsey, 1998 and Smith 2001 on distance education learners were found to be typically older than traditional students with the average age being more than 25 years old, females outnumbered males. They tended to have family and job responsibility that prohibited them from attending traditional classes – being employed full-time while attending college on a part-time basis; and, they were often times disadvantaged by geographic remoteness, generally living in rural areas.

Thompson (1998) on the basis of the review of the previous researches in respect of the demographic variables identified the characteristics of distance learners gave an overview of the of the distance learners, as a distance learner is one who is:

1. Older than the typical Under Graduate learner.
2. Female.
3. Either employed full time/part time.
Anil Kumar (1999) pointed out that more than 70% of the distance learners were reported in the age group of 25 years and above 67.6% belong to male sex and 33.3% of them were females. In respect of marital status distance learners were found to be equally divided as married and unmarried, about 60% of them were employed. The study further reports that distance learners were found to exhibit good study habits and displayed above average, academic achievements and have positive attitude towards distance education.

2.3 Studies Related To Strengths and Weakness of Distance Education

Holmberg (1989), stated that distance learning like any kind of learning, can serve different ends, but distance learning appears mainly to serve those who can not / don’t want to make use of classroom teaching. Demanding professional commitments and family responsibilities of many adults often make attending a conventional, full-time, face-to-face course with fixed time tables a rather unrealistic, proposition and the reasons why adult choose distance education are primarily “the convenience, flexibility and adaptability of his mode of education to suit individual student’s needs. All learning requires a degree of motivation, self-discipline and independence on behalf of the learners, but these aspects are arguably more pertinent in the case of distance learners, where the students are largely self-directed and unsupervised and expected to be more autonomous.

Distance study is a self-study, but the student is not alone. Holmberg (1989) described it “A kind of conversation in the form of two-way traffic occurs through the written or otherwise mediated interaction between the students and the tutors and others belonging to the supporting institution”. Holmberg further stated that “Conversation is brought about by the presentation of the study matter. If this is characterized by a personal approach and causes the students to discuss the contents with themselves”. Such a development can be brought about by a readable style of presentation.

Keegan (1990) stated that sharp cut off dates for tutor marked assignments, rigidity of learning content and materials and inflexibility learning
structures are all common in distance education systems and these are factors which clearly will not meet the need of all learners. The investigation has summarized the most significant weakness of distance education which can be described as:

(a) Its inability to offer dialogue in the way that conventional face-to-face education does.
(b) The inflexibility of its content and study method.
(c) The isolation and individualization of the student.

Threlkeld and Brzoska (1994) states that maturity, high motivation levels and self discipline have been shown to be necessary characteristics of successful, satisfied students. Similarly, Kirkup and Jones (1996) found that the success of Distance Learning courses “Cannot be assumed” (p.277).

2.4 NEEDS OF DISTANCE LEARNERS AND LEARNER’S SATISFACTION

Tinto (1975) and Peters (1992), reported that the students support help students cope with the difficulties in distance learning and various barriers encountered by the students in the course of their study, the most critical of isolation. Potter (1998) stated that the provision of support services is an important issue in distance education that is worth studying because the goal of student support services is to reduce barriers and facilitate academic endeavor. Mills (1991) was of the view that the student support service is a fundamental requirement of any good DE system where the emphasis must be on the needs of the student, quality of service, effectiveness.

More specifically, programme evaluation is defined as the systematic evaluation of various aspects of the programme development and training progress to assess their merit (Brinkerhoff, 1983). Evaluation of distance education programmes finds fundamental similarity with conventional education. These are aspects of the quality of learning, the effectiveness of materials and services provided, the suitability of courses for the needs of the area or the population served Thorpe, (1988).
Holmberg (1986) stated that distance teaching supports student motivation, promotes learning pleasure and effectiveness. It needs to be offered in such a way so that the study relevant to the individual learner and his/her needs" (p.123). He again stated that distance education is concerned with meeting the educational needs of adults (p.103).

Beare (1989), Hilgenberg and Tolone (2000), Jones (1992), Mc.Cleary & Egan (1989) stated that one of the most common problems of many distance learning courses is the limitation of inadequate dialogue between teachers and learners and amongst learners themselves. Similarly, Kirkup and Jones (1996) states that “the distance learner needs dialogue with their teachers and with other students in order to consolidate and check their own learning” (p.278).

Delbecq and Scates (1989) found that the response of tutors and “turn-around time” for comments and grading is critical component of student support, with students who receive timely feedback on assignments responding more positively to the course than those who have to wait for feedback. Similarly, McCleary & Egan (1989), Murphy & Yum (1998), Threlkeld (1992), Threlkeld & Brzoska (1994) cited that the support provided by own-site facilitators has also been consistently crucial to the effectiveness of a distance education programme.

Burge & Howard (1990), too in their questionnaire study of audioconferencing in Canadian graduate education, found that the effective utilization of local tutors (as on-site facilitators) increase student satisfaction with course.

The need for face-to-face meetings is undoubtedly important to the distance learners although it is perhaps more a matter of the degree of interactivity then whether or not any interactivity takes place. Stone (1990, cited in Threlkeld & Brzoska, 1994, p.47) argued in his assessment of interactivity in distance learning, adult learners may actually perform better in situation and where they control not only where but when learning occurs and concludes that as long as students have some form of interaction with tutors, they high quality learning can still occur.
Johnstone (1991, cited in Threlkeld and Brzoska, (1994, p.49) stated that while there is no significant difference in achievement levels between distant and traditional learners, there is "considerable variance in student attitudes and satisfaction levels.

Mills (1991) reported that distance education/practitioners suggests that a distance course program is not only a neatly packaged materials, but also show about what actually happens when the students interact with this material and other elements of the learning system.

Verdium and Clark (1991) found that identifying adult learner's needs is though a difficult task. Distance education offers an opportunity to the distance learners to study and learn in a fear-free environment, when they prefer it by providing support during the learning experience in terms of guidance, planning and feedback that is necessary for continued student motivation and completion of the course.

Dillon, Gunawardena and Parker (1992), Threlkeld & Brzoska, (1994), in a study reveals that library resources are very important to distance students as the majority of them indicated that success in the course required assess to library materials (p57).

Threlkeld and Brzoska (1994) maintained that there is little empirical evidence to show that mediated instruction suffers in comparison to face-to-face instruction. He stated that the instructional medium does not appear to make any important difference in student achievement, attitudes and retention" (p.42). They concluded that the media itself is not as important to instruction as other variables, such as learner characteristics, motivation and instructional alternatives. It is these variables, they suggest, that are more pertinent to the process of learning and teaching at a distance, and thus to the ability of distance education to meet the needs of learners.

Threlkeld & Brzoska (1994) stated that the support provided by the on-site facilities is "critical" to the effectiveness for distance education programme (p.55). Robinson (1995) states that in her review of research literature regarding learning support, multiple interacting factors (personal, environmental and course
variables) are at work in determining learner success, although some institutional interventions can assist if appropriately targeted (p.222). She again concluded in her survey of learners support research, "learner-institution contact, such as regular contact with support staff, appears to have a positive effect on learner's performance and persistence rates. (p. 222).

Appleton (1994) stated that academic institutions have a responsibility to provide off-campus students with resources and facilities equivalent to their on-campus peers (p.79).

Tait's (1995) study on student support services stated that an institution that offering courses through distance learning must address the question of how their learners are and what are their needs. The institution can then strive how those needs can be met with regard to constraints of costs, technologies and geography. The study reports that the role of telephone and electronic communications provide a variety of students support to the distance learners. He categorized student support as advice / counseling, tutoring (individually or in groups), the learning of study skills, peer group support, feedback concerning assessment and progress, language support and administrative problem-solving, where the aim is to support student's individual learning whether alone or in groups student support is a key issue in the provision of distance education and their services appear repeatedly in the literature timely student feedback, on site support and access to library material.

Chen (1997) also supported the view that finding student-instructor dialogues an important factor in distance learning. Furthermore, dialogue allows learners to access their learning and develop a sense of community with other students and it also allows the institution to access the teaching objectives and see if they are being fulfilled.

Kailani & Kamal (1998) reported that the student support is very essential in distance education. The student support service plays a key role in determining the success of students and to enrich the process of learning. Similarly, Sewart (1993) reports that the student support service is vital in humanizing the institution and helping the learner to bond with it.
Kishore (1998) cited the functions of student support services in distance education for: motivating and guiding learners for self study; providing answers to administrative queries; making individualized study a reality; promoting effective study skills; and providing access to resources. The study also reveals that the key rate of student support services is to act as substitute for face-to-face classroom teaching.

Potter (1998), Croft (1991) stressed the need for administrative and learning support to the students. Rumble (2000) state that there are vide variations how people define learner support and student. First, as element of open learning system capable of responding to a particular individual learner, Secondly, as the support incorporated within the self-learning material, the learning system and assignment making, Thirdly, as the requisite support services essential to ensure the successful delivery of learning experiences, at a distance.

Mathewson (1998) stated that student support includes four components: the student maintenance system, the learning centre management, staff development and financial component. Student maintenance system courses registration and orientation (enrollment), materials distribution and tracking (dispatch) assignments and exams management, counseling and tutorials learning centre management, course the resources human library, equipment and communication system staff development pertains to the training of leaning centre, coordinators and tutors. The financial component includes time tabling, monitoring and evaluation.

Potter (1998) reported that if DE institutions are concerned about student success and making education more accessible, attention must be paid to support services that help reduce situational, institutional and dispositional barriers. In the same way Lewis (1995) states that the tutor is "the main source of support for the student beyond the course material". Therefore, the course materials and the tutor's comments are of significant import in distance education and resources that contribute greatly in meeting the needs of learners.
Gopin Sudhakar, Srinivas Reddy (2002) in a study on student support services and learner’s responses reported that the student support services mostly cater to the needs and expectations of students in view of their learning problems. In distance education learner’s satisfaction is regarded as one of the major criteria to determine the quality of the services rendered. The study reports certain need of distance learners viz. Course material without printing mistakes, updates of course material every year, examination forms should be available at every study centre; and student queries in subject should be cleared by phone whenever contacted.

2.5 COMPARATIVE STUDIES ON DISTANCE EDUCATION PROGRAMMES

Kanchan Bala (1996) in a study to investigated to what extent distance education programmes introduced by the Institute of Correspondence Education, University of Jammu and IGNOU were feasible in Jammu region in respect of their relevance to the needs of the students, problems faced by these organizations in the implementation of distance education programmes, and realization of objectives set out by the two Universities in the context of admission procedures, enrolment trends of distance learners, infrastructural facilities (building, classrooms, audio-video, library, technological gadgets etc.), staffing patterns, orientation of teachers, teaching strategies, use of media-print and electronic, dissemination of information, study materials, assignment system, evaluation, counseling and placement services, management system, and coordination between various agencies of Jammu University and Study Centre of IGNOU. Using historical and descriptive survey methods, the findings revealed (i) instruction to distance learners enrolled with the instructional technology of distance education and open learning; (ii) enrolment percentage of female students enrolled in distance education programmes of Jammu University is higher than that of males in almost all the categories, viz. rural, urban, general, social status of students indicates majority of learners are married and belongs to employed categories. But in case of IGNOU, males enrolment percentage was higher in all the categories than the females; (iii) Professional courses like B.Ed.
and M.Com offered by Jammu University, Distance Education Programmes were popular among the females in comparison to males, but in case of IGNOU such courses like B.Com, MBA, DIM and DMM were more popular among the males; (iv) Directorate of Distance Education, Jammu University has provision for reservation of seats for SC, ST, OBC’s and physically challenged students. Since, there is no prescribed limit of seats; this reservation does not serve any purpose. In case of IGNOU, the admission is open to all students except MBA in which there is reservation for SC, ST etc; (v) Admission to various courses are made using counseling and mass media, viz. radio, TV and newspapers by both the institutions; (vi) The contact programmes are organized by both the institutions for the benefits of students. However, the Directorate of Distance Education, Jammu University faces number of problems like; lack of sufficient accommodation for organizing such programmes in Jammu. However, Study Centres of IGNOU in Jammu do not face such problems; (vii) Lecture methods followed by discussions are used by teachers engaged by both the institutions. Brain storming techniques and seminars are also used by the teachers associated with IGNOU; (viii) Teachers engaged by IGNOU are provided orientation through seminars, workshops and refresher courses. The teachers are also trained in the use of latest technologies so as to equip them with innovative techniques which they may use in the development of self-instructional materials and other software; (ix) IGNOU also provides help to distance learners through TV and teleconferencing; (x) Pattern followed by the University of Jammu in the presentation of instructional material is more or less like a textbook. But in case of IGNOU, the modular approach is specifically followed, with adequate number of examples, activities, self tests and references. The materials are developed by the experts and edited meticulously for which experts are paid reasonable honorarium; (xi) the submission of assignments in both the institutions is compulsory. The scores obtained by the distance learners in the assignments are given weightage (25 percent) in their final examination results; and (xiii) teachers of both the organizations favored autonomy for organizing distance education programmes. The tendency of duplicating the
courses of traditional universities need to be discouraged and the curriculum of distance education programmes should be initiated by the organizations at their own level.

Nanda Renu (1997) compared the achievement of students of formal and non-formal school education programmes in Jammu region. The investigator had also explored status and management of non-formal education programmes with special reference to enrollment, number of centres, infrastructure, role of instructors and supervisors; factors which are helpful rather create hindrances in the promotion of non-formal education. It was also found that the academic achievement of the students enrolled in non-formal programmes was better than the formal education students. Lack of proper training of instructors and supervisors, shortage of building and teaching materials and less salary of teachers were the main hindrances in the promotion of non-formal education programmes. Early marriage of girls and non-availability of instructional materials were the main reasons of drop out from the non-formal system.

Patil, S.S. (1997) stressed upon the different aspects of distance education in Karnataka with a view to identify the trends in terms of growth of higher education through distance mode in the state and also compared the management of distance education through correspondence courses offered by University of Mysore (ICCCEM) with that of IGNOU in the context of Karnataka State. The findings of the study indicate that ‘Student Support Services’ of ICCCEM when compared with the printed instructional material supplemented with short term contact programmes. It was found that in case of IGNOU the services are available in the form of print based materials, media like TV, radio and tele-conferencing along with occasional counseling sessions. The evaluation of system of ICCCEM comprises of term examinations whereas, in case of IGNOU, it is continuous evaluation. The teachers of ICCCEM used lecture method and highlighted the role of personal contact programme whereas, in case of IGNOU, teachers supplemented lectures with discussion with emphasis on self evaluation. The average expenditure borne by the students of IGNOU was found comparatively less than that of ICCCEM. It was due to the fact that the students
had to incur more expenditure towards traveling, lodging and boarding due to non availability of study centres in their nearby places. The experts view on the normative futures of distance education in Karnataka revealed that the system should cope up with the future increase in the enrolment of students. It should incorporate networking with other distance education institutions and even conventional (formal) mode in the areas of instruction, practical and utilization of infrastructural facilities.

Sharma, Paras Nath (1999) in a comparative study of distance education programmes of IGNOU and International Centre for Distance Education and Open Learning, H.P. University with respect to growth and development, functioning and management, staffing pattern, orientation of teaching facility, teaching strategies, preparation of instructional materials, evaluation assignment system, finances, infrastructural facilities, counseling and student support services and academic benefits to disadvantaged groups (SC, ST, OBC and rural women). Using historical and descriptive survey methods it was found: (i) Male student enrolment of ICDEOL were reported to be higher than that of females an almost all categories of rural, urban, SC, ST, married / unmarried, employed and all students in the age group of 20 to 30 years; (ii) the percentage of male students enrolled in different courses with IGNOU regional centre (H.P) was more than that of females in almost all the categories of SC, ST, rural, urban etc; (iii) ICDEOL and IGNOU have given due consideration to the recommendations of UGC and both the institutions cater to the needs of local community and students in starting courses through distance mode; (iv) both the institutions have neither started any special courses for the disadvantaged groups of Himachal Pradesh nor they have plan to start any such course in the near future; (v) the students belonging to the reserved categories, viz. SC, ST, OBC and physically challenged admitted in IGNOU are entitled for reimbursement in fee whereas, which such categories do not get in ICDEOL; (vi) students are admitted to various courses in ICDEOL on the basis of marks obtained in the last qualifying examinations except B.Ed. course in which the admission is made on the basis of marks obtained by them in the last qualifying examination except in case of
MBA and MCA. In MCA only those students are admitted who have passed either of the (CIC, BCA, DCO) course from IGNOU. In case of MBA, the admission is made through entrance test; (vii) distance learners enrolled with both the institutions do not receive instructional material well in time. (viii) Importance and usefulness of contact programs have been appreciated by the IGNOU teaching faculty and students; (ix) ICDEOL receive financial assistance from State Government and UGC. Tuition fee charged from the students provides a useful source of earning. In case of IGNOU, funds are received from the Central Government and UGC; (x) in case of ICDEOL, 63.32% and 62.40% of total expenditure was spent on the salaries of the staff respectively for the session 1996-97 and 1997-98. The share of expenditure on academic staff was 28.40% and 26.10%, whereas, in case on Non-Academic staff, it was 38.83% and 36.54% of the total expenditure for the session 1996-97 and 1997-98. The IGNOU, Regional Centre (H.P), spent 27.55% and 23.80% of the total expenditure on the salaries of the staff for the session 1996-97 and 1997-98. The share of expenditure on academic staff was 9.75% and 8.60% whereas, in case on non-academic it was 17.80% and 22.20% respectively for 1995-96 and 1997-98; and (xi) in case of ICDEOL, for 1996-97 and 1997-98 recurring cost per student was Rs228.47/- and Rs303.83/- respectively for the session 1996-97 and 1997-98. Furthermore, the total per student cost was Rs705.98/- and Rs837.79/- respectively for the two sessions.

Naidu (2000) studied the organization and management of distance education programmes under the control of Dr.B.R.Ambedkar Open University. The study also identified the problems also encountered by the University in planning, organizing and administering distance education programmes. The findings indicated that there is a need: (i) to evolve strategies by the university to develop better relations with students, meeting the problems of dropouts, meeting the needs of the students through well organized programmes of counseling and guidance and augmenting new infrastructural facilities for future courses and programmes; (ii) for establishment of more number of study centres to provide opportunities in remote and backward areas where higher education
facilities either do not exist or are manager; and (iii) for policy making and better student support services including delivery system.

Rachna Kapoor (2008) in a comparative study of the needs of distance learners of Jammu and Kashmir Universities found that: (i) Distance learners of Jammu University were reported to be more aware with regard to admission process, fee structure, payment of fee in one installment and fee concession as compared to distance learners of Kashmir University. (ii) Distance learners of Jammu University expressed the need for further improvement of the course content, library facilities for the preparation of examination. (iii) Need in the improvement of detailed marks card (DMC) delivery procedure, necessity and proper evaluation of response sheets were felt. (iv) Distance learners of Jammu University expressed need of early delivery of study material and change of issuance procedure of books from library, whereas distance learners of Kashmir University expressed that their study material is in sufficient, incomplete, inadequately printed, lacking methods of delivery and feedback. (v) Distance learners form Jammu University opinioned that for stimulation, motivation and relevance there is a need to supplement the study materials, computers and overhead projectors whereas distance learners from Kashmir University expressed the need to improve the quality of existing programmes. (vi) Distance learners of Jammu University were more satisfied with existing style of learning and system of teaching. (vii) Distance learners of Jammu University were reported to be gaining qualification through distance mode for enhancing the status of students in the society. Married women, workers and others who could not devote time for regular classes, distance education programme is a boom to them.