CHAPTER-III

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

3.1. INTRODUCTION:

The literature review is the pivotal element of the entire research process and makes a valuable contribution to almost every operational step of research work. According to Webster’s Dictionary (1987), Review means to “examine again, study critically, general survey, critique.” In other words review of literature means to conduct general survey of related studies to analyse them critically and put them logically such that a certain framework and dimension can emerge. Review is useful for mapping the research landscape in the relevant area of research.

The need and importance of review of related literature are-

- The review of related literature is necessary to determine what was already known about the field and to what researches were performed by other researchers and the result obtained. In the initial stages of research it helps a researcher to establish the theoretical roots of the study, clarify concepts and develop research methodology. In the later stage, it helps to integrate findings into the existing body of knowledge.
- Knowledge of related literature enables researchers to define the frontiers of their field.
- It is very essential for every researcher to have up-to-date knowledge about the studies related to the problem.
- It enables a researcher to state the objectives clearly and concisely.
- It helps to avoid unfruitful problem areas and unintentional duplication of well established findings.
- It provides some insight regarding strong points and limitations of the previous studies.
- Review of related literature helps the researcher to know if there are certain gaps in the theories applicable to the problem under study and consistent with other. A researcher can look for missing links in the chain of
knowledge continuum. All these enable the researcher to take new studies in the field of furtherance of knowledge.

The literature pertaining to present study of investigation is reviewed under the following heads:

3.1.1: Studies conducted in countries other than India
3.1.2. Studies conducted in India.
3.1.3: Studies conducted in Assam

3.1.1: STUDIES CONDUCTED IN COUNTRIES OTHER THAN INDIA:

The research literature on different dimensions of distance education in abroad which has relevance to this study is presented below.

N. Mackenzie, R. Postgate and J. Seupham (1975)¹ conducted a study on open learning –systems and problems in post-secondary education at Paris, UNESCO. They noted that research and education have greater importance in open learning than they had in conventional because –a) innovative proposals require more documentation, b) distance learning systems involve such costs of advance, production and distribution that they are not easily modified and must be used for a considerable numbers of years, c) authors do not come in close contact with students using the materials, making it hard to know when revisions are needed, d) visiting to the public as well as to students within some delivery modes reinforces the need for careful planning and analysis.

W. J. Harris (1975)² completed a survey of 569 faculty members (tutors) from seven correspondence institutions in England. He discovered that 99% of the faculty worked part time with 55% handling only one course. Three fourths of the tutors were man and one tenth was retired from full time work elsewhere. Only 15% of the tutors were under age 28. 30% did not have previous teaching experienced. Although they did not have considerable professional experience, wide variation was noted in how often individual faculty members communicated with students.

W. Perry (1977)³ conducted a study at the Open University in U.K. The target learners were asked about their awareness of the existence of the Open University. The study revealed that over a period of five years (1971 to 1976) in the U.K., only 64% of the total adults population had come to know about the University. From
1971 to 1976 the percentage of men being aware of the Open University increased from 33% to 76% and the percentage of women being aware of it increased from 29% to 58%. Further, during the infant stage of the institution, a sample survey of 3000 adults revealed that just 55 of the total number of respondents were interested in joining the Open University courses and 0.9% respondents wanted definitely to be amongst the first applicants.

J. Mutanyatta (1989) attempted to study formative evaluation of distance education at the University of Botswana. The researcher suggested that the University should supply extra reading materials to students, particularly for theoretical subjects. Correspondence texts should include supplementary materials, and arrangements should be made either to photocopy some of those materials or provide them with the text or to enable the students to borrow materials from the national library network. Correspondence courses are taken as a private study and the onus is upon the employer to permit study time during working hours. Consequently, the institute must assist students to secure time off from their employers. The only way that this can be done is for tutors to make visits to the students’ workplaces. This has the added advantage of enabling tutors to understand the environment in which the students study.

N. Venkataiah. (1989) tried to evaluate preparation of course materials for distance education courses. The objective of the study was to suggest a good model for preparation of materials. The procedure adopted by the British Open University in the preparation of quality instructional materials was examined and discussed. The responsibility of a Course Team consisting of six categories of persons, viz. a chairman, course writers, media producer, editors, artists and a person specialized in educational technology known as a ‘transformer’, and their role in the writing of course material was highlighted and considered. The two approaches that are followed in India with respect to the writing of instructional materials, i.e. preparation by the faculty of the correspondence institutions or by outside authors, were also examined in the context of various deficiencies and inadequacies, including cost effectiveness vis-à-vis the Course Team approach and its effectiveness, particularly, for the Indira Gandhi National Open University as a
national resource centre for all open universities at the state level. The researcher concluded that A) Adequate attention must be paid to the writing of course materials. The standard or quality of instructional materials should not be sacrificed whatever might be the financial constraints B) The Course Team approach of the British Open University, though expensive, is feasible, economically viable and justified if the course material is used for a large number of students and C) In view of the large number of students for its course, this Course Team approach will be feasible, economically viable and will also ensure good–quality materials.

G. Kuruba (1999) studied the role and development of distance education in African countries in general and Botswana in particular. Although Africa has been neglected in the process of development over the years, there has been substantive work done in the area of distance education in different countries like Tanzania, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Uganda, Kenya, and Botswana etc. Poverty, neo-colonialism, financial crisis, shortages and under-utilisation of natural resources are the major problems that affect the economies of Africa. Distance education plays a vital role in overcoming the various problems faced by the counties of Africa and development of human resources. The University of Zambia, Zimbabwe Integrated Teachers College (ZINTEC), the private institutions such as the Zimbabwe Distance Education College (ZDECO), Makerere University of Uganda, Tanzania Open University, the Centre for External Studies, University of Nairobi has played an important role in the provision of distance education in Africa. Botswana’s thrust in the field of distance education is relatively new when compared to some of the other African nations. The Botswana Extension College and the Centre for Continuing Education, University of Botswana are the major developments in the field of distance education. Although distance education is widely accepted and used, a number of problems are identified in its use. These problems can be overcome by improving the whole package of the distance education system, particularly the quality of materials for self learning, the effectiveness of the feedback system, and the effectiveness of face to face interaction at different intervals. A special provision should be made towards distance education both in the Ministry and tertiary institutions. The use of modern technology, mode of instruction
and support service needs to be strengthened. The collaboration with other institutions coupled with the government support will further strengthen the system.

Q.M.G. Ahsan and S.M.M. Ahmmod (2005) analysed study habits of distance learners of Bangladesh Open University. The objectives of the study were:

a) to evaluate the intensity of study habits of the distance learners;
b) to identify the factors affecting the study habits of the distance learners;
c) to identify the possible ways to improve the study habits of the distance learners.

It was found that some learners had good study habits before joining and some learners had developed their self-study habits after joining the programmes under DE system. Most of the learners are looking for job-oriented programmes and recent requirements of the job market in Bangladesh create high demand for the business and information technology (IT) education. This study focused and identified the type of study habits of ODL learners at BOU. Tutor attitude, frequent changes in pronounced schedules and assessment delays act as important demotivators for such learners. It was suggested that ODL universities should not only take the responsibility to communicate the features of DE system to the learners before their joining but also to develop the system for improving the study habits of the existing learners. Such improvement of the study habits may also lead to the improvement of the supports from ODL universities and to the reduction of drop out of the distance learners.

S. Assefa (2006) investigated conduciveness of distance learning environment of Eastern Ethiopia. This case study was conducted with the intention of finding out perceptions of learners about psychosocial environment, institutional support, home environment, and study centre environment and gender and to find out how the environmental variables influenced SGPA of distance learners. The study revealed that there are no gender differences in perceptions of distance learners with respect to psychosocial environment, institutional support, the home environment, and the study centre environment for distance learners. All students felt that the distance learning environment in eastern Ethiopia is below average and it is not a conducive learning environment in its present status for distance learning. The environmental variables were found to affect the Semester
Grade Point Average (SGPA) of distance learners only indirectly. The researcher concluded that enhancing the quality of distance education mainly depends on raising the quality of study materials, provision of facilities and support for distance learners.

K. A. Sampong (2009) observed evaluation of a distance teacher education programme in a University of Ghana and found that the distance teacher education programme of the Centre for Continuing Education of the University of Cape Coast (CCEUCC) is fulfilling its purpose of upgrading the academic and professional competence of a large number of teachers in the basic schools in Ghana, raising their performance level and equipping them with skills for lifelong learning. The gap between these objectives and the programme’s performance, as perceived by students in the program, faculty, and administrators, is not so big that it cannot be closed. Constant review of performance is needed to completely close the gap. Further, this program would be enhanced if students and tutors were able to provide feedback to the course writers about the manual of instruction.

R. E. Taow et al. (2010) emphasised role of Open and Distance Learning in the attainment of United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in Cross River State of Nigeria. The main focus of the study was to access the overall views of Open and Distance Learning students (ODL) on the adequacy of Correspondence Education Programme (CEP); Radio and Television Education Programme (RTEP); and Internet-Based Education Programme (IBEP) methods in the attainment of United Nations Millennium Development Goals and education for all in Cross River State of Nigeria. The study revealed that a higher percentage of learners feel ODL methodologies create maximum access to learning for all and as well provide functional literacy skills, relevant in the attainment of the eight point UN MDGs. 70% felt their time was wisely and gainfully used in terms of access, continuous learning, augmentation between work and studies. This implies that, the adults would want to take part in the MDGs programmes, provided their time is effectively managed by the facilitators of the programmes. 75% viewed ODL methods of Educational Radio and Television Programme (ERTP) and Internet Based Education Programme (IBEP) help them acquire unlimited access to vocational and functional literacy education relevant in meeting MDGs target. It was suggested that the views
of the benefiting individuals, groups and nations shall have to be taken into account while designing and implementing programmes for the attainment of the UN Millennium Development Goals in Cross River State and elsewhere.

F.Glasgow (2011) investigated needs assessment in Open and Distance Learning (ODL) in Guyana. The main objectives of the study were – a) to ascertain the types of programmes needed by adult learners for their personal development; b) to identify the types of programmes required for improving on-the-job performance; c) to ascertain the types of programmes needed to forge community development; and d) to investigate whether the level of educational attainment is related to the types of programmes chosen/identified by adult learners. The researcher found that programmes at the secondary school matriculation level together with pre-university credit and non-credit courses, and programmes at the degree level (associate and bachelors) were needed to satisfy personal development. The results of the study suggest the existence of a relationship (correlation) between programme choice and level of educational attainment. Respondents with the highest qualifications opted for the academic programmes while those with lower qualifications selected technical, vocational and skill based programmes. However, respondents with the lowest qualifications (incomplete primary/secondary education and ODL certification) were the ones who selected literacy courses.

N.K.Jamandre (2011) tried to study on quality assurance in distance education achieved in the Philippines. This paper is an attempt to analyze and synthesize the developments and challenges of the University of the Philippines Open University (UPOU) which offers the Distance Education (DE) Program since 1995. This paper focuses on quality of distance education, administrative service, faculty development, and student feedback. The UPOU faces various challenges on: government, private sector, non-governmental organization, and academic support for policy and budget for technology and multimedia upgrade; organizing and training DE scholars, specialists, personnel and practitioners; relevance and competitiveness of programs and curriculum; establishment of more digital learning centers and learning object repositories; strengthening collaboration with other universities, including the Asian Association of Open Universities (AAOU)
and in the Southeast Asian Region; student retention and technological support; assessment methods; research agenda and bridging the pedagogical gap of acceptance. The UPOU is determined to address these educational realities to prove that DE is beyond an alternative to conventional university, and is a viable academic institution based on a learner-centered paradigm for more Filipino students.

A. Mahmood, S.T. Mahmood & A.B. Malik (2012) compared student satisfaction level in distance learning and live classroom at higher education level in Pakistan. The objective of the study was to compare the level of student satisfaction of graduate distance learning educational psychology course to a traditional classroom educational psychology course taught by the same instructor. The sample consisted of eighty graduate students from each programme who were enrolled in Allama Iqbal Open University’s distance learning and International Islamic University’s traditional classroom programs during fall semester 2009 in course of educational Psychology and completed their course in this session. Both courses were taught by the same instructor. It was found that students both from distance learning and traditional classroom showed a high level of satisfaction. There was slightly difference related to satisfaction with timely feedback to students, accessibility of resources to complete assignments and amount of student to student interaction between both distance learning and traditional classroom students.

H. Najafi, M. Farajjollahi, R. Noruzzadeh and M.R. Sarmadi (2012) tried to provide a conceptual model for human resource development in Iran’s distance education system. They concluded that if Payame Noor University evaluates and implements the components of distance education (technology, facilities and interaction with all their indices), it can develop the human resources of its students (knowledge, attitude skill and behaviour). In other words, if all the components of distance education are properly implemented and administered, it will lead to creation and expansion of knowledge, positive attitude and satisfaction, personal, social and technical skills, and behavioural change in students.

I. Hussain (2013) studied on learners’ reflection on andragogical skills of distance education tutors in Pakistan. The objectives of the study were: a) To
evaluate learners’ attitude towards academic and tutoring skills of distance education tutors b) To assess distance learners’ opinion about assessment & evaluation skills of their tutors and c) To examine learners’ reflection on scaffolding and emboldening skills of distance education tutors. The researcher found that the overall reflection of distance learners on andragogical skills of their tutors was positive. They were also satisfied with andragogical skills of their tutors. They asserted that their tutors had academic and tutoring skills. The researcher suggested short and long term training for distance tutors to use latest ICTs.

3.1.2: STUDIES CONDUCTED IN INDIA:

The research literature on different dimensions of distance education in India which has relevance to this study is presented below.

R. Dutt (1976)\textsuperscript{16} investigated growth of correspondence courses in India. The study revealed the enrolment trend of correspondence courses from 1971 to 1976 taking into consideration the nature of courses, annual compound rate of enrolment and level of courses. He found that all the institutes had the provision for personal contact programme.

B.N. Biswal (1979)\textsuperscript{17} conducted a study on correspondence education in Indian Universities at M.S. University, Baroda. The study revealed that the objectives of correspondence courses offered through different universities remained almost same all over the country; the academic staff pattern remained more or less similar in all the universities, whereas differences were witnessed with regard to administrative staff patterns; enrolment rate was found to be higher in Arts, Commerce and Education than in other disciplines.

J. Singh (1981)\textsuperscript{18} undertook a study on correspondence education programme of the Patrachar Vidyalaya at the Centre for Educational Technology, NCERT, New Delhi. The objectives of the study were- a) to study the characteristics of students of the correspondence course; b) to find out the reasons preferring correspondence education to regular school education; c) to study the process of planning, preparation and dispatched of lesson units to students; d) to study the organization of personal contact programme and e) to make suggestions for better functioning of the programme. He found that students in the two correspondence
courses were spread over a wide range of age levels of 15 years to 37 years. About 11% and 19% of the boys and girls respectively were married. Quite a few students belonged to rather low socio-economic status. By and large, the students found the lesson materials interesting and easy to understand.

G. Mani (1983)\textsuperscript{19} made an attempt to evaluate learning support systems of the distance education programme of Madurai Kamaraj University. The study revealed teachers lacked skills such as mastery of subject matter and effective communication, efficiency in clearing doubts, skill in motivating adults, use of various teaching methods and proper modulation / pronunciation / accent etc. Difficulties were encountered in listening to the radio broadcasts. Study Centres are very few and ill equipped. It was suggested that more study centers and contact seminar were needed. Study material should be attractive and pedagogically sound in all respects.

V. S. Prasad (1987)\textsuperscript{20} examined learners’ profile of APOU. The study revealed that enrolment in distance education reflects the urban and upper class bias of the university system as a whole. The proportion of the working population, industrial and agriculture workers is awfully small. Most of the learners are young or middle aged and are unemployed. Most of the beneficiaries belong to economically better families and are from urban areas. He also pinpointed that APOU has been able to extend educational opportunities to a very broad cross section of people.

R. G. Reddy (1987)\textsuperscript{21} suggested distance education system in India should be adopted due to prevailing educational inequalities across different classes and geographical regions, the deterioration in the quality of education and lack of relevance today. So distance education system should be adopted and encouraged as a different educational strategy along with conventional system. Such an approach should prove viable economically, socially, politically and pedagogically.

R. Jayagopal, (1987)\textsuperscript{22} highlighted the relevance of distance education system in the context of weaker sections of Indian society. In India, the complex social stratification and a large number of people below poverty line pose a challenge to the educational policy makers for providing appropriate education. He
suggested that non-formal programmes, supported by radio and television for the weaker sections should be considered on a priority basis.

**R. Amritavalli (1987)** observed that the role of educational technological gadgets should be supplementary to the traditional system so as to provide education to a large number of students. The investigator mentioned that the educational programmes which the UGC telecasts on the national TV network are not linked with the courses taken by the majority of the distance learners. Hence the utility of these telecasts as a supplement to distance learning programmes is doubtful.

**R. Takwale (1987)** emphasized the development of open education using distance methodology to ensure quality of education and suggested that distance education should offer relevant courses that are self-instructional and provide experimental learning and freedom to learners. He viewed that distance education is essentially the outcome of modern communication technologies. The factors that led to Distance Education are emergence of Post–Industrial society, information communication network, knowledge explosion and limitations of formal education system. He opined that at higher levels, the development of knowledge, critical thinking and higher cognitive and affective abilities need to be emphasized.

**B. C. Bakliwal (1988)** investigated correspondence education scheme in Rajasthan. Regarding enrolment, he found that the number of students enrolled in the self-study programme in Rajasthan was 2325 in 1968 which increased to 30,260 in 1988.

**Satpathy (1989)** highlighted the future expansion of Distance Education system as national and state level Open University systems, innovative practices in means and media used and growth of enrolment into higher education expected by the year 2001. It has been visualized that changes would occur in the organization of Distance Education functioning within the traditional university system. This study revealed that further progress of science and technology, advancement of education of weaker sections of society, increasing rate of unemployment and progress of in-service and continuing education would have significant positive effects on
expansion of DE and innovations in DE systems. So the future of DE is secure for a long time to come.

R. Gautam (1990)\textsuperscript{27} studied success in distance learning system in relation to some key learned and institutional variables at Kurukshetra University. The problem pertains to the study of success in the distance learning system in relation to some key learned and institutional variables. The variables included some characteristics of learner, their self image, attitude towards distance education and their reasons for joining the correspondence courses. The effectiveness of institutional components and institutional materials has also been evaluated. The objectives of the study were- a) to try out the learners Orientation Inventory and other draft performance and tools; b) to study the self image of distance learners, profiles of distance learners and their attitude towards distance education; c) to evaluate the effectiveness of institutional components and to conduct the participant evaluation of the quality of institutional material ;d) to compare the success of the formal and distance education system ;e) to find out the reasons for drop out ; f) to predict success in distance learning and g) to conduct some case studies. The researcher explored the characteristics and aspirations of the learners who had joined in distance education system.

N. Khan (1991)\textsuperscript{28} investigated effectiveness of distance education programme with reference to the teachers’ training course of Kashmir University. The objectives of the study were- a) to assess the opportunity of technical and professional training with regard to the practice of teaching, the benefits of the distance system (student enrolment), the access to the distance education system, and the sex-wise coverage; b) to study the preparation and comparison of the achievement profiles of both the sexes (formal, non-formal system) and c) to study the cost effectiveness of the course. The study showed that-A) the availability of centers for practice teaching is increasing year after year in consideration of the interest of the pupil teachers; B) there is a year -wise increase in the enrolment system from the session 1977-78 to the session 1988-89, an also an increase in the enrolment as compared to the formal system of education; C) the male and female ratio shows a substantial increase in the Department of Distance education; D) so far
as the pass percentage of the results from the year 1977-78 to the year 1988-89 is concerned, it goes hand in hand with the formal system of education; E) during 1977-78 the pass percentage ratio between the non-formal and formal systems was 60:63.5, and during 1988-89 it was 62:65.; F) the teaching competency of teacher trained through the formal system is higher than that of those trained through the DDE; G) the duration of contact programmes with the pupil –teacher in order to have face to face learning with tutors is three months; H) the rate of delivering the general and criticism lessons in the DDE is higher than that needed in the formal system.

P. Kalvati (1991) attempted to study on foundational approach to teaching learning process in distance education at Osmania University, Hyderabad. The objectives of the study were- A) whether the use of communication technology has been helping the spread of distance education; B) whether distance education can promote universal literacy; C) whether distance education is developing vocational competence in learners ;D) whether distance education is effective alternative to formal education. The findings drawn from the study were-Distance education, like formal education has the potential to promote value based education; distance education increases the vocational competence in learners; use of communication technologies is enabling the distance education in its rapid expansion; distance education provides proper direction to the rural people in increasing their standard of living.

G. Pugazhenth (1991) conducted a study on teacher education programme through correspondence system in Madurai Kamaraj University at the M. S. University of Boroda. The objective of the study was to examine the status and effectiveness of the teachers’ education problem through the correspondence system of Madurai Kamaraj University with reference to admission policies, infrastructural facilities, student background and aspirations, lesson materials, assignment, study centre, finance, the dissertation and personal contact programme. The researcher found that although only teacher candidates were admitted to the course initially from 1983-84 graduates as well as post graduate were also being admitted. The age of the teacher trainers ranged from 25 to 61 years.38% of the M. Ed and 49.4% of
the B. Ed candidates belong to the rural areas. The rate of drop-outs was found to be 1.7% to 4.2% at B. Ed level and 3.2% to 7.4% at M.Ed. level which were very low. The teaching community behind expertise in the writing of scripts. 72% of the B. Ed and 83% of the M. Ed students found the functioning of the study centre inadequate and inefficient. The trainers found it difficult to find a place for practice teaching as well as suitable guiding teachers.

M. Das (1992) carried out a comparative study on approaches to learning and academic performances of students in traditional and open universities at J.N.U., New Delhi. The objectives of the study were-a) to identify the relationships among learner, content and context characteristics and academic performance of students in the open and traditional universities and to find out the predictability of such approaches and b) to compare approaches to learning as well as academic performance of students in open and traditional universities. The researcher had taken IGNOU and two traditional universities as sample. The study revealed that -i) the students in the open university significantly differed from students in the traditional university in terms of the learner, content and context approaches to learning; ii) the learner, content and context characteristics significantly correlated with the approaches to learning and academic performance of students both in open and traditional universities.

P. Vijaylakshmi (1994) attempted to study on role of distance education in empowerment of women at Osmania University. The objectives of the study were- a) to examine the level of perception of women learners about education in general and Distance education in particular and their need for joining Dr. B. R. Ambedkar Open University; b) to examine the extent to which the existing academic programmes of the above university are relevant to the needs, motivation and aspiration of woman clientele of urban and rural areas ;c) to identify the course and skills required by woman and their opinions about different course offered; d) to examine the obstacles faced by the woman learners in terms of course delivery, student support services, examinations, study conditions at home and financial support for their studies. It was found that the women respondents of Dr.B.R. Ambedkar Open University were aware of the benefits of education in general and
specially for the empowerment of women. The positive perception about education among the women learners indicated their high motivation for pursuing higher education despite barriers. A majority of women opted for Open University since this had flexible admission policy and had no restriction of time and space of study. A majority of urban and rural students opined that Dr.B.R.Ambedkar Open University could have diversified the programme based on the needs of women. A majority of women learners proposed the courses including computer courses, B.Ed. course, textile designing, tailoring, nursing, secretarial courses, child care and development, interior decoration, food and nutrition, women studies beautician courses, dietitian course etc. Most women learners had joined under graduate course because degree has become a minimum respectable qualification now-a-days for women. There were certain institutional factors like delay in receipt of printed course material, difficulty in understanding the subject matter, irregularity of counsellors during contact programmes and distance of the study centre as some of the demotivating factors. It was also found that women learners were finding little time to study at home. They also faced lack of encouragement from family members and financial problems as other impediments.

M.D. Ushadevi (1994) investigated a study on necessity of contact sessions in distance education learners of IGNOU. The objectives of the study were –a) to examine what the distance learners feel about the necessity of contact sessions; b) to see what modes of contacts are preferred by the distance learners; c) to find out the extent of participation of distance learners in the contact sessions; d) to identify the problems experienced by learners in making use of the counselling session; e) to suggest measures to overcome the existing problems and thereby arrive at pointers to the future course of action. It was found that most of the students feel the necessity of contact sessions for clarifying doubts, breaking isolation and maintaining inter-personal relationship, gaining deeper insights and understanding of the subject. More than 50% students expressed their dissatisfaction with the CS because of poor quality of the sessions which they find uninteresting and boring. The RSCs are found to be underutilised due to a variety of reasons. Salient among them are lack of compulsion and distance of the study centre.
H.C.S. Rathore (1995) undertook an evaluative study on personal contact programmes of correspondence institutes in India. The objectives were –a) to study the aims behind organizing personal contact programmes (PCPs); b) to study the purposes served by the PCPs; c) to study the students' perceptions regarding voluntary/ compulsory participation in PCPs, suitability of the PCPs; and academic value of the PCPs. The study reported on the aims with which correspondence institutes in India organise personal contact programmes (PCPs); the purposes served by them in distance education; and (iii) the perceptions of students regarding the suitability and academic value of PCPs. The study revealed that face-to-face teaching during PCPs is over emphasized. PCPs don’t provide sufficient opportunity and time to students to discuss their academic problems. The researcher suggested that student population in distance education be distinguished as part-time and full-time students and PCPs be planned and organized separately for these two groups of students, taking into account their differing needs and expectations. Both the groups would derive optimum utility from the distance mode of education, if the PCPs are conceived and organised in a manner to meet the actual needs of learners who belong to distinctly different groups as distance learners.

Kachroo, B.K. (1999) evaluated distance education programmes at college and University of Jammu Region. The study has certain implications for both the University of Jammu and the IGNOU (Jammu Region) for running distance education programmes. The distance education course introduced at the under graduate and post-graduate levels are hardly adequate in number keeping in view the choices of the distance learner in the Jammu region. Moreover, most of these courses do not cater to the needs of disadvantaged communities like Gujjars and Bakarwals. It is suggested that certificate or diploma level courses in cattle rearing and dairy technology may be started for the benefit of the students of these communities. It is suggested that besides Hindi or English, Urdu which is the official language of Jammu & Kashmir should also be used. In order to achieve excellence in distance education the teachers should be oriented in innovative techniques like brain storming, problem solving, project method, seminars, mastery learning strategies, formative evaluation.
A. Gaba (1999) attempted to study on IGNOU Graduates regarding distance education and job market. The main focus of the present research study was to know the learner’s objective of joining with IGNOU and the advantage of obtaining the IGNOU degree to get employment, get promotion, continue education, self-employment and social and other reasons; to know the utilization of graduate degree; to find out the reasons if any for non-acceptance of IGNOU degrees in the job market and other higher education institution and to know the employer’s views about the preference of candidates with degree from IGNOU and others at the time of recruitment in their institutions. Major findings drawn from the study were -

- Majority students were from Arts background (42.43%). Majority (39.86%) belonged to age group between 31 to 40 years, 31.65% belonged to urban areas, (68.33%) belonged to the general category, 71.53% were married as compared to only 23.13% unmarried students.

- Majorities of the respondents (56.62%) were doing regular job and 11.03% were studying in formal schools and colleges. Some of them (9.96%) were doing both part time job as well as pursuing their studies. 12.8% of them were searching for job and doing nothing. 6.76% respondents were self-employed and 2.81% did not express their views about their previous activities.

- 143.42% responded that their objective was to continue education 35.9% of them got admission in different institutions in the country. 25.4% of them utilized IGNOU degree for other purpose which they have not specified. 14.45% of them got job and 3.35% were self-employed. 13.52% students informed that their objective was to get job. Among those who got 54.25% joined private sector while 45.8% joined (government) sector. 10.32% responded that their objective was to get promotion. 27.61% of them got promotion.

- The IGNOU degree not only helped the respondents for continuing education, getting regular job but also for the self-employment purpose, eight respondents responded that IGNOU degree helped them for self-employment. They also informed that foundation and application courses helped them get job and promotion, which is unique, and are not available in the formal system.
Saxena (2000) conducted a study on profiles of distance learners at Indira Gandhi National Open University. The objective of the study was to gather information about IGNOU’s learner, their ideas about the programme, the experience and their status after the programme. The study covered seven programmes of IGNOU from various disciplines. The findings of the study indicated that-a) there is more number of female enrolment; b) they live smaller houses with 2-3 children and 4-5 family members; c) most students belonged to lower or lower middle income group; d) most students are employed in the public sector and want only the printed text material to study; e) most of them feel that IGNOU should be an evening university; f) students want to pursue higher education from IGNOU but want new programmes like Environment and Traditional wisdom of India.

A. Pahad (2000) conducted a study on opinions of female learners regarding distance education at M. S. University of Boroda. The objectives of the study were-a) to study the opinions of female students of Indira Gandhi Open University, Boroda Study Centre (of the year 1997-98) regarding different aspects of Distance Education; b) to study the opinions of female students regarding the selected aspects of distance education with reference to their academic achievement, interest in studies, socio-economic status of the family, occupational status of the students and c) to have the recommendations of female students for the improvement of distance education regarding the selected aspects of Baroda Study Centre. Major findings of the study were-a) Academic Achievement of half of the female students was low and a less than 50% of female students were high academic achievers. A little less than 60% of female students were less interested in studies and a little more than 40% of female students were more interested in studies. A little more than half of the female students were from low socio-economic status of the family who were not employed and a little less than 50% of female students were from high socio-economic status of family and were employed; b) Overall opinion of female students was neutral towards all aspects of distance education. A high majority or female student had favourable opinion of the self-check exercises. Differences in the opinion of female students regarding the selected aspect of distance education with reference to the selected variables; c) No significant differences were found in the opinion of female students regarding selected aspects of distance education with reference to their
academic achievement and their interest in studies; d) Significant differences were found in the opinion of female students regarding library and assignments with reference to the socio-economic status of the family. There were no significant differences in the opinion of female students regarding methods and materials, support system, evaluation procedure, counseling and job prospects and expenditure incurred with reference to the socio-economic status of the family; e) There were significant differences found in the opinion of female students regarding student support system with reference to the occupational status of the student.; f) A high majority of female students strongly recommended that all assignments given by IGNOU must be made compulsory for grading.

B. Sukumar (2000) attempted to study on awareness of academic counsellors at IGNOU Regional Centre, Cochin. The objectives of the study were-a) To assess the extent of awareness of academic counsellors about distance education instructional concepts; and b) To ascertain the use of instructional practices by academic counsellors. The researcher found that majority academic counsellors (55%) had ambiguous idea about the difference between correspondence and distance education system. The study showed general lack of awareness among academic counsellors about distance education instructional concepts and learning theories. Similar trend also seems in their use of motivational techniques and audio-visual media. Orientation programmes need to be conducted twice or thrice in a year in each region with the aim of accommodating all the academic counsellors. The orientation should not only take care of the subject, counselling and evaluation aspects but also how to improve their knowledge with regard to communication aspects, usage of audio-visual media, student psychology, teaching-learning, etc. Also it is suggested that attendance in orientation programme should be made compulsory.

S. S. Sreekumar (2000) undertook a study on Distance Education and Human Resource Development in the Union Territory of Andaman and Nicobar Islands. The study was intended to: a) study the extent to which programmes of distance education cater to the requirements of various sections of the population in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands; b) examine how far programmes of distance education provide job enrichment professional competency; c) and study the
constraints and impediments faced by learners in attaining skills through distance mode of education. The study revealed that distance education programmes helped employed students to acquire higher qualification in their professional development. The programmes also gave opportunity to the middle aged persons and housewives to gain more knowledge and new ideas. Majority of the distance learners preferred practical-oriented courses. Majority of the learners opined that the study materials of IGNOU maintain high standard in terms of quality. It has been observed that study materials, audio lessons, video lessons and academic counselling and assignment helped in skill development. Study centres provide adequate guidance regarding various matters related to their study. The difficulties faced by learners are: a) some learners don’t get materials and assignment questions in time; b) audio/video lessons are not accessible to many learners; c) library facilities are not adequate in the study centers and d) lack of qualified academic counselors etc. The study recommends for improvement of various aspects such as study materials, study centers, counselling, introduction of new programmes etc.

C. Krishnan (2001) conducted a study on institutional arrangements for Distance Education at the school of Distance Education (SDE), University of Calicut (Kerala). The main objectives of the study are: a) to examine the nature and characteristics of the student population in the distance stream of education ; b) to examine the pattern of enrolment in the institution; c) to examine the institutional arrangements provided in these institutions from the students perspectives; d) to suggest measures to improve the functioning of the institutions. The researcher found that the SDE, Calicut University offers various courses to meet the requirements of the learners. All the students viz., the regular and open stream students follow the same syllabus, appear for the same examination and get the same certificate. 60% students enrolled in the degree level courses. Students’ enrolment in professional and diploma courses are insignificant. Most of the students feel that mere supply of printed notes and a ritual of 7 or 8 days PCPs are not effective enough in getting quality education. The study materials supplied by the SDE are not found in the self instructional formats. Majority students considered the PCPs useful. There are no study centers for benefit of learners. Library facilities are very poor. It was suggested that the SDE has to be reconstructed to reach the unreached.
D. P. Sharma (2002) evaluated student teachers’ perception on Teacher Education Programme of IGNOU. The aims of the study were: a) to analyse the profile of student teachers; b) to find out the reactions of the student teachers on different components of the Bachelor of Education Programme of IGNOU; c) to elicit suggestions from student teachers for improvements in the ongoing Bachelor of Education Programme of IGNOU. The reactions of the student teachers are positive on all the major components of the programme except interactions during counselling and workshops, feedback on assignments, audio-video inputs and schedules of the activities. All the respondents have suggested holding workshop/counselling sessions before the submission of assignments, holding workshop during vacations, feedback on assignments, more interactions during counselling and workshop sessions and provision of audio-video inputs. It is suggested that the counselling should be made compulsory, counselling days should be increased, counsellors should be orientated to the methodology of distance education and practice teaching programme should be monitored and supervised from the programme centre.

C. Villi (2003) conducted a study on knowledge, attitude perception and expectations (KAPE) of the women learners. The study revealed that 45.1% learners are in favour of entrance examination. 18.7% felt that entrance test is easy. 25.5% expressed that Open University System is similar to the other system i.e. that they have not found any change. 30.4% felt that the days for contact class are very meager. 20.6% felt that contact classes conducted were not according to students requirements. The source of getting study information through Newspapers and friends is significantly larger 34% and 32.5% respectively. The main reason for choosing Open University System seems to be their ambition to get higher education. 54.6% expressed their desire for higher education as the reason for choosing Open University System. 16% felt that their less qualification leads them to join in the OUs, and 15.6% expressed their current jobs is the reasons for opting to OUs. The researcher concluded that opinions about the contact seminars indicate the areas of required improvement in the system.
R.V. Vadnerer, R. Gujar, & A. Sonone, (2003) attempted to study on a vocational education programme through distance education mode. It was found that majority of the respondents were happy and satisfied for getting the opportunity to complete such programmes without disturbing their routine education as required in conventional system. Majority of the respondents have appreciated the format and content of learning material. Majority of the students were found to be sincere about attending counseling sessions. As this programme is skill oriented it requires more practical practice, for which the students were getting access at the study centres.

P. Narayan (2004) evaluated CLD programme of IGNOU. The programme has been highly effective and successful in terms of meeting its objectives. The overall effectiveness of the programme measured in quantitative terms worked out at 4.09 at five point scale. Thus, the success score of the programme in percentage terms is more than 80% and the learners have substantially been benefitted by pursuing this programme. The quality of course material in terms of its language, style, content and structure as perceived by the learners is very good. The learners belonging to different educational status did not make any change in their perception about the quality of the course material. Thus, the course material is rich in content, language, style and structure.

K. Gangapi & E. Chanrai (2004) conducted a study on responses of learners to technology-based learning of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Open University. The main objectives of the study were to: i) examine the role and contribution of multi-media instructional system adopted by the University. ii) study the responses of learners to technology-based teaching/learning methodologies; and iii) study the issues and concerns associated with technology based teaching-learning system and to make some useful suggestions based on the analysis of study to improve the system. It was found majority informed that teleconferencing and television programmes were useful and interesting but they were not able to watch the programmes due to inconvenient timings and non-availability of schedule of lessons. It was suggested to improve the system and to increase access of the new technologies to the distance learners and a separate channel for tele-lessons and teleconferencing is highly desirable with well-in-advance information to the students. Audio-Video Lessons are required to be revised, updated, and improved.
As the future is Internet based E-teaching and E-learning, it requires a great deal of professional training for teachers to improve and convert their existing expertise into technology oriented to produce quality lessons.

A. Gaba (2004) examined role of distance education in the Human Resource Development of India. The study was conducted to examine the extent to which IGNOU programmes have helped in the development of human resources. The study revealed that that distance education helped learners to facilitate job performance, to acquire skills in their concerned life and for self-development.

M. Srivastava, J. M. Kurup & R. Nembiakkim (2007) analysed the role of distance education in general and IGNOU in North-Eastern region. They observed that there is unmet demand for education at all levels, but especially for higher education in this region. Thus the ODL system holds the promise of providing more opportunities to the people of the NE region to pursue higher education and improve their prospects. The CCIs/ DDE attached with conventional universities were set up after more than a decade of IGNOU’s existence in the NER. As compared to IGNOU, the CCIs have a limited presence in terms of both number of programmes offered as well as students enrolled. Also the number of programmes they offer are very few as compared to IGNOU. The diversified delivery approach adopted by IGNOU since the latter half of the 1990s has also contributed to the growth of students. There has been a phenomenal increase in the establishment of study centres of different types like programme study centres, special study centres besides the Regular Study Centres in the region. The study centres provide support services such as academic counselling, tutoring, library and information services through face to face sessions, teleconferencing, radio etc. The number of programmes offered by IGNOU has also gone up from 2 programmes in 1986 to 125 in 2006. They suggested that OUs like IGNOU and the newly established Open Universities of Assam and Nagaland including the CCIs should invest in the adoption of ICT for providing educational opportunities to larger segments of the populations living here. Incentives should be instituted by the state governments in order to attract the youth and the unemployed to enroll in DE programmes in this region.
A. Gaba (2007) conducted a study on online Graduates and job market. The objective of the study was to know the utility of degree for learners’ career path in terms of employment, promotion, continuing education and in any other area, and to study the perception related variables such as the acceptability of their degree in job market. The number of learners registered with Bachelor of Information Technology programme (BIT) through online mode has been increased from 1267 in 1999 to 1833 in 2001. But, it had declined after 2002 onwards. All the respondents were fresh learners having acquired 10+2 qualification from formal institutions before registration with BIT programme and were unemployed. After completion of their programme from IGNOU, 27% respondents got regular job, 24.3% were doing regular job already joined post-graduation programme through distance mode in different institutions. 13.5% joined further studies and were looking for job in comparison 10.8% studying and doing part time job and the same number of respondents was doing nothing. It was found that a majority of the respondents got job, continued further study and enhanced their skills despite facing the problem of non-acceptability at the initial stage. Most of the respondents also informed that due to this programme they acquired communication skills. 92% informed that they did not face any problems in getting job or pursuing post-graduation in different institutions. It was observed that online teaching has broken all barriers for those people who could not have access to higher education programmes.

M. H. Siddiqui (2008) undertook a comparative study of the attitude of B. Ed. male and female students of Aligarh Muslim University towards the Distance Education. It was found that –a) there was no significant difference between male and female students with regard to attitude, intelligence and achievement motivation; b) there was no significant difference in attitude of high and low intelligence level and high and low achievement of male and female B.Ed. students; c) there was no significant difference between the attitude of male and female B. Ed. students towards Distance Education; d) there was no significant difference amongst the attitude of male and female B.Ed. students towards distance education in relation to their high and low intelligence level and high and low achievement motivation.
A.K. Gaba (2008) presented a paper on distance education and human resource development at the University of London. The study investigated the learners’ benefits, which they received after completion of the CCDP from IGNOU. The objectives of the paper are to study-a) learners’ goals to register with CCDP programme; b) learners’ perception of the valued of CCDP programme study through distance mode; c)to find out the reasons, if any, for non completion of the programme. Based on the objectives of the study, two research methods were employed in this study -Document and Database Analysis and Telephone /Email survey Method. The study revealed that most of the respondents’ goal was to get skills in pottery and to get certificate. The respondents informed that to get CCDP certificate from IGNOU was necessary to get a job and promotion in their respective institutions and it was one of the prerequisite for the job. Half of the respondents informed that the certificate helped a great deal to facilitate job performance. Most of the respondents (71%) informed that they perceived that the present certificate would help them in achieving higher education, to get a new job and a promotion in their present job. 73% informed that the course exactly met their personal needs, which motivated them to complete the programme. Rest of the students informed that other factors like professional compulsion was responsible to complete the programme. One of the respondent informed that he was already aware about the skill but did not have the certificate. Therefore, he registered with this programme and got a certificate. Then, he got a job in a school. Some of the students were having graduate and post graduate degree in Arts and Crafts. They registered with this programme for learning skills in pottery. One of the respondents she got practical training from the regional centre. She was perusing art and craft degree along with another degree from the university at the time of registration with IGNOU. Another respondent informed that he could not start this programme because of his health problem. Few respondents suggested that more practical classes should be organized.

D. Harichandan (2009) examined student support services in Distance Education Institute of conventional university (Mumbai University) and open university(IGNOU). It was found that in the DEI, study materials are written by individual teachers from the constituent colleges. They have no training in SLMs.
In OU, the faculty of the University and outside experts constitutes the course team. In DEI, the submission of assignments has not been introduced whereas in OU it is compulsory. The duration of PCPs in DDI is 3 months and in OU it is 6 months in a year. The DEI has no study centres. The facilities such as reference books, back of audio and video cassettes including radio are available in study centers of OU. Both the DEI and OU do not offer any pre-enrolment guidance and counselling to students.

A.K. Gaba & S. S. Sethy (2010) conducted a study on learners’ perception towards Information and communication technologies. The objectives of the study were to: a) ascertain the awareness of online/distance learning programmes; b) find out which teaching delivery model is preferred by the learners most; c) examine learners’ accessibility to on-line programmes; d) study learners’ level of skills for study through online; and e) know the learners’ preference for the support services through ICTs. It was found that majority of the respondents of all the programmes were having basic knowledge of ICT in general and computer skill in particular before registration with IGNOU with experience of internet use. Learners had given their preference to receive support services through Audio/Video and CDs/DVDs followed by Online/e-Learning/Web based programmes. Most of the learners were having ICT equipment. The study found that ICTs help IGNOU learners in various ways. The respondents appreciate IGNOU for its e-Gyankosh and wiki facilities. It was suggested that IGNOU should deliver content and other services through mobile devices.

M. Das and C.K. Ghosh (2011) conducted a study on academic counselling and need and expectations of IGNOU learners. The objectives of this study were: a) to investigate the learners’ perspective of the academic counselling sessions at IGNOU; b) to identify areas of intervention to facilitate the academic counsellors to build the capacities of inquiry, creativity and innovation; moral leadership; technological capabilities; and entrepreneurial skills in the learners of IGNOU. It was found that 96.2% learners said that counselling sessions were important for their learning. About 60% said that they got the study material well in advance and the counsellors tried to familiarize with the learners and many learners,
65% said the counsellors made an effort to know the background of the learners. About 77% learners said that the counsellors listened to their study related issues, and about 68% learners said that the counsellors listened to their administrative related issues and tried to solve them. About 47% said the libraries of the study centres do not have adequate collection of books. The academic counsellors of IGNOU identified different areas for capacity building such as emphasis should be on given counselling sessions, ‘questioning skills’ rather than ‘answering skills’ of learners, inculcate moral and ethical values in the learner, ICT-based teaching for learners, and entrepreneurial skills etc.

R. H. Makwana (2011) discussed role and challenges in Distance Education in India. The Government of India has taken into consideration to develop distance learning mode by encouraging open universities and DEIs across the country with a basic objective to make the masses educated. The Distance education system is an innovative component of higher education and are perceived by educational planners and policy makers as well as the community as a vital instrument of human resource development and education rights. The challenges of distance education system are-a) lack of adequate teachers; b) lack of adequate staff; c) large numbers of students; d) difficulties to prepare lessons according to the individual differences of the learners; e) dearth of multi-media instruction; f) difficulties in printing materials; g) limited library facilities in the study centers; h) maintaining the quality of distance education institutions etc. Emphasis should be given on career-oriented courses, setting up of additional study centers, Radio Interactive programmes, reduction of fee structure, scholarships for learners, Individualized Instruction, and new methods of reducing.

S. P. Nair (2012) attempted to study successful learners of IGNOU and find the learner-centric factors and OU-related factors that have facilitated the learners to successfully complete their study. Among the factors to which the learners attribute their academic success are both learner based aspects and OU-based aspects. The important learner-based factors are learners’ hard work and the support received from their immediate environment namely; family/friends/colleagues. Among the OU-based factors, the support from OU
in terms of providing the sought information/ responding to queries etc. had a relatively lower score than other factors. The successful learners stated that their study habit and all communications & information from the OU helped them to successfully complete their study. OU learning fosters other such valuable life skills and qualities. OUs can stress these qualities to the learners during appropriate forums such as induction meetings, website, counselling sessions etc. OUs have a responsibility to enhance their pass out rates. The researcher concluded that maximising learner satisfaction by providing excellent learner services with quick redressal/response to student grievance/problems/queries could clearly work in the long run towards enhancing pass out rates.

3.1.3.: STUDIES CONDUCTED IN ASSAM:

The research literature on different dimensions of distance education in Assam which has relevance to this study is presented as below.

**D. Medhi (2005)** evaluated distance education system with special reference to IGNOU and PGCS, GU at Gauhati University. The objectives of the study were-a) to study the status of PGCS, GU and IGNOU as the mode of distance education in Assam; b) to study the progress of distance education in Assam; c) to study the enrolment trends of distance education programmes, personal contact programmes, development of course materials and student support activities are based on principles of distance mode of learning; d) to access the role of mass communication system in promoting distance education programme; e) an evaluative study of the distance education as alternative to formal education system; f) to make suggestions for better functioning of the programmes. Major findings of the study were-

- Enrolment trend shows that the percentage of distance learners is increasing every year.
- 66.32% students were male and 33.68% were male. IGNOU had total 35.38% of rural students where as PGCS, GU had 47.70% of rural students. Majority (52.40%) belonged to age group of 19-25 years. Most of the students (59.24%) belonged to general category.
52.40% students joined in distance education programmes because of their job, 31.89% joined as they could not get admission in regular college, 28.35% joined because of financial problems and others joined for personal problems. 84.23% of IGNOU students opined that they joined in distance education programmes for time saving.

90.91% students were found satisfied with course structure of different programmes.43.04% students demanded more programmes.77.69% students of IGNOU and 54.59% students of PGCS, GU were found satisfied with their study material.58.73% students were found satisfied with students support services.78.73% students supported that distance education is more economical than formal education. It was found that only IGNOU is using multi-media and teleconferencing systems for education. PGCS, GU was limited to printed study material only.

M. Kumar (2002) investigated the status of distance education in Assam at Gauhati University. The objectives of the study were- a) to study the status of the open distance education and other alternative system of education in Assam; b) to study the development trend of distance education in the state of Assam; c) to study the function of distance education in the state of Assam; d) to study the enrolment trends, personal contact programmes, development of course materials and students support services; e) to investigate the opinion of the people i.e. distance learners regarding the alternative system of education i.e. distance education; f) to study the effectiveness of mass communication apart from printed study materials in context of Assam; f) to propose flexible and appropriate methods of education with focus on distance, open and life-long system as complementary, supplementary and additional supportive system in catering to the varied educational and vocational needs. The study revealed that the percentage of distance learners was increasing every year but rate of increase was not specific. The reasons behind joining distance education were – a) employed people could not attend regular college; b) some get less mark in previous examination; c) some had financial problems and d) some wanted to continue their education. It was also found that the study material of distance education was satisfactory. Learners agreed that the counseling session conducted to their institute was useful. Infrastructure was not in good condition. Medium of study
were in favour of Assamese medium. Majority of the students were found totally
dependent on their counsellors.

M. G. Borgohain (2009)\textsuperscript{59} evaluated distance education under IGNOU in
Assam at Dibrugarh University. The objectives of the study were- a) To study the
general functioning of distance Education centres under IGNOU in Assam; b) To
study the enrolment trend in different programmers of Distance Education under
IGNOU in Assam during 2001-2006; c) To take account of the total number of
students divided on the basis of gender, educational qualifications, residential status,
caste, occupational status and marital status; d) To study the achievement of Distance
Education under IGNOU in Assam during the session June, 2001 to June, 2006; e) To
study the physical and infrastructural facilities of the study centres of IGNOU in
Assam.

The major findings of the study were –

\begin{itemize}
  \item IGNOU has been functioning through a chain system, headquarter, regional
centre and the study centres. The study centres are adequately equipped with
the required staff (Co-ordinator and others, viz. Assistant Co-ordinator, office
assistants, attendants, safaiwala) are appointed as per norms. It has also been
functioning through some part time Academic Counselors. The study centres of
IGNOU in Assam have been facing various problems in the field of
administrative, academic, financial, physical and infrastructural facilities.
  \item In the Management programme (MP) enrolment numbers have shown a
flexible trend. Enrolment scenario of the programmes MBF, CES, CRD, CHR,
CWED, CLD, CAFÉ, CPLT, and DPECCP. In CIS, the enrolment figures have
shown a flexible trend. In CDM, the enrolment figures were almost equal
during the period 2001 to 2006. In the programme CTE and CNCC the
enrolment trend shows both upward and downward.
  \item There was substantial decline in participation (enrolment) in the distance
education programmes under IGNOU among male and females. Participation
of students divided on the basis of caste wise distribution also shows
significant decrease. In the case of employment status also same trend is seen.
\end{itemize}
A good number of achievers are seen in the CIC programmes. IGNOU produces 1138 certificate holders of CIC in Assam during the period from 2001 to June 2006.

- 67.55% achievers are male learners, 32.44% are female learners, 13.98% are rural students, and 86.01% are urban students. 55.56% study centres have been getting printed material sufficiently and in time, another 45.44% study centres have not been getting it sufficiently.

- Only 22.22% study centres have total number of books above 1500. 55.56% study centres have achieved VCD cassettes above 100 pieces, only 22.22% study centres have audio CD above 100 pieces. Radio Broadcasting is held regularly in 11.11% study centers. 33.33% study centres has internet-based delivery. 22.22% study centres have laboratory/practical facilities of their own. Only 11.11% study centres held face to face counseling regularly.

S. Lama & M. Kashyap (2012) emphasized the role of distance education in Assam and the potential it carries in building a huge wealth of human resources. Distance Education is an approach which supplements the higher education in Assam. The Assam government has shown its interest towards the open and distance educational scenario, to cover large number of human resources. KKHSOU is a first in this kind of university in the state and also for the entire North-east India. The efforts of this university can be seen through different vocational and professional courses. The basis objective of the university is to cover all those students who have left their education at the early stages of their life and to generate employment opportunities and promote economic growth. In simple words it tends to increase the need of the human resource of the state. The working population can utilize the distance mode in acquiring skill and needed education which in other way help in their promotion and opt for new job opportunities. Distance education has potential to provide adequate human resources to country as well states growth. The DE Institutes in the state offers a wide variety of programmes that can enable the learner to be employed in a field of his/her choice. Assam is one of the states with huge potentials but the lack of human resource has resulted in stagnancy of development of the region. Hence, distance education has a definite role to play in Assam.
3.2. TREND ANALYSIS OF THE REVIEWED STUDIES:

Research in Distance Education is emerging since later years of 1960s. With the beginning of the British Open University in 1969, a more serious and systematic attempt to study the components of Distance Education started which helped to improve the distance teaching-learning process. Quite a good number of studies have been conducted on Distance Education system at international, national and state level. In India, Distance Education is a post-independence phenomenon. Systematic research in Distance Education started in the second half of the 20th century. The field of distance education is relatively young in the 1970s and 1980s; the qualitative research methods have gained more prominence over the quantitative that were popular in the 1960s and early 1970s.

From the above discussion and interpretation of review of literature, it is observed that the educationists and researchers have given due consideration to various aspects of Distance Education.

The trend analysis of the reviewed studies is as follows.

1970-1980: The researchers in this period conducted a good number of studies on correspondence education and open learning systems. The studies conducted in outside India revealed that the researchers gave more importance on research in open learning system. They found that most of the distance tutors have previous teaching experience and worked as part time faculty in the correspondence institution. Awareness of the learners regarding the existence of Open University has increased gradually. In India, most of studies are concerned with enrolment, nature of courses and developmental growth of correspondence education system. It was found that enrolment trend was higher in Arts and Commerce.

1980-1990: In this period, the researchers conducted study on evaluation of distance education programmes, preparation of course materials, correspondence education programme, learner support system, learners’ profile, relevance of distance education system in Indian context, role of educational technology in distance education system, and future expansion of distance education. The researchers
suggested that the Open University should supply extra reading materials to learners; adequate attention must be paid to the writing of course materials; more study centers and contact seminar were needed; study material should be attractive. Since Distance Education system has been able to extend educational opportunities to a very broad cross section of people, so it should be adopted and encouraged as a different educational strategy along with conventional system in Indian context. The role of educational technological gadgets should be supplementary to the traditional system so as to provide education to a large number of students. They felt that the future of DE is secure for a long time to come.

1990-2000: In this period, studies were conducted in diverse aspects of distance education system such as effectiveness of distance education programme, teacher education programme through correspondence system, success in the distance learning system in relation to some variables, comparative study of students in traditional and open university, role of distance education in empowerment of women, necessity of contact sessions/PCPs in distance education, evaluation of distance education programmes, IGNOU Graduates and job market, distance education system with special reference to IGNOU and PGCS, GU etc. Outside India, the researcher found that Distance Education plays a vital role in development of human resources. The researcher found that Distance Education increases the vocational competence in learners; provides proper direction to the rural people in increasing their standard of living; the functioning of the study centers were inadequate and inefficient; the students in the Open University significantly differed from students in the traditional university in terms of the learner, content and context approaches to learning; the women learners are highly motivated towards distance education programmes. It was also found that most of the students felt the necessity of contact sessions/ for clarifying doubts, breaking isolation and maintaining inter-personal relationship, gaining deeper insights and understanding of the subject. It was found that the IGNOU degree not only helped the respondents for continuing education, getting regular job but also for the self-employment purposes. IGNOU is using multi-media and teleconferencing systems for education and PGCS, GU was limited to printed study material only.
2000-2010: During this period, studies conducted outside India were study habits of distance learners, conduciveness of distance learning environment, evaluation of a distance teacher education programme and role of Open and Distance Learning in the attainment of United Nations MDGs. In India, the researchers paid emphasis on learners profiles of IGNOU, opinions of female learners regarding distance education, awareness of academic counsellors, Distance Education and Human Resource Development, institutional arrangements for Distance Education, student teachers' perception on Teacher Education Programme of IGNOU, knowledge, attitude perception and expectations (KAPE) of the women learners of Open University, vocational education programme through distance education mode, evaluation of CLD programme of IGNOU, responses of learners to technology-based learning in ODL, utility of IGNOU degree in job market, the role of distance education in general and IGNOU in North-Eastern region, comparative study of the attitude of B. Ed. male and female students towards Distance Education, comparative study of student support services in Distance Education Institute of conventional university and open university, status of distance education in Assam and distance education under IGNOU in Assam. The researchers suggested that open universities should develop the system for improving the study habits of the existing learners, attendance in orientation programme should be made compulsory. The researchers found that perceptions of distance learners with respect to psychosocial environment, institutional support, the home environment are not different; distance education programmes helped employed students to acquire higher qualification in their professional development; most of the learners preferred practical-oriented courses; study materials, audio lessons, video lessons and academic counselling and assignment helped in skill development; the ODL system holds the promise of providing more opportunities to the people of the NE region to pursue higher education and improve their prospects. In Assam, the percentage of distance learners was increasing every year but rate of increase was not specific.

After 2010: In this period, the researchers laid emphasis on needs assessment in Open and Distance Learning, quality assurance in distance education, student satisfaction level in distance learning and live classroom at higher education level,
conceptual model for human resource development, learners’ reflection on andragogical skills of distance education tutors etc. It was found that Management and IT programmes technical/vocational and professional type courses were required for on-the-job improvement; students both from distance learning and traditional classroom showed a high level of satisfaction towards distance education system. The researcher suggested that if all the components of distance education are properly implemented and administered, it will lead to creation and expansion of knowledge, positive attitude and satisfaction, personal, social and technical skills, and behavioural change in students. In India, studies were conducted on learners’ perception towards information and communication technologies, academic counselling and need and expectations of IGNOU Learners, role and challenges in Distance Education in India, successful learners of IGNOU, the role of distance education in Assam etc. It was found that learners had given their preference to receive support services through audio/video and CDs/DVDs followed by online/e-learning/web based programmes. The researchers suggested that emphasis should be given on career-oriented courses, setting up of additional study centers, Radio Interactive programmes and new methods of teaching in order to increase pass out rates among distance learners.

The findings of different studies that have been reviewed above have given the investigator a scope for conducting the present work. The above reviewed studies have helped the investigator in formulation of objectives of the present work, construction of tools for collection of data and analysis of data.

3.3. FELT GAP AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PRESENT STUDY:

Research priorities can be derived from the gaps or the uncharted areas or from such areas where research is still scanty. Though a number of works have been done in different areas of distance education, it is felt that the available studies appear limited to address the phenomenon under present study. In North-East India, studies regarding the functioning and role of IGNOU were done. But no study was done regarding the role of Distance Education Institutions under Dual mode universities of North-East India in enhancing higher education. No study has been
conducted about distance education for human resource development in North-East India. The researcher considered it as a felt gap for the present study. The present study is expected to fill this existing gap and throw light on the developmental growth and present status of the Distance Education Institutes under dual mode Universities of North-East India.

The significance of the present study may be brought into a sharp focus. Unlike formal system, research in Distance Education is rather limited. There is need for conducting research on distance education. In this context, the present study is a felt need and relevant. Various policies have been implemented for qualitative improvement of distance education programme. Though there has been rapid expansion of Distance Education Institutes (DEIs) and enrolment of distance learners has been increasing day by day, its social, academic and job market acceptability is rather low. For clearing misconceptions about Distance Education and enhance its acceptability there is urgent need to study effectiveness of distance education system for Human Resource development. The North-East India is full of potentialities. Different types of natural resources are available within North-East India. To counter various problems of North-East India, the only solution is education. The open and Distance learning holds the promise of providing more opportunities to human resources of North-East India. There is a serious need to develop benchmarks in the area of distance and open learning. The present study will be helpful for the policy makers and practitioners of distance education and open learning for strengthening the Distance Education Institutions under Dual mode Universities of North-East India. The present study will be useful to social science researchers, social scientists, educationists, policy makers, and those people who are interested and actively involved in the improvement of the distance and open learning system.

In view of all the facts given above, the investigator has considered to study on Distance Education as a means for Human Resource Development in Dual Mode Universities of North-East India.
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