CHAPTER - I

INTRODUCTION

1.0 **Education - The Life-Spirit of the Nation**

Education, as a tool for social change, determines the all round development of a nation. The education commission of 1964-66 referred to education as the "only instrument of peaceful social change." The recent document on education, 'The Challenge of Education: A Policy Perspective' viewed education as "a catalyst to transform a static society into a vibrant society with a commitment to development and change. Therefore, revolutionary changes in the education system can and must be brought as an integral part of the revolutionary transformation of the existing socio-economic order." In the same document it is observed that the objective of education is to "build a dynamic, vibrant, and cohesive nation capable of providing its people with the wherewithal for creating better, fuller and more purposeful life".

According to Carmichael [1960] the education of a nation aims at serving two needs - the needs of the individual and the needs of the state. The democratic aim of education is that every individual should receive an education suited to his or her age, aptitude and ability. The economic aim is that education should contribute to the national wealth and wellbeing.
Kothari [1964-66] states, "Every society that values social justice and is anxious to improve the lot of common man and cultivate all available talent must ensure progressive equality of opportunity to all sections of the population. This is the only guarantee for the building up of an egalitarian and human society in which human resources through properly organized programme of education. Of the two, human resource development is more crucial than the material resource development, because, even an adequate development of physical resource is not possible without the former and for the optimum use of available physical resources, we need human resources".

Coombs [1968] assumes that the educational system will produce the kind and amount of human resources required for the economy's growth and that the economy will in fact make good use of these resources.

The New Education Policy [1986] re-defined the role of education as a vehicle of human resource development in the country so as to prepare the country to meet the challenges of the next century. There are many innovative approaches in this new policy, distance education being one of them.

The New Education Policy states [ref:3.11](i) that "life long education is a cherished goal of the educational process. This presupposes universal literacy. Opportunities will be provided to the youth, housewives, agricultural and industrial workers and professionals to continue the education of
their choice at the pace suited to them. The future thrust will be in the direction of open and distance learning."

1.1 Open Learning and Distance Education

The term 'Open Learning' is not synonymous with distance education. Open learning is a state of mind. It is an approach taken to the planning, design, preparation and presentation of courses by educators and an approach taken to the selection and use of learning strategies and associated resources by students. This approach tries to provide students with as much choice and control as possible over content and learning strategies. The branching programming is one of the strategies of open learning.

Open learning [Mckenzie et. al., 1975] is an imprecise phrase to which a range of meanings can be, and is, attached. It eludes definition. But as an inscription to be carried in procession on a banner, gathering adherents and enthusiasms, it has great potential. For its very impression enables it to accommodate many different ideas and aims.

1.2 Open Education and Distance Education

The concept of 'Openness', very briefly is a system of education that does not operate through the traditional conventions which are essentially restrictive in nature - admission restrictions, attendance restrictions, restrictions on the candidature for examinations, restrictions on the period of
time to be devoted to a course, restrictions on the subject combination for a particular degree, restrictions on the modes of didactic tasks etc., the larger the number of restrictions left unobserved, the higher the degree of the 'openness' of the type of education under consideration.

Open education [Escotet 1980:144] is particularly characterised by the removal of restrictions, exclusions and privileges; by the accreditation of students' previous experiences; by the flexibility of the management of the time variable; and by substantial changes in the traditional relationship between professors and students. On the other hand, distance education is a modality which permits the delivery of a group of didactic media without the necessity of regular participation where the individual is responsible for its own learning.

1.3 Correspondence Education and Distance Education

The concept of distance education is distinct from correspondence education. The distinction between correspondence education and distance education lies in their aims, methods, and orientation. Whereas correspondence education becomes an extention of conventional education as far its imparting of prescribed knowledge for issuing of certificates is concerned, distance education aims at more varied goals. These include personal growth, training for better prospects and job enhancement, a change in attitudes etc., in addition to imparting
knowledge. Distance Education also employs a multi-media approach including human contact through correspondence education, on the other hand, depends mostly on printed materials distributed by post.

Thus, correspondence education is essentially a name based on the mode of -

[i] the distribution of didactic materials and
[ii] that of effecting interaction, if needed, between the teacher and the taught.

**Correspondence Education**

'Correspondence Education' is defined in the UNESCO Volume Terminology of Adult Education as: Education conducted by the postal services without face to face contact between teacher and learner. Teaching is done by written or tape recorder materials sent to the learner whose progress is monitored through written or taped exercises to the teacher who corrects them and returns them to the learner with criticisms and advice. [UNESCO 1979]

1.4 Adult and Distance Education

Mostly distance education is concerned with the education of adults and it seems fairly obvious that our research plans should be informed by the theories and research about learning in adulthood, adult development, programme planning, instruction and evaluation in adult education. [Moore 1985, p. 44]
Major, if not most, of distance education is concerned with meeting the educational needs of adults. The historical paths of distance and adult education not only have crossed many times but have often been one. Adult educators such as William Rainey Harper did not see adult and distance education as distinct fields. For Harper, at the university of Chicago, correspondence study was one of the three equally respected teaching agencies within the University Extension Department [Dunkel & Fay, 1978].

Another adult educator who also contributed to the history of distance education was Mosses Coady at St. Frances Xavier University's Extension Department in Nova Scotia. In the 1930s he organised discussion groups around the Farm Radio Forum. These educational broadcasts were the 'first' prominent Canadian mediated adult open learning system.' [Rothe, 1986] Whether in Europe or North America invariably the early attempts at distance education were directed toward the adult population - a trend that persists to this day.

Since, as Moore states, most of the distance education is concerned with adults, it is considerable importance that distance educators become aware of the assumptions and principles of adult education.

Adult Education

The interrelationship between adult and distance education can be understood by analysing the concept of adult education. To describe the adult in a sociological or functional
manner is to recognise the roles and responsibilities that the adult has assumed for himself and others. In addition, Verner [1964] states that not only are these roles immediately productive, they introduce a continuous sequence of new tasks for which pre-adult learning is never an adequate preparation; continuous learning is therefore necessary. The necessity for continuous learning in conjunction with social responsibilities demands an integration of learning and living. Darkenwald and Merriam [1982] state that this 'intimate relationship between learning and living is in our view the hallmark of adult education."

A second characteristic of adult education is that participation is largely voluntary. Together with very real social responsibilities of the adult it is perhaps not difficult to understand that the participation rates in formal adult education in North America are less than thirty percent [Cross, 1981; Devereaux, 1984]. At the same time seventy-five to ninety percent of adults are engaged in self-directed learning [Penland, 1979; Tough, 1979].

The question of help raises the important problem in adult education with regard to the facilitation of self-directed-education. Education is a collaborative process and therefore self-directed education is an interactive and socially recognised activity [Brookfield, 1986; Chene, 1983] Verner [1964] went on to conclude that for 'all practical purposes, self education is beyond the range of responsibility of adult education, for it is
an individual activity and affords no opportunity for an adult educator to exert influence on the learning process.'

One description of adult education emphasises the need to reach out to learners. Knowles [1980] states that "The most visible characteristic of the system of adult education is its expansiveness and flexibility... adult education has a history of adapting to new social needs and serving elements of the population previously unreached; it has spread to an ever-wider spectrum of institutions; it has developed new technique and media; and it recruits and trains large number of new personnel to deliver its services."

1.5 Interaction of Living and Learning

Three Trends

Knowles [1980] has suggested that there are three trends that augur change for our educational system. The first is a trend 'toward the unit of education, work and life, based on the nation that learning is most effective when it is related to and integrated with working and living.'

Self Directed Learning

The importance of this concept to adult education is often seen as ultimate aim of adult education. [Brookfield, 1986; Mezirow, 1985]. The problem of facilitating self-directed learning beyond the institutional setting has been argued by Harrison[1987] that a large part of the answer to this problem is the adoption of distance education methods.
Lifelong Learning

A third and most potent trend according to Knowles [1980] is that "life long education is based on the notion that in a world of accelerating change, learning must be a continuing process from birth to death". Lifelong learning is largely at the conceptual stage and is 'viewed as a concept which can guide the restructuring and rethinking about education in a society. [Apps, 1985]

Life long education is adoption of distance education methods and communications technology. According to Waniewicz [1982], "Life long adult education becomes as essential as the education of children and young people. There are, however a number of characteristics of adult learning that make it immeasurably more complex. The delivery of learning opportunities has to take into account the immense variety of needs, goals and interests as well as the immense variety of situations in which adults live. The education of adults at a distance is probably capable of meeting most of these needs and situations, but it is still in its early stages."

1.6 Distance Education

This concept covers a variety of forms to teaching and learning at various levels of education but the main feature is that the learning is not under the continuous immediate supervision of tutors who are present with the learners in the place of study. However, students may have access to tutors if and when they need and at specified times.
According to the International Dictionary of Adult and Continuing Education, distance education is a generic term for forms of education in which the teachers and students are separated by geographical distance and communication is through correspondence or other forms of technology eg, satellite computer electric mail. The Open University in the U.K. is often seen as the epitome of this form of education although there were many countries in the world which had distance teaching universities before its foundation.

1.7 Definitions of Distance Education

Dohmen [1967] "Distance Education [Fernstudium] is a systematically organised form of self-study in which student counselling, the presentation of learning material and the securing and supervising of students' success are carried out by a team of teachers each of whom has responsibilities. It is made possible at a distance by means of media which can cover long distances. The opposite of 'distance education' is 'direct education' or 'face to face education' - a type of education that takes place with direct contact between lecturers and students. From this early formulation may be highlighted:

* the organisation of self-study by an institution.
* use of media and
* differences from direct contact between lecturers and students

According to Peters [1973] 'Distance teaching/education [Fernunterricht] is a method of imparting knowledge, skills and
attitudes which is rationalised by the application of division of labour and organisational principles as well as by the extensive use of technical media especially for the purpose of reproducing high quality of teaching material which makes it possible to instruct great numbers of students at the same time wherever they live. It is an industrialised form of teaching and learning.

Characteristics of Peter's position are:

- the use of technical media
- the mass education of students at a distance; and
- the industrialisation of the teaching process

According to Moore [1973], [1977] distance teaching may be defined as the family of instructional methods in which the teaching behaviours are executed apart from the learning behaviours including those that in a contiguous situation would be performed in the learner's presence, so that communication between the teacher and the learner must be facilitated by print, electronic, mechanical or other devices.

Central to Moore's position are:

- the separation of teacher and learner; and
- the use of technical media

To Holmberg [1977] The term 'distance education' covers the various forms of study at all levels which are not under the continuous immediate supervision of tutors present with their students in lecture rooms or in the same premises, but which nevertheless benefits from the planning, guidance and tuition of a tutorial organisation.
Basic to Holmberg's definition are two elements both of which can be considered essential:

** separation of teacher and learner; and

** the planning of an educational organization

While defining distance education [Keegan 1980] a number of similar definitions were brought together and analysed.

The following six basic defining elements of distance education were proposed:

** the separation of teacher and learner which distinguishes it from face to face lecturing;

** the influence of an educational organization which distinguishes it from private study.

** the use of technical media, usually print, to unite teacher and learner and carry the educational content.

** the provision of two-way communication so that the student may benefit from or even initiate dialogue;

** the possibility of occasional meetings for both didactic and socialization purposes; and

** the participation in an industrialized form of education which, if accepted, contains the genus of radical separation of distance education from other forms within the educational spectrum.

This definition in 1980 led to extensive citation and feedback. In some cases [Peruniak 1983:66; Store, 1981:171] it seemed that the definition was accepted as the basic for further research.
1.8 The need for distance education

Distance education has been suggested as a viable solution to the existing problems in the field of education for two major reasons.

[i] the enormous size of population with a high percentage of illiteracy among them and

[ii] the limited resources especially money and manpower available for human resources.

The need for democratisation of education arises due to various reasons. The International Commission on the Development of Education [1971-72] analyses, 'Economic requirements in some countries, ideological goals in others, the struggle for national liberation in many parts of the world and even in some cases, the fear of social unrest, all contribute to the pressing need to make education more democratic.

The idea of universalising or democratising education and at the same time minimising the expenditure of money and energy has finally found in distance education a viable solution to the country's educational problems. Because, formal education is very costly. As a result, expansion on a large scale becomes very difficult. Even if the society is prepared to provide these facilities there are sections in the population who cannot take advantage of it.

The inevitable conclusion one draws from this is that if large and varied section of population are to have access to education, our approach to it must change; we have to think of
alternative system which can supplement the existing system. Distance education is one such alternative and it has the potential to transcend the barriers of time and space.

Distance education attempts not only to give a second opportunity for those who want to continue their education but also accelerates the programmes such as non-formal and adult education, child care, women's studies, rural development etc. which are as much educational as socio-economic in character.

This can only satisfactorily be met by adopting the methodology which allows flexibility in operation, diversity in academic offerings not edged by time and space. This can easily be achieved by distance education.

Distance education has been recommended in the U.G.C. report [1980-81] for students

1. who have had to discontinue their studies for financial or other reasons;
2. who stay in remote areas;
3. who want to continue learning either in their own field or in new areas;
4. who had discontinued their studies due to lack of motivation; and
5. who do not wish to or for some reasons cannot join the regular college or school but pursue their studies.

1.9 Motivation

The meaning of motivation has been a controversial subject and topic of key interest to psychologists. The idea of
motivation or some similar concepts appears in almost every theoretical account of behaviour. According to Bolles [1975] motivation is a mental event which determines the course of action.

Motivation is regarded by Paul [1969] as the most critical factor in collegiate success. The student must be properly equipped and motivated to get the most from the educational system. Taylor et. al. [1966] states that academic motivation is broadly defined as a combination of forces which initiate, direct and sustain behaviour towards a scholarly goal. Stressing the importance of motivation Farquher and Payne [1963] write that motivation is an evasive octopus which, as an ever expanding spiral, envelops the whole field of learning. For them motivation is "a combination of forces which initiates, directs and sustains behaviour towards a scholarly goal."

According to Gates et.al., [1963] motivation has three functions of energizing the behaviour, selecting or determining the behaviour and tendency to react to different situations as well as direct the behaviour.

The term motivation is used to include any inner conditions of the organisation that initiates or directs its behaviour and influences its direction [1969].

According to Maslow [1970] the need for achievement has little or no effect on a person's behaviour unless his physiological and safety needs and his needs for love and esteem have been met.
Conger [1974] states that the term "motivation" is a generic one that refers to the needs, goals and desires that provoke an individual's action. One of the important characteristics of need or motive is an energizer of behaviour.

According to Atkinson and Raynor [1974] a student in whom the motive to achieve is stronger than the motive to avoid failure, receives a higher course or grade. On the other hand, a student in whom the motive to avoid failure is stronger than the motive to achieve success receives a lower course or grade. According to the theory of motivation person in whom the motive to succeed is greater than the motive to avoid failure should perform better in achievement oriented tasks than person in whom motive to avoid failure is greater than motive to success.

Mc Donald [1965] states that motivation is an energy change within the person and is characterised by effective arousal and anticipatory goal reduction. The three elements in the definition are: i) Motivation begins in an energy change in the person. The organic base for some energy changes [hunger, thirst and sex] is derived, the physiological changes; whereas for the psychological needs the exact organic nature of this energy change is not known.

ii) Motivation is characterised by 'effective arousal' which represents the feeling of state of the person.

iii) Motivation is characterised by anticipatory goal. This results in the reduction of tension created by the energy change.
1.10 The Nature of Motivation

There are two somewhat different kinds of questions which are typically dealt with the discussions of motivation. One of these is the question of the arousal or energizing of the organism. Why is the organism active at all? What conditions instigate action, determine its duration on persistence and finally its cessation? The phenomena to be explained include the level of activity of the organism and the vigour of amplitude of its behaviour. The second question involves the direction of behaviour. What determines the form that activity will take? Under what conditions will an organism choose one response or another or move in one direction or another? The problem is to explain the choices made by an organism among qualitatively different behaviours.

Research on conditions affecting the choices made by organisms among alternative acts or responses constitutes a large part of the psychology of learning and of motivation.

Moreover, there are some psychologists [Estes, 1958, Logan 1956] who have seriously questioned whether differences in level of activity and response amplitude cannot be explained in the same term as the direction of activity.

Maier [1949] has proposed an even greater restriction on the scope of motivation. He distinguishes between motivated behaviour which is variable, constructive and goal directed and frustration-instigated behaviour which is rigid, stereotyped, compulsive and not goal directed.
To sum up, we view the central problem of motivation as the explanation of choices made by organism among different voluntary responses. Although some behaviours, specifically those that are not under voluntary control are defined as unmotivated, these probably constitute a rather small proportion of the total behaviour of human beings. It is reasonable to assume that most of the behaviour exhibited by individuals under voluntary control are motivated.

1.11 Study habits:-

According to Webster's New International Dictionary (1976) study refers

[i] to apply the mind to the acquirement of knowledge through reading and reflection, observation, or experiment.

[ii] to undertake formal study of a subject or course.

[iii] a] to consider deeply: Meditate, reflect
   b] to deliberate something with oneself-debate.

[iv] to consider something as one's aim
to read in close detail with the intent of learning for recall.
to learn for playing.
to apply the mind to the learning or understanding of it. (an area of knowledge).
to occupy oneself with the formal study of a subject, course or activity.

[v] to do special reading for a specific purpose.
to make a plan for Pilot study
to observe or analyze in detail  
[a phenomena, development or question]  
to examine closely to understand or to determine something.  
to employ thought and careful attention  
to pay heed to be solicitous for.  

Habit is defined in the Advanced Theories Dictionary of Current English as something that has been done frequently by a person that it has become customary and is done without thinking. Habit is defined as an amplitude or inclination for some action acquired by frequent repetition and showing itself increased facility of performance or in decreased power of resistance also an acquired mode of behaviour.

One of the aims of education is to form good habits physically, morally and mentally. Watson defines [1961] habit as a stable stimulus response connection.

Our ideas truly depend upon experience, but so do our sensations. And the experience upon which they both depend is the operation of habits-originally of instincts. Thus our purposes and commands regarding action [whether physical or moral] come to us through the refracting medium of bodily and moral habits.

Ideas, thoughts of ends, are not spontaneously generated. There is no immaculate conception of meanings or purposes. The nature of habit is to be assertive, insistent, self-perpetuating. Habits deprived of thought and thought which is futile are two sides of the same fact.
All virtues and vices are habits which incorporate objective forces. They are interactions of elements contributed by the make up of an individual with elements supplied by the out-door world.

1.12 The Nature Of Study habits:

The term study habit has been used to mean the various methods and practices adopted by the students in their learning process. Poor study habit is one of the biggest and most persistent problems among the learners. Effective study consists of much more than merely memorizing facts.

It calls for knowing where and how to obtain facts and the ability to make intelligent use of time. It means that the student must be able to organise, classify and arrange facts in their proper relationship to the subject being studied; taking notes is essential for learning and remembering things properly. Notes should be prepared from books because everytime it is not possible to go through the books we have read.

Study habit includes students' habit of concentration, note making, time budgeting and study methods [Smith 1961]. Smith [1961] further describes that what a student learns depends upon his learning methods, the goal he sets, the time he spends, the degree to which he becomes actively involved in his work, the breadth of the framework within which he tries to learn and the extent to which he applies what he learns. The ambitious and intelligent student is more likely to develop effective study methods.
Kohi [1977] pointed out that in the academic field study habits are particular theoretical and practical importance. Healthy study habits and intelligence help the individual to surpass the limits circumscribed by his intelligence, by bringing him to the category of an over-achiever. Unhealthy study habits become a hurdle in the way of achievement of the individual and do not let him make the best use of his potentialities dragging him down to poor performance in the academic domain and thus making him an under-achiever. Hence study habits are of immense importance in the acquisition of a satisfactory level of achievement.

Evans and Smith [1970] pointed out that it is important to develop good 'study habits' for successful adjustment in college. Successful college students differ from unsuccessful students in study habits. According to them, good study habits include class participation, study time, use of text books and recitation.

Study Habit is described in line with Smith [1961] which includes concentration, note taking, time budgeting and study techniques.

Gilbert [1966] viewed study habits, strategies of work which have some common denomination activities as taking notes, using the library, improving reading ability, building vocabulary writing, preparing and taking examination notes. She took study skills to be synonymous to reading skills and they were further analyzed as skills of outlining, summarising, reading for definition, reading for inference etc.
Moddox [1963] described study habit as an art. Agreeing that success in study to some extent depends on the inherent ability and the environment factors also he feels that effective techniques too are responsible for success.

1.13 Essential conditions for good study habits:

In order to ensure success in the acquisition of skills the following essential conditions have to be satisfied.

[i] A clear and comprehensive idea of what is to be achieved by the study.

[ii] Sufficient motive or reason for the study.

[iii] Appropriate motive or reason for the study.

[iv] Sustained and persevering efforts till the results are obtained. Study should be conceived as the kind of learning stimulated by a felt need, difficulty or problem, seeking to acquire new facts, establishing new habits and developing new skills. Study should mean not mechanic acquisitions of facts and skills but much more than that for this is the most economical method of study which will best fit the learner.

1.14 Effective Study habits

The following points can be considered as effective study habits.

1. Provision of required physical facilities free from barriers to study.
2. Planning and implementation of a programme of study.
3. Persistence and balance in the studying subjects.
4. Concentration, conviction and intelligent reading habits.
5. Reservation of lesson with interest and concentration.

The habits are generally formulated, acquired, cultivated and fixed by repeated efforts. Not all learners with above average intelligence may be expected to be better in studies. Their potential intelligence has got to be transmitted into kinetic intelligence. The medium through which this information is possible is study habits.

1.15 Family background

Education is the art of helping a learner to grow to full maturity of body, mind and spirit in and to a large extent for society and such is a continuous process of development from the cradle to grave. During this extended period of education the responsibility of educating a human being is shared by many persons and groups. Every one is subject to a variety of educational influences that mould his character and develop his personality. Of these the home is one.

A home implies a family and it is in the nectar of the family a child learns his first and most lasting lessons. The family is the natural environment of the child in his formative years when the foundations of his physical, mental and spiritual health are being laid and it remains the focus of his life. Hence, the family is the first, the most natural and most important educative agency. The home is the real educator.
Family: "A group of people who are closely related by marriage and by birth. The typical family is made up of a husband and wife and their children; they live together. A wider sense of the family goes on to include grandparents, uncles and aunts and cousins. It may even be extended to more distant relations and to dead ancestors". [New Encyclopedia]

The family is a primary social institution, important to the individual and society. It is a social unit of which each one of us is a member. The family is in fact, "the institution to which we owe our humanity" [Mead 1953:4]. Burgess and Locke defined "Family as a group of persons united by the ties of marriage, blood or adoption; constituting a single household, interacting and inter-communicating with each other in their respective roles of husband or wife, mother and father, son and daughter, brother and sister, creating a common culture".

Family is a social institution and structural arrangement for carrying out certain functions necessary for the continuity of society and maintenance of social order. It is called the "Cradle of human nature". This is because it is the first place when the individual is socialized. It is the centre through which initial status, basic skills and models of performance pass from one generation to another. As the repository of tradition, it acts as the transmission belt linking the past to the future [Goode, 1967]. There are a number of factors which influence the education of the learners. Of these,
family background plays an important role. Family background produces an insistent and subtle influence on the learners educational and mental development.

Family background of distance education learners mainly refers to parental education, parental occupation and parental income. It may include educational status and occupational status of family members and family income.

Family background of the learner plays an important role in the academic activity. It enables a learner to sustain him in the academic process, thereby it paves a way for successful completion of his continuing education process.

1.16 Statement of the Problem

Universities are very much concerned with the dissemination of knowledge and skill to the society. These are the basic elements of education. To achieve this Universities carry out diversified activities especially, they provide learners with diversified courses in science, arts and commerce. But the responsibility of choice of the course falls in the hands of the learners. It depends upon so many factors such as motivation, study habits and family background. Influence of these factors seem very much in the selection of course among the distance education learners due to several reasons.

Motivation to study is a major concern which intrinsically instigates learners to select a course, continue the
course and complete the course successfully. It is an interesting psychological phenomenon that makes every learner act and achieve. Further, motivation directs the learners to select a course according to their study habits and family background. It activates learners choosing the relevant course suitable to their needs and abilities.

On the other hand, study habits play a vital role in student's choice of course. Study habit may be considered a way of practising. It implies the method of study that a learner can follow during his or her learning process. The study habit may not be the same for every learner. It varies from learner to learner. It depends upon the learners' habit i.e., how they practice their learning activity as their habit.

The success in the study, to a considerable extent, depends on the study habits of the learners. Study habits may include attending personal contact classes, taking notes, using the library, writing, preparing and taking examination, revising, making plans and timetables etc.,

Hence, the students' choice of course concerns with their study habits. The students of hard working and having good study habits may choose science and commerce subjects. Generally, the learners who do not like hard work and having better study habits may select arts subjects than science and commerce subjects. Thus, the study habits can influence the choice of course among the distance education learners to a possible extent.
The other important aspect is family background of the distance education learners. It is related to occupation and education of family members and family income of the distance education learners. It can influence the choice of course among the distance education learners to a remarkable extent. Because the students' choice of course depends upon the occupation, education and income of the family members. The encouragement and advice of the parent or any one of the family members enable a learner to select a course. Besides this, the financial source, educational guidance and other personal reasons may lead to choice of their courses.

Hence, family background can act as a boosting element that a learner may involve himself in the learning activity. It implies social, economical and educational status of the family. It produces an insistent and subtle influence on which the educants play their role according to its nature, condition and scope.

Considering the importance of motivation, study habits and family background of distance education learners in selecting their course of study, the investigator chose to investigate the "Choice of course in relation to Motivation, Study habits and Family background of Distance Education Learners."

1.17 Definitions of the Terms

Motivation:

Motivation is the internal state or the intervening process that drives a person to act in a specific manner. There
is a variety of slightly different interpretations eg., some postulate general thirst claims that motivation is more specific.

According to Atkinson, 'the term Motivation refers to arousal of tendency to act to produce one or more efforts'.

Bernard says, "Motivation refers to all those phenomenon which are involved in the stimulations of actions towards particular objective where previously there was little or no movement towards those goals".

Hence, Motivation is considered to be the basis for learning process by which learning is feasible and viable. It acts as a bridge between the learner and learning.

**Study Habits:**

The term study habits is used in the same way as methods of study. It depends upon the learners mood, interest and experience. It denotes the suitable or convinced methods of study which the learners follow during their learning process. It may differ from individual to individual to a considerable extent.

**Family Background:**

Family background of distance education learners refers to the parental education, parental occupation and parental income. It may include educational status and occupational status of family members and family income. Its influence in education is considerable and cannot be left unseen.
1.18 Objectives of the Study:

The study has the following objectives:

(i) General objective of the Study:

The General objective of the study is to investigate distance education learners' choice of course with regard to motivation, study habits and their family background.

(ii) Specific objectives of the Study:

The specific objectives of this study are:

1. To study the level of motivation of distance education learners.

2. To study the level of motivation of distance education learners belonging to different groups based on sex, age, subject of specialisation, medium of instruction, residential area, marital status and size of family.

3. To study whether the distance education learners differ significantly in motivation with respect to their
   i) Sex,
   ii) Age
   iii) Subject of specialisation
   iv) Medium of instruction.
   v) Residential area
   vi) Marital status
   and vii) Size of the family.

4. To study the level of study habits of distance education learners.
5. To study the level of study habits of distance education learners belonging to different categories based on sex, age, subject of specialisation, medium of instruction, residential area, marital status and size of family.

6. To study whether the distance education learners differ significantly in study habits with respect to their
i) Sex
ii) Age
iii) Subject of specialisation
iv) Medium of instruction
v) Residential area
vi) Marital status
and vii) Size of family.

7. To study the educational status of the family members of the distance education learners.

8. To study the occupational status (Family income) of the family members of distance education learners.

9. To study the association between course of study and motivation.

10. To study the association between course of study and study habits.

11. To study the association between course of study and family background.

1.19 Hypotheses of the Study:

The following hypotheses were framed for the present study:

1. The male and female learners differ significantly with respect to motivation.
2. Learners belonging to different age groups differ significantly with respect to motivation.

3. The rural and urban learners do not differ significantly with respect to motivation.

4. Learners belonging to different courses of study differ significantly with respect to motivation.

5. Learners belonging to different subjects of specialisation differ significantly with respect to motivation.

6. Tamil and English medium students do not differ significantly with respect to motivation.

7. Learners belonging to different groups based on religion differ significantly with respect to motivation.

8. Learners belonging to different groups based on community do not differ significantly with respect to motivation.

9. Married and unmarried learners differ significantly with respect to motivation.

10. Learners belonging to different groups based on number of children differ significantly with respect to motivation.

11. Learners belonging to different groups based on occupation differ significantly with respect to motivation.

12. Learners belonging to different groups based on their income differ significantly with respect to motivation.

13. Learners belonging to different groups based on educational status of the parents differ significantly with respect to motivation.

14. Learners belonging to different groups based on occupation of the parent differ significantly with respect to motivation.
15. Learners belonging to different groups based on income of the parent differ significantly with respect to motivation.

16. Learners belonging to different groups based on monthly income of family differ significantly with respect to motivation.

17. Learners belonging to small family and big family do not differ significantly with respect to motivation.

18. Learners belonging to different groups based on financial assistance differ significantly with respect to motivation.

19. Learners belonging to different groups based on educational guidance differ significantly with respect to motivation.

20. Learners belonging to different groups based on obstacles in continuing education differ significantly with respect to motivation.

21. The male and female learners do not differ significantly in study habits.

22. Learners belonging to different age groups differ significantly in study habits.

23. The rural and urban learners differ significantly in study habits.

24. Learners belonging to different courses of study differ significantly in study habits.

25. Learners belonging to different subject of specialisation differ significantly in study habits.

26. Tamil and English medium students do not differ significantly in study habits.
27. Learners belonging to different groups based on religion do not differ significantly in study habits.

28. Learners belonging to different groups based on community differ significantly in study habits.

29. Married and unmarried learners differ significantly in study habits.

30. Learners belonging to different groups based on number of children differ significantly in study habits.

31. Learners belonging to different groups based on occupation differ significantly in study habits.

32. Learners belonging to different groups based on their monthly income do not differ significantly in study habits.

33. Learners belonging to different groups based on educational status of the parent do not differ significantly in study habits.

34. Learners belonging to different groups based on occupation of the parent do not differ significantly in study habits.

35. Learners belonging to different groups based on monthly income of the parent do not differ significantly in study habits.

36. Learners belonging to different groups based on monthly income of family do not differ significantly in study habits.

37. Learners belonging to small family and big family differ significantly in study habits.

38. Learners belonging to different groups based on financial assistance do not differ significantly in study habits.

39. Learners belonging to different groups based on educational guidance differ significantly in study habits.
40. Learners belonging to different groups based on obstacles in continuing education do not differ significantly in study habits.

41. There is an association between course of study and motivation.

42. There is an association between course of study and study habits.

43. There is an association between course of study and family background.

1.20 Scope of the Study

1. It is hoped that the present study will be useful to develop a suitable curriculum and text design in accordance with the distance education learners' motivation and study habits.

2. It may also help to have a prejudice about the academic needs of the distance education learners in general.

3. Further, it is hoped that the present study may help to have a general view of the learners' choice of course with regard to their motivation, study habits and family background which will be more useful to planners and administrators of education, to provide the learners with useful and relevant academic programmes.

1.21 Limitations of the Study:

1. The investigator has chosen the Distance Education Programme of Madras University for his study due to constraints in time and human resources.
2. The study is limited to second year students of Distance Education Programme at undergraduate level during the academic year 1993-94.

3. The study is limited to the sample population of 504 distance education learners of Madras University due to heavy enrollment.

**Conclusion:**

Motivation, study habits and family background play a prominent role among distance education learners in selecting the course of study. In fact, motivation is the factor which drives the learners to maintain sustained interest for successful completion of the course. As a key factor of success in education, good study habits help the learners to be update, keen and thorough with their lessons which in turn yield fruitful results. Finally, family background plays its role to a considerable extent in choosing the proper course of study by the learners.