Banking is no longer a business restricted to borrowing and lending of funds. Recent years have seen Indian commercial banks – both in the public sector and private sector diversify into new areas to widen their business horizons. As banks started offering diversified services ranging from insurance to mutual funds, from stock-broking to housing finance, from merchant banking to portfolio management under one ‘umbrella-brand’, they gradually metamorphosed from being business organisations having prime focus on money transactions to a business related to information on financial transactions. Thus, with this transition, banks gradually moved towards becoming ‘Universal banks’.

3.1. **Objectives of the Research:** The objectives of the research are the following –

1. To position a bank in terms of the progress made by it in the direction of Universal Banking.
2. To examine the risk exposure of banks.
3. To critically examine the existing debate on Universal banking in the context of the samples studied.

3.2. **Scope of the Research:** The research has the following scope –

1. The research would highlight the comparative position of a sample commercial bank with respect to ICICI Bank - the first Indian Universal Bank, which would help the concerned banks to know where it stands with respect to Universal Bank.
2. The research would enumerate the financial health and risk exposure of sample commercial banks in terms of the CAMEL Model. This
would be helpful to understand the relative strength and risk exposure of Indian commercial banks.

3. The research would also point out the perception of Bank Managers on Universal banking concept and at the same time would also bring to light the perception of customers of banks regarding the awareness and demand of various services presently offered by the banks.

4. The research can be used as a base for Post-doctoral research work.

3.3. **Limitations of the Research:** In spite of best of efforts to minimise all limitations that might creep in course of the research, there were certain constraints within which the research was completed. These are discussed below –

1. The research was based on secondary as well as primary data. The primary data required for research objective No. 3 was collected from the samples based in Guwahati city. Although Guwahati is one of the most important cities of the country and a commercial hub of North East India, samples selected from the city cannot be considered as a proper representation of the population of the country.

   However, the objective of the survey was to check the mood/perception of the bank managers as well as customers of the bank with regard to the concept of Universal banking. Thus, this may not create hindrance in achieving the desired objective even if Guwahati city cannot replicate other major banking hubs of the country.

2. For primary data, non response error cannot be ruled out.