UNIT 1 HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

Unit Structure

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1.0 OBJECTIVES

On completing this unit, you should be able to :

i) form a compendious account of the evolution of distance education and describe with examples how social factors influence educational systems.

ii) discuss the frequent changes in Indian society that brought about different educational changes in the past few thousand years, and

iii) appreciate the relevance and efficacy of distance education, particularly in developing countries, and delineate how the changing attitudes towards education make distance education a socio-political imperative.

1.1 INTRODUCTION

If an educational system has to be relevant to the society in which it operates, it needs to effectively respond to the demands of that society. Put differently, socio-political changes which colour and shape social needs greatly influence educational systems. As a result, new systems emerge. Obviously, this is a continuous process.

In this unit, we have presented the social factors that led to the emergence of distance education. The discussion offered here primarily relates to the inherent inadequacy of the conventional educational system to accommodate the ever-widening frontiers of knowledge and the tremendous increase in the number of aspirants for higher education. To explain the influence of socio-political changes on education, we have taken up the Indian scenario as a case study. Here, we have touched upon how India, which having gone through diverse phases of educational systems for various historical compulsions, has begun to accept the distance mode as a viable and complementary system of education. This unit also presents a brief account of what distance education is. In block 2 of this course we have already discussed the concept and philosophy of distance education in detail.

1.2 SOCIAL HISTORY OF DISTANCE EDUCATION

In this section, we shall look into the socio-historical scenario that warranted distance education in some countries. We have mostly given you information about developing countries because of its immediate relevance to our contexts.

Indonesia

Let us begin our discussion with Indonesia . The problem of access to schools and colleges was the decisive factor in leading Indonesia to distance education. In the early 1940s the number of schools and colleges in Indonesia was very insignificant. Most of them were managed by the Dutch, and not many natives could afford to go to school. Further, the school system was built according to the social status imposed by the colonial masters: schools for the native population; schools for overseas Asian immigrants, and schools for the Dutch and other Europeans. After independence, however, the demand for education became intense. The expansion of secondary and tertiary education did pose the problem of a shortage of teachers. This despite the fact that various crash programmes were developed for training and also for increasing, at a faster rate, the number of teachers.

For obvious reasons, primary and secondary schools grew very fast. But tertiary level institutions increased only at a marginal rate. This led to a limited access to tertiary education. By the early 1980s, access to tertiary education became an important problem for the Government. The number of new places at the tertiary level fell far short of the demand for such places. Hundreds of thousands of applicants could not enter government or private higher education institutions. It is under these circumstances that the Indonesian government started two distance education projects which later formed part of the Universitas Terbuka, more of which we shall see in unit 3 of this block.

Republic of Korea

The situation in the Republic of Korea was no better. Student explosion was, and still is, the most critical problem in Korean education. The Korean educational system is based on the six-three-three-four year pattern: six years of elementary school; three years of middle school; three years of high school and four years of university or college. The system expanded significantly at all levels because of an intense public demand for education. A sharp increase in the number of students in secondary education brought in severe competition for entry into higher education.

It is no surprise, therefore, that distance education in Korea is being viewed as a new educational avenue for the growing population of secondary school graduates and as part of the concept of life-long education. As the standard of living improves, the adult population has increasingly sought further education as one of the means of learning to cope with rapid growth in new concerns. New and developing educational needs have amplified the demand for part-time higher education at the least possible cost. At the same time, it constitutes a new, cost effective alternative for the increasing numbers of secondary school graduates who are denied access to conventional universities because of their inability to expand to accommodate more students.

Thailand

Thailand experienced many of the situations and shared many of the factors, influencing the development of national educational systems, that prevail in other countries of the region. Its population in 1986 was estimated at 52 million, growing at the rate of 1.5% clustered mainly in Bangkok. The majority of the labour force is engaged in agriculture, forestry and fishing. About 45% of the labour force consists of women. Corresponding to the growth in population, there has been an increasing demand for educational opportunities. Population explosion and greater demand for education have put a severe strain on Thailand's educational system in the last few decades, resulting in a hurried increase in the number of new colleges and universities and the expansion and upgrading of existing ones. As in most other developing countries, the facility of education is unevenly distributed with the most prestigious institutions of higher education being concentrated in the capital and a few other urban centers at the expense of the rural areas. This makes it difficult for the people in remote areas to have access to higher education facilities. Determined to come to grips with the problem of inadequate access to higher education and lack of appropriate in-service professional environment, the Thai Government gave its earnest support to distance education. Distance education in Thailand is, thus, a response to the increasing demand for higher education. It is cost-effective for the Government, and also affordable for the students.

Australia

Distance education in Australia has grown out of the region's geographic and

demographic peculiarities. The Australian land-mass has a total surface area of almost 8 million square kilometers. It is approximately the same size as the United States of America, but by contrast has a population of less than 25 million compared with that of the USA which is over 250 million. Further, Australia is a highly urbanised country, with almost 70% of its population living in cities along the coastal region. The result is that large parts of Australia are very sparsely populated. Distance education is the only way in which education can be taken to a significant segment of the population living in remote areas.

Bangladesh

Bangladesh, with a population of about 120 million in an area of about 144,000 sq. km., has a low per capita income rate (about $140), low literacy (about 24%), a high dropout rate at the primary level (about 70%) and inadequate educational facilities (ADB, 1996). Clearly, distance education provides the solution to the colossal problem of educating a vast number of the adult population within a short period.

Bhutan

In the case of Bhutan, the education introduced centuries ago was purely monastic. Modern education was introduced in the fifties and several schools were opened in the early sixties. In spite of the impressive achievements the Government has made in the field of education , the school enrolment ratio is about 20% in 1986. The dropout rate is high in the primary and lower secondary schools. In other words, 80% of the children of school going age do not have access to education. This can be attributed to numerous constraints, one of which is the acute shortage of teachers. A majority of teachers are either undertrained or untrained. Out of the 20% of school goers, hardly 5% pursme tertiary education. Because of ample job opportunities, most of the school dropouts get absorbed in Government service. While many countries in the world encounter the problem of unemployment, Bhutan faces an acute shortage of workforce, particularly skilled labour. Distance education helps train many in a shorter period of time.

In the 60s and early 70s, most students left school to join Government service which they found finanicially attractive. Further, many working people who could not have the opportunity to continue their higher studies, became interested in any form of study that would help them to improve their qualifications without leave or absence. Distance education not only provided opportunities for further studies, but also helped in improving the competence and performance of the working people.

Myanmar

In Myanmar (former Burma), the Government developed policies and plans regarding distance education, with the following objectives:

- to provide basic education to all citizens,

- to provide a base for the uplift of socialist moral values,
- to promote and extend sciences and technology both of which are essential for building up a socialist system,
- to nurture professionals, technicians, skilled and semi-skilled workers who definitely accept the socialist system and who would help in building up a socialist society,
- to nurture working people with all-round development,
- to educate students in such a way that those of high calibre and diligence will be able to pursue higher learning, and
- to provide opportunities for workers to continue higher education while still in service.

Through the process of distance education a vast majority of teachers, still in active service, were able to fulfil their requirements, both academic and professional.

Hong Kong

The demand for a trained workforce in Hong Kong is certainly no less than in other developing and newly developed countries and the rapid growth planned for education at the university degree level reflects this demand. The factors which make distance education, in general, important in Hong Kong include the large reservoir of persons whose educational standards do not, for historical reasons, match either their potential or their social and financial position. The increasing prosperity of the territory, with the consequent demand for more opportunities to obtain personal fulfilment through additional education and the strong emphasis traditionally placed on educational attainment by the local society are other factors which warranted a change in educational patterns in Hong Kong.

At present less than 4% of the 17-20 age group in Hong Kong can obtain a first year first degree place. Plans were drawn up to increase by more than two-fold the provision of such places by the close of 1995. Besides the individual's demand for education, there is also the need of society for a workforce in specific areas, which changes from time to time. The pace of change in a developed society and economy is such that initial training at the sub-degree level quickly becomes out of date in many fields. Updating and retraining workforce are the important tasks being managed by distance education.

Japan

In Japan, distance education was developed with a view to providing access to education for those who could not afford it in terms of the traditional mode of schooling. After the end of World War II, democratization was the key for the reconstruction of the nation. Equal access to education was strongly promoted as the primary theme of post-war educational reform.

Hardship in maintaining a livelihood, shortage of campus facilities in the defeated nation and a wide spread desire to learn among aspiring yet poverty-stricken youth gave a great impetus to providing non-traditional opportunities for education. Accompanied by advances in economic development in Japan, the 1960s saw an unusual increase in the number of people wanting to enter institutions of higher education. With the development of a technological society, an average person in such a society needs to obtain more and more of the specialized knowledge of the new age. It was difficult for adults who must fulfil both social and professional obligations, to receive a college education because of problems caused by time limitations. Obviously, distance education came in as an answer to this situation.

New Zealand

New Zealand, a mountainous country with an area about the same as that of Japan and Malaysia, is made up of two main islands and many smaller ones. The population is dispersed through provinces, separated by barriers comprising mountain, sea, valley and forest. Travel is difficult and expensive. Regular schooling has been difficult for some and impossible for others, whereas distance education has been provided, in some form, to most. Of its population of nearly 5 million, about 84% are urban and the rest are mostly located on intensively formed coastal lowlands. Much of the country is sparsely populated or uninhabited. The geographic features are as peculiar as that of Australia. Naturally, to cater to the population which is isolated in many cases, the government had to adopt distance education.

Philippines

Educators in the Philippines today are faced with challenges that in no historical period have demanded so much of their concern. One of these challenges is the increasing number of school dropouts, which suggests a need for reviewing the existing system of delivering educational services to the masses.

Yet another reason besides the one delineated is the growth in technology. While initial education for many professions will remain a basic part of the university teaching commitment, there is a persistent demand for recurrent and post-experience education which cannot be ignored. The rapidity of technological change places an increasing pressure on universities to provide further education consisting of learning experiences which are significantly different from those at the core of university teaching.

Almost for similar reasons about 103 countries have set up 1117 institutions of distance teaching in different forms which at present offer about 34000 courses in various disciplines to a student population of about 30 million. Some of the significant developments in distance education at the global level have been discussed in Units 2 and 3 of this block.

Before we proceed further, let us look at the following exercise.

Check Your Progress 1

List the socio-academic compulsions that led to the spread of distance education both in the developing and the developed countries.

Notes: a) Space is given below for your answer
b) Check your answer with the one given at the end of this unit.

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1.3 SOCIO-POLITICAL CHANGES VIS-A-VIS EDUCATIONAL SYSTEMS : A CASE STUDY

In this section, we shall touch upon a case to show how socio-political changes impact the educational provision in a country.

The educational system(s) in India over the past few thousand years changed from time to time, as a result of socio-political changes. Although the contribution to various branches of knowledge and culture by the Indian educational systems are rich, the fact remains that education as such was made available to a comparatively limited number of people. But the education accessible to a few in the past had never been free from changes, effected by historical necessity. Let us briefly survey here the different educational patterns in India at the various stages of its history. For ease of presentation and for purposes of discussion, we have broadly divided the political history of India into four stages.

1.3.1 Pastoral India

Vedic literature including the *Aranyakas*, the *Brahmanas* and the *Upanishads* was the produce of a pastoral society. The scholastic enthusiasm

and its social purpose as evidenced by these works reflect intense and purposeful academic exercises. The practice of 'education' thus was certainly a well established social phenomenon. There were those who taught and those who learned and yet there is no evidence of the existence of universities and schools in those days. The system of education, it appears, was essentially based on the relationship between the guru (teacher) and the shishya (student). The latter had to go in search of a preceptor, who usually lived in an *ashram* (hermitage) at some distance from the other habitations. It was for the guru to reject or accept the newcomer, i.e., the seeker of knowledge or skills. Once the seeker was accepted, a simple ceremony tied the guru and the shishya by the bond of the academic relationship. Very often, the shishya was expected to live with the guru, be a part of his household and learn as much from his way of life as through actual instruction and practice. We should note that in India this system has defied complete extinction and survives even today in the way, for example, Indian classical music and Sanskrit are taught by great masters. The essential characteristic of this system and the one in which we are interested, is learner-motivation. The starting point in the process of education, in this system, was the learner's urge to learn, which impelled him to look for a guru. Once the guru accepted an aspirant into his fold, learning could be taken for granted. The major mode of instruction was through word-of-mouth, i.e., face-to-face instruction, in which individual attention to the needs of the learner was assured at all costs.

1.3.2 Feudal India

With the passage of time the pastoral society became what came to be known as a feudal society. And with the feudal system, we may associate the ancient institutes of India such as Nalanda and Takshsila. These educational institutions were considered seats of higher learning. That is, having completed the lower levels of education, mostly with local masters, the aspirants to higher education travelled long distances for admission to these institutions, which was regulated, with entrance tests given by *dwarpals* (literally, a dwarpal is a gatekeeper). Obviously, the essential characteristic of this system too was learner-motivation.

By this time, the number of learners aspiring to higher edueation had increased and as a result, education got institutionalised, though the kind of education prevalent in the pastoral period must have also remained in vogue. It is during this period that learner-motivation appears more clearly to have its basis in a desire for upward social mobility on the part of the learner, for learned people were in demand at royal courts and in the growing bureaucracy. What is more, those who sought higher education usually got financial support. This support might have come through the institutions themselves in certain cases and in certain others from parental or community support. The need for financial support in one or the other form appeared to have emerged as the second important characteristic of the education system of this era.

The arrival of Muslims on the scene did not change the politico-economic structures of society. It continued to be a feudal society as in the past, but the appearance of a new ruling class led to the emergence of two parallel streams of education -- the *Pathshala* and the *Madrassa*. Under the former system, Sanskrit played a vital role, and under the latter a Perso-Arabic combine played a similar role. Some of the disciplines, for example, ethics, philosophy, astronomy, astrology, linguistics, languages, etc., being common to both streams, the major difference between the two were those of the medium of instruction and differing religious orientations. The desire for social mobility appeared now as a more recognizable factor in learner-motivation.

1.3.3 Colonial India

With the arrival of the British, the Indian educational system underwent a major change. The rulers introduced the Western type of education. English, being their language, became the language of the dominant culture, the medium of instruction and the recognised language of thought. The traditional disciplines were replaced by subjects like economics, physics, chemistry, etc. The schools were housed in separate buildings meant exclusively for educational purposes, the teacher was now a paid agent of the government, a private agency or a voluntary organisation (unlike the tutors in a Pathshala or a Madrassa who were independent agencies by themselves). The learner's objective now was to obtain a 'certificate' by completing a prescribed course of studies successfully. The prospect of social mobility became so strong that it was possible to run schools without any help from the government, as the learners were ready to pay high fees willingly. Before long, education came to be seen as a commodity that would pay dividends in the future, and those who saw this point were ready to pay for this commodity. The rigorous standards of education in the past gradually gave way to a stress on the mastery of certain skills necessary to perform certain functions at this stage.

Having briefly touched upon the educational situation of pre-independent India, we shall now look into the educational scene in independent India.

1.3.4 Independent India

The first expression of the educational aspirations of independent India is discernible in the Dr. Radhakrishnan Commission Report (1948-49). As a democratic welfare state, India announced 'universalisation of educaton' and 'equal opportunities for all' as basic principles of the educational policy of independent Inda. This was a significant policy decision, as it marks a definite change in the age-old system of education -- now it was the State that took over the responsibility of educating each and every citizen, irrespective of his/her caste or creed, social or economic status, motivation or aptitude. This decision obviously proposed a major change in the educational system of India.

Let us stop here for a minute and work on the following exercise.

Check Your Progress 2

Fill in the blanks with relevant details.

Notes: a) A chart is given below with some blank columns for your answer.
b) Check your answer with the one given at the end of this unit.

Sl. No	Socio-political structure (India)	Teacher - student relationship	Dominant feature	Mode of teaching	Accessibility	Standards of education
1	Pastoral					
2	Feudal					
3	Colonial					
4	Independent					

Implications of the changes

The foregoing details present a few contrasts, brought into being by repeatedly changing socio-political situations. They are as follows:

i) In pastoral India the learner had to go in search of a guru, the source of education; and getting accepted by a guru was the first step in the process of education, which depended mainly on learner-motivation. During the phases of feudalism, the desire for upward social mobility began to colour learner-motivation increasingly, though gradually. And during the colonial period, student-motivation was subordinated almost completely to the desire for social mobility. Eventually, 'certification' rather than a quest for knowledge became more important in the eyes of the learners, and by implication, for the society. Independent India further strengthened this trend, since irrespective of the nature and degree of learner-motivation, the State made a public promise to educate the masses. It is the State and the agencies employed or recognised by the State that have to go around looking for the learners.

ii) The second significant contrast is seen in the gradual growth of 'commercialism' in the field of education. During the earliest days of Indian society, education was effected through a close relationship between the teacher and the taught. Of late, it has turned into a 'commercial' enterprise in more than one respect. The school, by and large, is like a commercial house which employs wage earners (the teachers in this case) who work with their tools and tricks of trade -- the

prescribed texts, etc. -- on the human raw material (the learners) to produce the finished items or end products (the certified students) who are then available in the employment market for a certain price. The laws of supply and demand govern the quality and the value of these certified students as well as they apply to other marketable commodities. With the gradual growth in the supply of certified job seekers, the market value of the various levels of certified attainment begins to fall, and this fall triggers a blind rush for certificates of higher levels. Here, we should point to the fact that this rush is not in essence for higher education, but for the certificates thereof. The gradual deterioration in learner-motivation for education in relation to the growth of concern for social mobility can be graphically represented as follows:

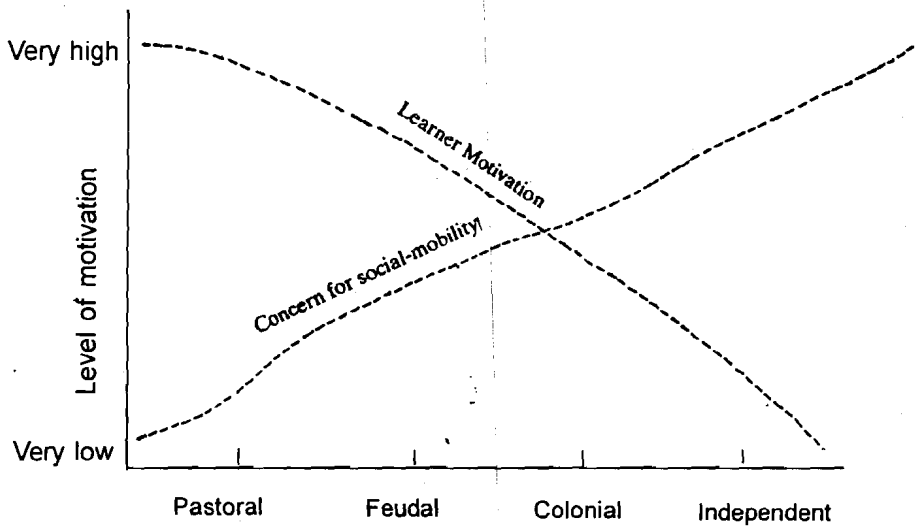

Figure 1: Concern for social mobility and learner-motivation : relative rise and fall.

Thus, whereas the earliest system of education aimed at 'mastery-learning', today it is 'certification' and not 'learning' that matters. This attitudinal change and the related problems -- the falling standards, the crowded institutions of higher learning, and the teachers' growing indifference verging to professional dishonesty -- erode Indian society in more than one way. On the one hand, the genuinely motivated learner gets disillusioned very early on in the educational process, which results in him/her being either thrown out of gear or attracted by more promising places and on the other, society multiplies mediocrity at geometric rates. This change over to commercialism in education may be expressed as follows:

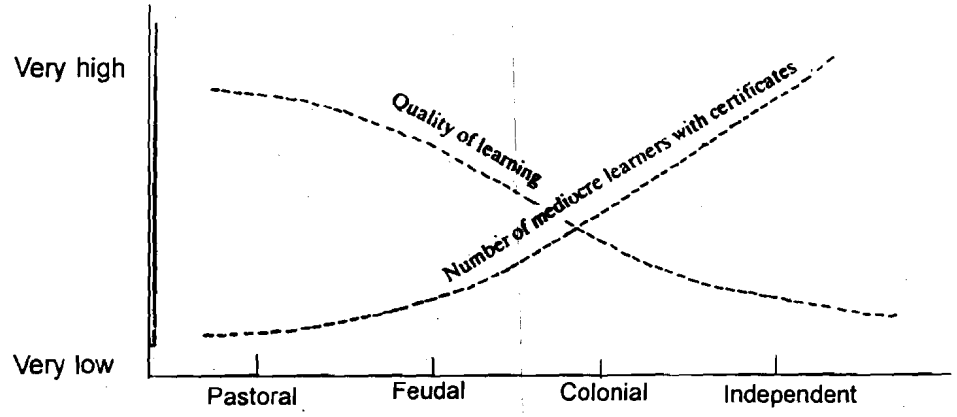

Figure 2 : Rise and fall in the quality of learning and of the learner.

Common Issues

The phenomena described under items (i) and (ii) above pose a number of theoretical as well as practical questions. These questions, in turn, pose a number of challenges to the educational reformer in India and in other developing countries as well.

i) How does the reformer help the State look for and then reach the average learner? This is to keep the promises made by a democratic country to her people.
ii) How does s/he meet the aspirations of the thousands who seek admission to higher education whether they deserve it or not?
This is a crucial question as the economic resources to meet this demand by expanding the means of education are not available.
iii) How does s/he safeguard the interests and the nerves of a highly motivated learner, and consequently save the country from intellectual bankruptcy?
iv) How does s/he check the fall in standards and yet provide the minimum required education to one and all?
v) How does s/he build human resources to solve the problems (i), (ii), (iii) and (iv) without creating irrevocable time lags?

These issues defy solution, as what may be seen as a solution to one problem is in effect a factor that worsens another. This confusing mesh of contradictions may be summed up as follows:

i) A vast population of unmotivated learners aspire for higher education -- lack of motivation contradicts aspiration for higher education (see item (ii) above).
ii) The desirable goal of maintaining high standards in education conflicts with the increasing population of mediocre students (see item (iv) above) and teachers.
iii) Limited and inadequate resource allocation for education conflicts with the goal of providing education to all those who need it -- education of various types at various levels of instruction at various locations/ situations (see items (i), (iii) an (v) above).

1.4 COMMERCIALISED Vs. INDUSTRIALSED TYPE OF EDUCATION

This case study of India should be of great interest to countries which have (a) liberated themseleves from colonial rule, (b) a strong hangover of the feudal past (c) adopted English as the medium of instruction upto the highest level, (d) limited resources and weak political will to improve the educational scenario and (e) a strong bias against any educational innovation, including distance education.

The implication of the discussion we have had so far is that education still remains skills oriented and specialisation in specific branches of knowledge also is essentially retained. But the overall operation has to be of much larger dimensions, of a size that was never visualised before. Such a change, though an evolutionary imperative, will have its strong advocates and also its severe critics.

For example, if the gurus of the pastoral era where asked to comment on the kind of education that was available in Pathshalas and the institutions of the feudal era, they would , in all probability, scoff at them. Similarly, the teachers of these ancient institutions would look at the education of the colonial period with disdain. The educator and the educated of a particular era, having been brought up in a particular educational culture are bound to be biased against a different educational culture, and this is understandable. However, every change in the educational system need not be justified for its own sake. The colonial system of education, for example, may be good for the coloniser but it is detrimental to the colonised. We should, therefore, judge the merit of any change on the basis of its relevance to society and the people in it.

It is always easier and socially more convenient to discard and condemn an unfamiliar culture than to appreciate its compulsions and diversities. However, it is essential to place it in the right perspective of the socio-evolutionary process that makes it as much a social imperative as an evolutionary reality. We should not, therefore, be surprised if those who were brought up in the culture of face-to-face education scoff at educational patterns that resemble 'industrial operations' which include planning, rationalising procedures, division of labour, mechanising, automation, controlling and checking. Since such operations have to be on a mass scale, and also because education, of whatever type, is gained and imparted through communication, the techniques of 'mass communication' have to be employed to effect these industrial operations successfully.

A word about mass communication is appropriate here. Mass communication is bound to be impersonal in nature. It cannot be as personal as that which obtains between the teacher and the taught in the best of face-to-face teaching situations. Thus, while it provides to all the aspirants access to education, it is only the adequately motivated ones who will derive the best benefits from such communication without facing any interference from other types of learners or teachers.

These techniques, which appear to be pressing on us so inexorably and eminently, have other promises as well. They provide positive answers to the problems identified as contradictions/conflicts. To put it briefly, what we are trying to say is, that it is for the first time in history that governments or states have taken it as their responsibility to educate each and every citizen as a matter of welfare policy. To fulfil this enormous responsibility of democratising of education with the available financial resources, the

traditional means and modes of education, without creating an irrevocable time lag, is just not possible. It is time we shifted the emphasis from the 'commercialised' kind of education that we are familiar with to the 'industrialised' form of education with an egalitarian goal..

Some academics and some of the social elite are apprehensive about the effects of democratising education. They think that there will be a further fall in standards. How tenable is this assumption? Let us touch upon this issue in 1.4.1 and 1.4.2.

1.4.1 Democratisation of education

The intentions of modern States in the field of education are welcome. They form the will of a democratic people. The system of distance education has the potential to fulfil this will as it can change the impossibile into a foreseeable possibility, and also holds the promise of checking, at resonable costs, the fall in standards.

One obvious reason is that many teachers are involved in the production of a single learning unit, unlike in a classroom situation in which a single teacher can tilt the balance.

Further, as in the ancient Indian system in which only a motivated learner went in search of a guru, in distance education we have learners who are by and large highly motivated. For example, they go for a particular course/ programme not by chance but by choice. From this point of view, distance education clearly is a socio-historical imperative.

It may be that the puritanical among educationists and those who are little informed or misinformed about distance education may have reservations in accepting this mode of education for quite some time to come. But the very dynamics of social change will carry it through like a piece of wood is carried ashore by a rising surge that brooks no opposition. The earlier we prepare ourselves for this change the better. Let us remember that the developed world has already travelled far in this direction and we in the developing countries have just begun our journey.

1.4.2 Fall in educational standards

Democratisation of education without adequate facilities, however, implies a fall in standards. The process of making education a non-elitist phenomenon entirely depends upon extending the reach of educational institutions, which in turn implies the involvement of what is not necessarily the able, proficient and efficient workforce needed for the purpose. Effecting democratisation of education with the help of traditionally known means such as the school, the college and the university together with the classroom teacher and the texts will lead to mediocrity, which is concomitant with a fall in standards. One way of controlling this fall is to duplicate the efforts and performance of the best teachers and make them available to the learners through techniques of mass-communication, learning units, video programmes, radio broadcasts,

face-to-face teaching, etc.

Moreover, to maintain high standards of education is not exclusively a function of the individual or the institution which imparts education. Education standards can be looked at only in relative terms as they depend on the socio-educational norms of particular societies. This, however, does not absolve educators from their responsibilities for the maintenance of standards. In a particular social situation well-meaning educators may not be able to improve the situation in spite of themselves. They need a favourable socio-academic climate to realise their well-intended goals.

To reiterate, the maintenance of standards depends on the expectations of the society in general and the aspirations of the individual learner. It is independent of the mode of education. The state rightly promises equal opportunity of education to all, but not equal standards thereof, for such a promise would amount to a denial of the variety in human abilities, capacities and intentions. The traditional face-to-face mode of education too does not promise to maintain standards. Standards are maintained individually and also collectively by highly motivated learners, professionally honest educators and societies that accept only the best among the educated. It is obvious then that till our societies learn to make the right kinds of demand from the educated, the onus of maintaining standards is squarely on the motivated learners and professionally honest educators. And the distance mode of education promises full flowering to both these parties. The realisation of this promise, however, depends on the manner in which distance education projects are conceived and implemented in different, and specific situations.

1.5 DISTANCE EDUCATION: AN APPRECIATION

In block 2, we discussed at length the underlying philosophy of distance education. Further, we have seen in this unit the impact of socio-political changes on education, warranting a change in the educational pattern of today. In other words, we have reached a stage in our discussion when we need to make an attempt to appreciate the phenomenon of distance education more clearly.

We shall attempt this appreciation by

i) briefly analysing the process of education in the context of face-to-face and distance-teaching modes, and
ii) placing the distance-teaching mode in the general educational patterns of today and the expected ones of tomorrow.

The process of educating an individual or a group of individuals consists of the following processes individually or any combinations thereof, depending on the demands made by the subject/discipline concerned:

i) imparting information,
ii) giving practice/exercise/skills of various kinds in actual and simulated situations.

iii) giving demonstrations by the teachers and making the learners do what is demonstrated in the area of sciences, fine arts, and performing disciplines (like music), etc.,
iv) taking learners on educational tours for exploration, for gaining first hand information of historical sites, etc.,
v) developing the critical faculty through seminars, tutorials and discussion sessions, and
vi) researching (fostering interest in research and innovation).

Word-of-mouth: Is it the sole medium for didactic communication?

The basis of all the processes mentioned above is communication — the teacher communicates with the learners in a face-to-face situation using the word-of-mouth as the medium of communication. Texts of various types, the equipment in a laboratory, the historical sites, etc., are the aids which help learning through the visibly active mediation of the teacher, and this mediation is effected invariably through the word-of-mouth which so dominates our traditional system of education that not only are the other curricular components namely, evaluation, materials and objectives pushed into the background but their relative positions (i.e., superordinate versus subordinate and vice versa) also get distorted.

It should be realised that the superordinate among the curricular components are the 'objectives'. An educational programme is launched in order to achieve the objectives set out for it. Materials, methods and evaluation schemes are the subordinates — the materials should be of such a nature that they become effective means to achieve the set objectives, and the evaluation schemes should guarantee success in achieving the set objectives with the help of the materials designed and the methods employed for the purpose. A particular way of using the other three curricular components may help in achieving the 'objectives' more effectively, whatever the means of communication – the printed or the spoken word.

If this argument is accepted, it should not be difficult to concede that *there is nothing sacrosanct about using the word-of-mouth as the sole means of communication in educational processes*. There may indeed be situations in which the word-of-mouth is the most suitable means of communication, and by the same argument there are indeed many situations in which communication can be effected by means other than the spoken word. In such situations we need not, rather *should not* insist on its use, just because we have been using it for centuries now.

Indeed the processes/activities listed under items (i), (ii) and (iii) can very successfully be effected through means other than the word-of-mouth, be it the written or the printed word, a radio broadcast, a TV or a video demonstration. It is only the activities listed under item (v) above, which may seem to depend exclusively on the word-of-mouth but in this case also we should not lose sight of the potential of tele-conferencing or discussions/ meetings conducted with the help of satellites. The point that is being made is

that having been brought up academically in, (and grown through) a system of education dominated by the teacher's spoken word, we are likely to be biased in favour of such a medium, and be (quite understandably) blind to the strengths of other means, say the printed or the written word. One may point to disadvantages in the use of written or printed words for purposes of teaching/learning, but one can as well point to the advantages therein. Without going into those details at this stage, we would like to suggest that in order to appreciate the potential of distance education, one needs to be free from the bias which we have referred to above.

It needs to be emphasised, however, that distance education does not once for all exclude the use of the spoken word as a means of communication between the teacher and the taught. Instead, it will be used only when required and for purposes which cannot be achieved through other means easily or successfully. Let us pause here to work on the following exercise.

Check Your Progress 3

Identify at least two principles on which distance education operates.

Notes: a) Space is given below for your answer
b) Compare your answer with the one given at the end of this unit.

At this stage, a revisit to the concept of 'distance education' is necessary. We have said in block 2 that there is a difference between correspondence education and distance education. The distinction is quite overwhelming as distance education encompasses the entire gamut of educational strategies. The term itself is broad enough to accommodate the traditional meaning of correspondence education, the new dimensions added to this meaning in the recent past and also the possible changes in these meanings that may take place in the future. We shall try to make this point clear with the help of the following illustration:

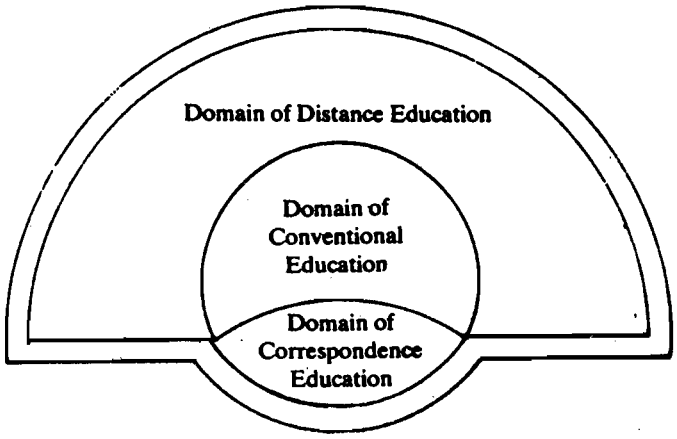

Figure 3: A futuristic view of distance education

In figure 3 above, the single line contour represents the traditional system of education, which, as said above, is dominated by the word of mouth as the major means of communication for effecting various pedagogic activities. About 150 years ago, when the postal system was used for education (see the circle in figure 3), it may be said to have incorporated the system of correspondence education as one of its sub-domains. To all intents and purposes this new addition remained unnoticed for years, though the proliferation of courses taught through correspondence went on unabated. It is only during the last 30 years, with the beginning of the British Open University in England, that distance education emerged as a concept different from correspondence education. Distance educators themselves took some time to finally realise that they were more than correspondence educators -- it was during the Twelfth World Conference of the International Council for Correspondence Education (ICCE), that it was renamed the International Council for Distance Education (ICDE).

Though seen as a wanton offspring of the traditional system of education, distance education envelopes the traditional system (see the double-line contour in figure 3 above) unequivocally and promises much more by way of educational opportunities by extending its reach to one and all, undoing all the traditionally known constraints — non-availability of seats in educational institutions, non-availability of such institutions in geographically difficult regions, poverty of the aspirants, failure to obtain the required qualifications for entering a particular university course, etc. Looked at from this point of view, distance education is, in essence, first and foremost *education* and in no way different from *education* as known traditionally.

However, it is oriented to the current and possible future changes in human societies. To maintain this orientation, it accepts the use of all the possible media as legitimate components of its operational strategy on the one hand, and on the other, it aims at rationalising their uses for optimal results, depending on the student population that is to be catered to and also the subjects/disciplines which are to be taught.

We notice, therefore, that distance education is not opposed to traditional education in its ultimate goals, but the difference is that the former is better equipped to meet the challenge of democratising education, which it should be stressed once again here, has traditionally been an elitist pursuit.
Of the various questions that may be raised, the two most prominent are:

i) *Is distance education as effective as face-to-face education is supposed to be?*
ii) *What is distance education, after all if not education as people have traditionally understood it?*

Our answers to these questions are implied in the foregoing discussion. However, to get a comprehensive view you need to refer to blocks 1 and 2 once again.

Suffice it to say here that rapidly changing social aspirations demand an educational system which is as potent in effect as it is extensive in its reach, and this educational system by itself has to be one that both fosters and satisfies those aspirations. It certainly cannot be the traditional system which restricts itself to the four walls of the classroom. It has to be a system that, having jumped those four walls, is capable of reaching everywhere and to the satisfaction of all concerned, wherein lies the relevance of distance education, not only for developing countries, but also for the advanced ones. For growing social awareness leading to differing social aspirations is a phenomenon common to both the developing and the developed societies.

1.6 LET US SUM UP

In this unit, we studied that

i) information growth, greater awareness about education, the problem of access and technological developments are the factors that led to the emergence of distance education,
ii) any changes in the educational pattern of India can be attributed to societal changes, which are evolutionary in character,
iii) the conventional face-to-face educational system is inadequate to cater to the diverse needs of the people, and distance education (an industrialised form of educational system) is likely to be a more effective complementary system of education, and
iv) distance education subsumes what is conventionally referred to as education and encompasses the entire gamut of educational strategies.

Check your Progress: Possible Answers

1. Some of the reasons for the spread of distance education are
   i) Population explosion
   ii) Appalling illiteracy rate
   iii) Ever increasing number of aspirants for higher education
   iv) Technological growth that heralded new knowledge and immense possibilities for educational communication
   v) The need for updating the workforce, etc.

2.

Sl. No.	Socio-political structure (India)	Teacher-student relationship	Dominant feature	Mode of teaching	Accessibility	Standards of education
1	Pastoral	Shishya going in search of guru	Mastery of learning	Word-of-mouth	Education to a selected group	High
2	Feudal	Pathshala and Madrassa	Social mobility	Word-of-mouth	Education to a selected group	High
3	Colonial	School/ institu-tions (The students paid fees)	Certification for livelihood	Word-of-mouth	Education to a selected few who could pay (commercial-isation)	High
4	Independent	States looking for aspirants	Social mobility and certification	Word-of-mouth	Education for all, democra-tisation	Low

3. The main principles with which distance education operates are
   i) education for all, and
   ii) the idea that the word-of-mouth is not indispendable for academic communication.

UNIT 2 THE INTERNATIONAL SCENE - 1

Unit Structure

2.0 Objectives

2.1 Introduction

2.2 The genesis of Distance Education
- 2.2.1 Developments in the twentieth century
- 2.2.2 The international fora
- 2.2.3 World-wide spread of Distance Education

2.3 Regional Perspectives – Europe
- 2.3.1 England
- 2.3.2 France
- 2.3.3 Germany
- 2.3.4 Italy
- 2.3.5 Netherlands
- 2.3.6 Norway
- 2.3.7 Russia
- 2.3.8 Eastern Europe
- 2.3.9 Spain
- 2.3.10 Sweden

2.4 Let Us Sum Up

2.0 OBJECTIVES

In unit 1, we have given you some idea about the socio-political rationale behind the development of the distance education system in general. We have also talked about the influence of social and political changes on the educational system using the Indian case as an illustration. In this unit, we aim to provide you with an account of the functioning of distance teaching institutions in Europe.

By the end of this unit, you will have

i) traced the genesis of distance education, and
ii) acquired an overall understanding of the status which the distance educational system has gained in Europe.

2.1 INTRODUCTION

As pointed out in unit 1, distance education was born of pressing social compulsions, dynamics of change and new cultures. It indicates a healthy

evolution in the field of education, though in certain ways it may be considered a revolutionary development because it marks a significant break from the centuries old formal or 'face-to-face' teaching system leading to the development of an innovative multi-media teaching/learning system.

You will notice while reading through this unit that some of the countries we have chosen for study have independent open universities and some have various other forms of distance education. The cause for the latter might be, besides logistics, the sheer complexity of the prevailing structural systems and/or strong networks of vested interests trying to perpetuate them. However, the goal of open/distance education, in whatever form it is practised, is to make available education/training to all those who aspire to it.

2.2 THE GENESIS OF DISTANCE EDUCATION

A brief sketch of the genesis of distance education is essential here to have a clear picture of the role of the distance mode of teaching/learning on the international scene.

If we try to trace the genesis of distance education, we notice that some early forms of this innovative system of teaching/learning were the instructive letters in the Old Testament and some other works in early Greek-Roman history. The instructive letter played a significant role in the Roman Catholic Church right from the Epistles of St. Paul. The Age of Enlightenment was, perhaps, the most fertile period for instructive letters.

The general belief, however, has been that the history of modern correspondence instruction began in 1840 with Issac Pitman's Shorthand Course for distance students through the Penny Post, when uniform Penny Postage was introduced in the UK. Nevertheless, some researchers have traced the forerunners of the distance education of today to 1833 when a private teacher of English taught composition by post, providing two-way communication, which is the predominant characteristic of distance education. In 1856, a School of Modern Languages established by Langenscheidt and Toussaint in Germany started teaching foreign languages through correspondence. In the USA, the first efforts to organise correspondence instruction were made in 1873. Later on, the idea of a land grant college with a campus extending to the state boundaries resulted in the establishment of correspondence courses in some universities in 1890. Although correspondence education played only a limited role in the formal secondary school system, and in colleges and universities, it has been more extensive in the USA than in any other country. In Europe, pioneering work was done in Germany and Sweden in 1890 with the establishment of Fern Lehrinstitute in Berlin and Hermods in Sweden. With the onset of the twentieth century, a number of correspondence instruction schools were set up throughout Europe.

We shall, at this juncture, deviate a little from the main stream of our discussion to talk about the birth of the term 'distance education'.

Varied names such as **'home study', 'postal tuition', 'correspondence courses', 'independent study',** etc. were given to the earlier forms of distance education and its programmes throughout the world. Even now, terms like 'off-campus studies', 'external studies', 'non-formal education', etc., continue to be in use. Of these, the term 'correspondence education' has been widely accepted. All these terms were essentially associated with non-traditional teaching-learning programmes, which had many similarities. They, very often, embody the phenomenon of teachers linked with varied learners through the printed word and later on with the development of science and technology, through various kinds of electronic media as well. The names of some such institutions symbolised the link media, e.g., 'university of the air', 'tele-university', etc. In due course of time these institutions, which were progressive in their outlook brought in the multi-media approach in their teaching/learning systems.

This development raised doubts in some minds about the appropriateness of the term 'correspondence education' and generated thinking for finding a broader and more appropriate term for this innovative and non-traditional teaching/learning system. The issue was finally clinched, (as mentioned in Unit 1), at the 12th World Conference held in Vancouver in 1982 under the presidency of Prof. Bakhshish Singh and the International Council for Correspondence Education (ICCE) was renamed as International Council for Distance Education (ICDE). The Vancouver Conference also decided to include promotion of research and scholarship on distance education among the objectives of the ICDE. (For further details about the term 'distance education' see block 2, unit 1 of this Course).

Check Your Progress 1

List at least two reasons for choosing the term 'distance education' to denote the distance mode of teaching/learning.

Notes: a) Space is given below for your answer.

b) Compare your answer with the one given at the end of this unit.

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Having seen how the term 'distance education' came into currency, let us now go back to our discussion of the genesis of distance education.

2.2.1 Developments in the twentieth century

As said earlier, with the onset of the twentieth century, a number of correspondence instruction schools were set up throughout Europe. In Russia, (in fact, the former USSR as a whole) correspondence study became the main form of study at the university level by the early 1960s – more students studied through correspondence courses than through regular classroom instruction in colleges and universities. In Japan, over a million students are studying through correspondence courses. In Australia and New Zealand, correspondence instruction came to be used in the compulsory school system to teach children who had never been to a classroom. In England a number of private correspondence colleges were set up to coach students for various school and university examinations.

Before we attempt studying the status of distance education in various countries at greater length, it is necessary that we also talk about the gradual but steady growth of distance education in the overall sphere of education.

2.2.2 The international fora

The wide-spread acceptance of correspondence courses prompted some imaginative correspondence educators to organise an international forum for this innovative system of education.

International Council for Distance Education (ICDE)

The credit for establishing the International Council for Correspondence Education (ICCE) in 1938 goes to Mr. J.W. Gibson who was for many years the Director of High School Correspondence Instruction at Victoria, British Columbia in Canada. The first World Conference of this Council was held in Victoria, B.C. in August 1938, and 87 delegates, mostly from Canada and the US attended the conference. Australia, New Zealand and Scotland were also represented. Mr. Rex C. Haight was elected the first President of ICCE.

World War II delayed the second ICCE conference which was ultimately held in 1948, presided over by Dr. Kunte O' Broady, the Director of Extension Division, the University of Nebraska. One hundred and eighteen delegates from the USA, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Norway and the Philippines participated in this conference. The following table gives you the year and venue of the ICDE conferences that have been held so far.

Table 1: ICDE Conferences: A glance

S.No	Year	Venue	Delegates	Countries	President
1	1938	Victoia B. C	87	5	Rex C. Haight (US)
2	1948	Lincoln, Nebraska	118	6	Kunte O' Broady (US)
3	1950	Christchurch,	79	5	A. G. Butchers (NZ)
4	1953	Pennsylvania, US	73	8	William R. Young (US)
5	1957	Alberta, Canada	76	5	G.F. Bruce/G.J. Buck (Canada)
6	1962	Gearheart, Oregon	77	5	Viron A. Moore (US)
7	1965	Stockholm, Sweden	114	27	Donald Cameron (Canada)
8	1969	Paris, France	159	34	Renee Erdos (Australia)
9	1972	Warrenton, Virginia	145	28	Charles A. Wedemeyer (US)
10	1975	Brighton, UK	84	32	Borje Holmberg (Sweden)
11	1978	New Delhi, India	192	39	David Young (UK)
12	1982	Vancouver, B. C.	450	55	Bakhshish Singh (India)
13	1985	Melbourne, Australia	700	50	John Daniel (Canada)
14	1988	Oslo, Norway	800	60	Kevin Smith (Australia)
15	1990	Caracas, Venezuela	1100	62	David Sewart (UK)
16	1992	Bangkok, Thailand	900	52	David Sewart (UK)
17	1995	Birmingham, UK	1000 (App.)	76	Marian Croft (Canada)
18	1997	Pennsylvania, US	1200 (App.)	85	Armando R. Trindade (Portugal)
19	1999	Vienna, Austria	1000 (App)	78	Ing. Hagen (Germany)

The International Council is officially affiliated to UNESCO in category 'A' international non-governmental relations, and cooperates closely with the United Nations. With well over 100 countries represented, ICDE functions as the window to the world of open/distance education. Acting as a coordinating body, ICDE strives to promote knowledge of and improvement in, open/distance education throughout the world. ICDE provides for its member institutions consultancies and advice at reduced costs. Further, it offers opportunities for building strategic alliances as a global broker for finalising the programmes of member institutions.

ICDE has established various 'interest groups'. One such group, for example, is called the *ICDE Women's International Network*, which offers opportunities for women in open/distance education to meet and to deliberate on special issues, i.e., those with particular relevance for them.

Moreover, ICDE has close working relations with a number of associations of open/distance education institutions. We have presented some of them here:

- European Distance Education Network (EDNE)
- Association of Asian Open Universities (AAOU)
- National University Continuing Education Association (NUCEA), USA
- Open and Distance Learning Association of Australia (ODLAA)
- Distance Education Association of Southern Africa (DEASA)
- West African Association of Distance Education (WAADE)
- Canadian Association for Distance Education (CADE)
- United States Distance Learning Council (USDLC)
- Latin American Network for Development in Distance Education (REDLEAED)
- Norwegian Association for Distance Education (NADE)
- Distance Education Association of New Zealand (DEANZ)

ICDE has its permanent international headquarters at Gjerdrums vei 12, 0486, in Oslo, Norway.

The Commonwealth of Learning (COL)

The Commonwealth of Learning is another such body. It is an international organisation, established by Commonwealth Governments in September 1988, following the Heads of Governments Meeting held in 1987. Its headquarters are in Vancouver and it is the only Commonwealth inter-governmental organisation located outside Britain.

The purpose of the *Commonwealth Of Learning*, as reflected in the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) among the Commonwealth Governments, is

* *to create and widen access to education, and*
* *to improve its quality, utilising distance education techniques and associate communication technologies to meet the particular requirements of member countries.*

Thus, COL purports to strengthen member countries' capacities to develop the human resources required for their economic and social advancement. The functions and objectives of COL include:

* *assisting the creation and development of institutional capacity in distance education in member countries;*
* *facilitating the channelling of resources to projects and programmes in distance education;*
* *providing information and consultancy services on any aspect of distance education including the selection of appropriate technology;*
* *undertaking and supporting evaluation and applied research in distance education;*
* *assisting the acquisition and delivery of teaching materials and more generally facilitating access to them;*

* *commissioning and promoting the adaptation and development of academic credit;*
* *assisting in the development of local support services to students; and*
* *stimulating and supporting any other activities that fall within the Agency's areas of interest by such means as may be approved by the Board of Governors.*

The present President of COL is Dato Professor Raj Dhanarajan

2.2.3 World-wide spread of distance education

According to the first report by Lord Walter Perry on the Index of Institutions involved in Distance Learning, *The State of Distance Learning: World-wide (1984),* which is based on the computerised data of distance education institutions compiled by the International Centre for Distance Learning (ICDL), Open University, Milton Keynes, UK, there were over 2,100,00 students studying in 756 distance learning institutions throughout the world.

As of now, i.e., October 1998, there are 1117 institutions in 103 countries offering distance education programmes. The break up is given below:

Table 2: Distance education – the world over

Regions	Countries	Institutions
Africa	31	159
Asia	19	109
Australia Pacirfic	05	096
Europe	25	412
Middle East	03	003
North America	03	278
Carribean	05	007
Latin America	12	053
8	**103**	**1117**

The total number of courses available is over 38,000

The progressive period

The period between 1960 and 1985 has been the most progressive for the development and credibility of distance education. The period between 1985 and 1995 marks a stage of stability. The throes of establishing the credibility of the system being over, the focus has shifted to consolidation and further innovations in this system of education. More particularly, currently the emphasis is on assuring quality in all its operations. Besides the growth in the number of distance education institutions and distance learners, this period marks the following.

i) the realisation and development of *research* on various aspects of distance education;

ii) *publication of books, surveys, reports, case studies*, etc., connected with distance education;
iii) emergence of *journals, bulletins, papers, newsletters* on distance learning/education/teaching;
iv) establishment of *regional and national associations* of distance education;
v) organisation of a number of international, regional and national *conferences/seminars/workshops* on distance education;
vi) further evolution of distance education culminating in *universities of the air, tele-universities, and open universities;*
vii) search for and integration of *new communication technology* into the distance teaching/learning methodology;
viii) *awareness* among government bodies and societies about the relevance of distance education system to the educational needs of the people;
ix) widespread *acceptance* and credibility of distance system as an academically viable channel for imparting education at all levels; and
x) *realisation* of the potential of distance education for providing continuing/update/enrichment/refresher education to people engaged in different vocations.

2.3 REGIONAL PERSPECTIVES — EUROPE

With this background of trends in the development of distance education over the past three decades or so, let us now have a glimpse of important developments in different regions of Europe. For purposes of convenience, the regions are arranged in alphabetical order. Before we take a look at the distance education system in different regions, we shall first try to get an overall idea about the flowering of distance education in Europe as a whole.

Europe has seen rapid strides in the development of distance education during the last few decades of the twentieth century, particularly in England, Germany, Sweden, Norway, Netherlands and Spain. The systems approach as well as educational technology has greatly influenced the development of institutionalised distance education during this period, resulting in detailed analysis of educational objectives, target groups, judicious selection of various communication media, try-out procedures, and evaluation of courses/programmes, etc. Research in distance education is another important area in which some institutions in West Europe have made a significant contribution.

A number of national and regional associations of correspondence/distance education also have been actively engaged in promoting the cause of distance education by organising conferences/seminars/workshops and in tackling problems faced by distance education institutes. The European Home Study Council (EHSC) established in 1968 launched a research programme concerning distance education methodology in 1970. The Council has also been engaged in staff development programmes and is bringing out a journal *Epistolodidaktika.* The Council is now known as the Association of European Correspondence Schools (AECS) and continues to publish the journal. Its special emphasis is on research in distance education and building cooperation among its member institutions.

Another significant development during this period was the establishment of an Information and Resource Unit in June 1978 to support the Open University Centre for International Cooperation and Services (OUCICS). The Unit ultimately became the United Nations University International Documentation Centre of Distance Learning. Computerisation of data about distance learning institutions and projects all over the world has widened the scope of compiling and disseminating the data.

The International Centre for Distance Learning (ICDL) funded by the Overseas Development Administration (ODA) and COL was established to provide an information service in support of distance learning worldwide. Users of this service are located throughout the world. ICDL is located at the Open University (UK) Institute of Educational Technology. Its services comprise:

* a distance education database accessible online and available on CD-ROM
* a library collection on the theory and practice of distance education
* an information service dealing with users' enquiries.

In the following sub-sections, we shall be talking about the significant status the distance education system has acquired in some European countries. But before going to all that, let us work on the following exercise.

Check Your Progress 2

What does 'systems approach' imply in the context of distance education?

Notes: a) Space is given below for your answer.
b) Compare your answer with the one given at the end of this unit.

2.3.1 England

The establishment of the Open University at Milton Keynes, in England in 1969 turned out to be a significant milestone in the development of distance education.. The Open University was established by a Royal Charter in 1969 as an independent and autonomous institution authorised to confer its own degrees. The university aims to provide a second chance to adults who have not received higher education and fuller professional training and qualifications for those who prefer to study while continuing to work, and to contribute substantially to continuing education in the UK. The university is located on a 70-acre site in Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire, and has offices in 13 regions covering the whole country.

This university has created a world-wide impact by producing effective course materials for all kinds of people, irrespective of age, sex, place of residence and formal qualifications. In fact, no educational qualifications are required for admission to undergraduate courses, but students must be at least 18 years old and residing in any European Community country (or in one of the certain other European countries in which it has agreed to register students). The normal minimum entrance requirement for postgraduates is identical to that which applies in conventional universities in the UK. The age and residential requirements of the undergraduate programme also apply to the continuing education programme, but in the case of professional and updating courses in this programme, stipulations are made concerning required levels of previous knowledge. In 1993, the University enrolled a total of more than 120, 000 students.

The TV and radio programmes of the university have good educational value and are of interest to the general public as well. This university has provided expertise to a number of developing countries in establishing open universities or distance education institutes. A wide variety of courses is offered by the Open University, and their respective components are similarly varied. The printed materials which form the core of the university's taught courses are supplemented by one or more of the following: audio cassettes, field trips, summer schools, and weekend or day schools. Attendance in tutorial and counselling sessions available in the university's 250 Study Centres is optional. A student newspaper, *Sesame*, is published regularly and circulated to current students. The Open University Students' Association organises study-related and social activities, clubs and societies. The Open University, through the Longman Group Ltd brings out a journal *Open Learning* (3 issues a year) which was started in 1980.

International Extension College, Cambridge, is another well known distance education institution, which in addition to offering distance education courses provides consultancy and expertise to developing countries, particularly in Africa, for organising distance education institutions.

Besides, there are a large number of private correspondence institutions in England preparing external students for various public school/university examinations, and so offer a variety of correspondence courses. The council for the Accreditation of Correspondence Colleges looks after the

maintenance of standards by these institutions which account for more than 5 million students.

2.3.2 France

In France, university teaching at a distance was originally designed for initial training to upgrade teachers, but the scope was widened in due course of time. By 1986, eighteen formal universities were renamed Radio Universities. The *Centre de Tele-Enseignment Universitaire* provide university level courses of 2, 3 and 4 year duration. In addition to the students who enrol in these courses, other people also derive some benefit from the TV and radio programmes of these universities. There is active collaboration between some universities with regard to materials for various courses and also useful exchange with overseas French speaking universities, particularly in the developing countries.

The *Centre National d'Enseignement a Distance (CNED)* is a state institution under the authority of the Ministry of Education. The *CNED* comprises eight different centres in France. It offers opportunities for joining distance higher education programmes, single courses and foundation courses at all levels, in France and abroad. Every year, about 70,000 young people of school age are registered at the CNED. Among those, many cannot go to school for various reasons, such as poor health, residence abroad, having no fixed address, or because they are high-level artists or athletes.

The CNED not only offers all levels of studies from the first-year-infants school (*course preparatoire*) to the secondary school examination (*Baccalaureat*) but also home packages for subjects which are not taught in school and support courses or summer courses. 80% of students registered at the NCED are adults in full-time employment. They follow courses in order to take one of the various competitive exams commonly held in France. Other students seek complementary training or even a change of profession.

Traditional media such as printed materials and audio and video cassettes are supported by advanced technology such as floppy discs, telematics(minitel), television, video-discs, CD-ROM, CD-video, visual conference links, video transmission for lessons, lectures, debates and seminars.

The number of students enrolled rose from 83,000 in 1950 to 350,000 in 1992, 80% of whom annually follow courses in 150 different countries.

2.3.3 Germany

The then German Democratic Republic (GDR) entered a new stage of social development around 1976, while and education was expected to be a productive phase in students' lives and to play a positive role in social development. Special emphasis was laid on the education of working people by means of distance education and evening classes leading to a university or technical degree. Distance education was also used, for several years, to

provide further education to graduates of technical schools in the fields of agriculture, economics and technology. Approximately 40 per cent of technical school students were trained through distance education. Except for medicine, all other subjects available to on-campus students at the conventional universities were covered by distance education and evening colleges as well.

Commercial Correspondence Schools were quite popular in what was earlier known as West Germany, i.e., the Federal Republic of Germany.

Considering the increasing demands of the people, the State and Federal governments realised the need for their involvement in the development of distance education. This resulted in the establishment of the German Institute of Distance Education. (Deutsches Institute fur Fernstudien, DIFF) at Tubingen in 1965. It is an institute for research and development in the field of continuing education. It conducts research on teaching and learning processes in continuing education and develops and tests relevant teaching-learning models. The aim is to optimize methods in continuing education, in particular for guided, media-supported self-study, which also plays a major role in distance education. DIFF cooperates in research and development with various providers of continuing education, for instance, with institutions of higher education and with industry and commerce. Forms of cooperation range from providing advice on questions of continuing education methods to full-scale cooperative research and development projects.

In the wake of pressures from students seeking admission to institutions of higher learning, and keeping in mind international trends in distance education, the State of North Rhine Westfalia took the initiative of establishing a distance teaching university, the *Fern Universitate*, at Hagen in November 1974. Although this university kept in mind the experience of other distance education universities, particularly the Open University in England, it has developed a character of its own and is specially known for research on distance education. It offers degree and other courses to over 20,000 German-speaking students and has broken new grounds by instituting a distance education course namely *Essentials of Distance Education* for distance educators. Printed materials, tapes, video cassettes, computers, telephone, etc. are the media being used to disseminate information, the emphasis on face-to-face teaching is relatively insignificant.

2.3.4 Italy

In Italy, the *Consorzio per l' Universita a Distanza* (CUD) was established in 1984 with the purpose of providing a distance university system for Italy. The first students were admitted in 1986. CUD is a consortium established under Italian law. Members include universities, multinational companies and government-related organsations. Teaching materials and student support services are organised by CUD on behalf of its university members. The headquarters of the consortium is in Rende, Cosenza, in the south of Italy, and it has an office in Rome also.

The first programmes offered were diplomas in informatics (the first diploma to be offered in Italy) and modern languages (both 3-years and part-time) and a laureate in economics (part-time equivalent of the Italian 4-year full-time degree). Continuing education programmes and refresher courses are available to teachers in secondary schools.

Audio and video cassettes and computer software supplement the print material. Material is provided to students at study centres, where regular computer access is available along with lectures, tutoring and counseling. Fifteen centres had been set up throughout Italy by 1991, and the plan was to have 25 in due course of time.

2.3.5 Netherlands

Having considered the needs of the adult population in the area of higher education, the Dutch government took a policy decision in 1971 to make flexible and diversified higher education available to the people. This ultimately led to the setting up of the Netherlands Open University which became functional in September 1984 with a network of 18 study centres, some of which are located in places where hardly any facilities for higher education had existed.

The university planned 15 courses in basic law, cultural sciences, natural sciences, social sciences, marketing, statistics and systems and their management. Although there were over 25,000 applicants, the university decided not to enrol more than 15,000 students for the first intake. Students are enrolled for courses and not for a degree or diploma programme. However, through a combination of courses over a convenient period of time they can obtain a degree or diploma.

The European Association of Distance Teaching Universities (EADTU) was established on 23 January 1987 by the principals of Europe's major distance teaching institutions to foster co-operation among European organisations dedicated to higher education through distance teaching methodology. Members of the Association are non-profit institutions or non-profit consortia embracing independent higher education/teaching institutions and departments of universities/institutions which are responsible for distance (teaching) courses and research on distance education.

The mission of EADTU is to promote and support the creation of a European network for higher level distance education leading to the development of the European Open University Network. Fourteen non-profit organizations from 13 European countries currently participate in the activities of EADTU.

2.3.6 Norway

Correspondence education in Norway is provided by non-public correspondence schools. The government passed a law on correspondence education in 1948 to regulate correspondence education throughout the

country. This resulted in the establishment of a government body, the Council for Correspondence Education, to advise the government on matters concerning correspondence education which is financed by the State, which pays 60 per cent of the course price to the students.

The correspondence schools on their own formed the Norwegian Association of Correspondence Schools in 1967, in order to have a common platform to negotiate and cooperate with public organisations. This Association, which has been playing a very effective role in the development of distance education in Norway, decided in 1985 to change its name to Norwegian Association for Distance Education (NADE).

The University of Oslo offers 18 courses through the distance mode. Though founded in 1811, its activity in the field of distance education started very recently.

2.3.7 Russia

Before we discuss the present Russia Open University, we should touch upon the educational scenario in the former USSR.

Distance education in the former USSR was born out of the necessity to train thousands of volunteers who offered to teach illiterate adults throughout the country, where about 76 per cent of the population was illiterate in the early 1920s. The vast contingent of 'peoples teachers' were trained through specially devised correspondence courses. As a result of this massive campaign, illiteracy was completely eradicated within two decades since the 1917 revolution.

The success of correspondence education in training people for adult literacy work led to the extension of this non-formal system of education to other areas also, because the traditional channel of full-time education could not ensure equality of opportunities, a principle to which the government was committed for education, knowledge and culture to every citizen of every age group. Therefore, it was decided to have three channels of formal education -- full-time, evening/part time and correspondence courses -- for providing professional training and higher education through universities, teacher training colleges, polytechnics, etc.

Correspondence courses in the then USSR were organised on an All Union basis, in so far as syllabus and course materials were concerned. The universities or polytechnics followed the national syllabus and the course materials was produced and distributed by the Ministry of Education. The universities/institutions in the different Republics had the course materials translated and the basic course materials were supplemented according to local needs. Correspondence courses during 1970s attracted more students than the formal channel and the ratio, for quite a few years, was 55:45. There were over 500 correspondence faculties or departments attached to various universities or institutes throughout the then USSR and 16 autonomous institutes/polytechnics of correspondence studies offering diplomas as well as

higher research courses. A wide range of courses were available to over three million students.

Correspondence students were required to take a year more than the students from the formal channel of studies, i.e., six years as compared to five years for the formal Diploma Courses. However, they were given a number of incentives like paid leave and travel subsidy for attending contact sessions and taking the examinations, and a day off every week for studies in the fifth and the sixth years. Like other students they were entitled to free education up to the highest level.

The Russia Open University, founded in October 1990, is both a scientific and an educational organization established by the Union of Soviet Teacher Innovators, the Academy of Sciences of the USSR, and the Soviet Culture Foundation. The mission of the University is to carry out research, to design projects, and to implement scientific achievements. The primary purpose of Russia Open University (ROU) is to provide access to higher education to all those students who are admitted to and who excelled in the appropriate secondary schools. ROU provides access to education for people of all ages who may wish to learn, for any reason whatsoever. The University grew from 20,000 students in 1990 to more than 100,000 in 1992. At present efforts are on to involve industry and the private sector to offer quality courses which can compete in the changed market driven economy. What we have discussed would be equally valid for Russia too.

2.3.8 Eastern Europe

The collapse of former USSR has had tremendous impact on the distance education system in Russia and East European countries. The socio-political changes in these countries have affected all institutions, including those of distance education. The previous support from the state and the consultative models of distance education which assured distance learners leave with pay for attending face-to-face contact programmes have disppeared. The central planning at the state level and arrangements to produce graduates in the areas needed by the national economies have also been given up. The market driven economy demands different types of planning, courses and student support.

From the papers persented at the 17th World Conference of the ICDE (1995), we could figure out the following concerns of and trends in the distance education practices as they obtain in Eastern Europe.

- To change the distance education policies to suit the privatised market driven economic situations
- To deviate from the previous cosultation model which required regular face-to-face contact between the institution and the learners
- To adopt more and more the distance education models of Western democracies which facilitate individual rather than social objectives and career development

- To persuade distance teaching institutions to generate their own resources by linking up with industry and business, and not to depend on the state entirely as was the case previously
- To offer quality courses appropriate to train and supply the workforce to sustain and develop competitive market-economies rather than continuing with courses appropriate for centralised planned economies of the Soviet era.

The consequences of the above trends and concerns are many. But a few of these are worth mentioning.

- With the sudden change of policies and the subsequent withdrawal of state funding, the institutions of distance education are passing through a crisis.
- The social base of the learners has dramatically changed. It is no longer the natural right of everybody to get assistance to go for higher levels or professionally oriented distance education. Now, there is a compulsion for institutions to admit only those who can pay and offer only those courses which are qualitatively good and in demand.
- There is a sharp decline in enrolment from the working families and equally a sharp increase in the enrolment of learners who can pay for the courses. It means that while the overall enrolment of distance learners for the new courses will continue at 30-40 percent as it was earlier, their socio-economic profile is bound to change drastically. In fact this has already happened in Russia, Hungary, Romania, Poland, Latvia, Ukraine and Albania.
- Autonomy of distance teaching institutions now means that they are free to revise their fee structures, develop courses with a market orientation and get money from agencies other than the state.
- There is a growing tendency to look towards western institutions for help in reshaping, adapting and creating appropriate models of institutions, policies and courses.

From the foregoing details it is clear that distance education in Eastern Europe in passing through a period of trial. Its future will depend much on the future socio-political developments in this region.

2.3.9 Spain

In Spain, distance education received a big boost with the establishment of *Universidad Nacional de Education a Distancia (UNED)* in 1972. The specific aim of the university is to widen access to higher education for 'disadvantaged social groups'. The university offers three academic programmes:

i) Admission courses (to help students pass the admission examination),
ii) Degree courses, and
iii) In-service training courses.

It also provides facilities for research studies. The total student enrolment in 1991/1992 was 123, 963. Of these, nearly 84,000 were enrolled in degree courses and 35,000 in continuing education courses. The average age of students was 30 years.

The University has set up an Educational Science Institute for carrying out institutional research concerning its educational system.

2.3.10 Sweden

The history of distance education in Sweden goes back to 1898 when H.S. Hermods started a correspondence school. This school became one of the pioneers in the field of distance education in Europe. Being encouraged by the success of Hermods, a number of other schools came into existence, notably Brevskolan. A correspondence school of the Swedish National Defence was also set up subsequently. By 1966, with the merger of Norsk Korrespondanseshok Industright (NKI), Hermods became the largest distance teaching institution of the world with an enrolment of nearly 150,000 students. Later on, Hermods was integrated with the State-owned Liber group of companies and came to be called Librer-Hermods. It continued to cater to the needs of thousands of correspondence students. But with the widening of access to all Swedish children to the official school system, greater emphasis on social aspects of education through learning together in groups and greater opportunities for adult education of the under-privileged sections of society, distance education suffered a setback in Sweden.

Swedish universities started distance education programmes for university level courses in 1968 as a supplementary form of study, like the evening classes and local external courses. As in Australia (see. sub-section 3.4.1), the university departments look after the on-campus as well as the distance education courses.

The Swedish Association for Distance Education (SADE) was founded in 1984. Its members are various institutions and other agencies involved in distance education. Members also include individuals interested in the field. A separate section for higher education was also established including all 14 universities and university colleges to enable representation of appropriate SADE member institutions in EADTU (European Association of Distance Teaching Universities). These universities are degree granting state institutions recognised by the Swedish Government. Distance education, at this level is an integrated, departmental activity mainly carried out on a small scale in a dual-mode structure.

Distance education at the post secondary level is now well established in Sweden. A ruling and statutory principle of Swedish higher education is that all institutions of higer education are to be organised so as to ensure a fair geographical and social distribution of educational opportunities and to further recurrent education.

Post secondary distance education is characterised by a highly decentralised system. Institutional structures, production and delivery systems vary from

university to university. Each department engaged in distance education is independently responsible for the course programme and for the media and methods used. There is no central control of distance education, nor does the individual university impose any restriction on the liberty of the individual department to organise its distance teaching. Distance teaching forms an integral part of departmental activities and as such a 'distance teacher' usually has 'conventional' teaching duties as well.

Distance education is dominated by separate courses although full length study programmes are also offered in this form. A degree programme can combine traditional on campus courses and distance education courses.

2.4. LET US SUM UP

In this unit we

i) attempted to trace the genesis of distance education,
ii) touched upon the themes of the emergence of the term 'distance education' to denote the distance mode of teaching/learning, and the establishment of international fora to give distance education a unique place in the domain of education, and
iii) informed you about the significance which has been attached to distance education in European countries.

Check Your Progress: Possible Answers

1. i) The term 'correspondence education' which has popularly been used to denote the distance mode of teaching/learning is restricted primarily to mean the postal delivery of print materials which are not necessarily self-instructional in nature. In other words, the term is felt to be inadequate to encompass the various media being used in the distance education system.

   ii) The terms such as 'correspondence education' and 'postal study/ tuition' which have often been related to the distance mode of teaching/learning came into existence mainly because of their association with the delivery system, whereas the term 'distance education' reflects the multi-media approach to dissemination of information.

2. In distance education, the systems approach is used to lay out appropriate procedures for an effective instructional system. The steps may vary but essentially comprise
   i) need analysis/assessment,
   ii) curriculum development,
   iii) media production,
   iv) identification of modes of delivery, and
   v) evaluation.

UNIT 3 THE INTERNATIONAL SCENE-2

Unit Structure

3.0 Objectives

3.1 Introduction

3.2 Africa

3.3 Asia
- 3.3.1 Bangladesh
- 3.3.2 China
- 3.3.3 India
- 3.3.4 Indonesia
- 3.3.5 Japan
- 3.3.6 Korea (Republic of)
- 3.3.7 Malaysia
- 3.3.8 Singapore
- 3.3.9 Hong Kong
- 3.3.10 Pakistan
- 3.3.11 The Philippines
- 3.3.12 Sri Lanka
- 3.3.13 Thailand

3.4 Australia and the South Pacific Region
- 3.4.1 Australia
- 3.4.2 New Zealand
- 3.4.3 Papua New Guinea
- 3.4.4 The Pacific Islands

3.5 Middle East

3.6 North America
- 3.6.1 Canada
- 3.6.2 United States of America

3.7 South and Central America
- 3.7.1 Costa Rica
- 3.7.2 Venezuela
- 2.7.3 Brazil
- 3.7.4 Argentina

3.8 Mega-Open Universities

3.9 Let Us Sum Up

Putting Units 1, 2, and 3 together: looking at emerging trends

3.0 OBJECTIVES

This unit gives you an overview of the indispensable place that distance education has occupied in the international educational system with particular reference to Africa, Asia, Australia, the Pacific Region, Middle East and North,

South and Central America. This unit along with the previous one will give you a broad and general perspective on developments in the field of distance education across the world. Once you are through with these units you will get a clear impression of the enormous and widespread growth of this system and its great diversity in respect of course offerings, clientele, types of institution and use of communication technology. The development of distance education is obviously a story of the continuous process of innovations leading to a non-formal, democratic, flexible, academically viable, economical and forward looking teaching-learning system which has established its credentials beyond doubt and has a very vital role to play in meeting the challenges of the future. On completing this unit, you should be able to

* discuss the phenomenal growth of distance education in the regions mentioned above,
* discuss the various systems of distance education that operate in different countries, and
* analyse the distinct characteristics of distance eduation practices in the major regions.

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This unit complements the previous one in which we were talking about the growth of distance education in Europe. Consequent upon the efficacy of the distance education system, a majority of the countries have adopted this mode of teaching/learning.

We have repeatedly mentioned that distance education has an edge over the traditional system of face-to-face communication because of various reasons. One such important reason is that through this system of education diverse courses can be offered to meet the needs of individuals in society. Further, through this mode of teaching it is possible to academically communicate with larger segments of the population – even with people who are in remote corners of a country. The forthcoming discussion under different sections will give you a glimpse of the significant role of distance education in various countries.

3.2 AFRICA

In most countries in the African region, the educational level of a majority of the people continues to be relatively low. As a result, some of the countries in this region decided to make primary education compulsory and to improve the overall educational level of the people. But the colossal problem that they confronted was the training of teachers. Most of the school teachers were either undertrained or untrained. Considering the necessity of training the in-service teachers and the future need of employing large numbers of properly trained teachers to cope with the programmes of educational expansions, a number of countries like Nigeria, Zimbabwe, Tanzania, Kenya, Botswana,

Lesotho, Swaziland, Guyana, Ethiopia and Ghana organised distance education courses for the training of teachers. The courses primarily comprise self-instructional print materials being supplemented by radio and television programmes, audio-visual tapes, films, face-to-face sessions, vacation workshops, etc.

The first correspondence college in Africa was set up at Brazzaville in 1962. At present there are over 122 institutes using the distance education system. Some countries were able to secure technical support from UNESCO and various other international organisations/institutions for developing self-instructional materials.

Later, distance education institutions were established in Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland. These institutions have set a fine example for collaboration in developing distance education courses to cater to the educational needs of people in these three countries. Similarly, the distance education programme of the Namibian Extension Unit, a non-profit making educational institution catering mainly to the educational needs of the South-West Africa Peoples' Organisation (SWAPO of Namibia) and of the Namibians in refugee camps in Angola and Zambia is indeed a commendable effort. The Educational Resources Centre for refugees from South Africa and Zimbabwe adopted the distance teaching methodology in 1981 for preparing refugees for the government examinations.

Various international foundations have been providing special assistance to the African countries for organising and participating in international seminars, workshops and conferences. The African Association for Correspondence Education which works to coordinate the functions of the distance education institutions in the African region was initiated in 1973, but it became active only recently. Visualising the future educational needs of the people in Africa, some conventional universities also have introduced some distance education programmes.

In July 1983, Nigeria established a National Open University, attracting 20,000 applicants for admission, but unfortunately it was suspended by the military regime dating from May 9, 1984. However, the Correspondence and Open Studies Institute (COSIT) established during 1973-74 at the University of Lagos, Nigeria is playing a vital role in spreading distance education. The total student population is currently 6500. Approximately 2000 enroll annually. Students offering one of the three programmes can choose from among 200 available courses. The annual number of graduates is around 450.

Owing to the increasing number of refugees from Ethiopia and other countries who arrived in the Eastern Region of Sudan, the Sudan Open Learning Unit was established in 1984. It was based on a needs survey conducted in 1982, and establised with the help of the International Extension College, UK.

The objectives of this Open Learning Unit are :

* to offer a new, specially tailored educational programme for refugees, displaced and other Sudanese people who are not able to receive any

form of formal schooling;

* to offer adequate in-service job training opportunities through distance education techniques;
* to provide literacy courses mainly for women. These courses are designed to provide instruction including life skills, trade promotion and functional adult education, and
* to develop the unit's structure into a national self-supporting organization for open learning, maintaining its social rather than commercial orientation. (During 1987-88, there were 1297 students enrolled at the Unit).

Zimbabwe got into distance education in a big way by establishing the Zimbabwe Distance (Correspondence) Education college in 1980. The philosophy of the college is that education is of intrinsic value to the individual and to society. Therefore, its educational programmes are geared to meet the needs of the individual students and of the country.

The objectives of the college are :

* to provide a broad spectrum of practical education programmes which are concerned with skill building;
* to provide learning experience that will contribute to the individual's self development, national development, and betterment of one's fellow human beings;
* to develop a keen interest in the scientific approach to learning and its application to problems for practical solutions;
* to cultivate a sense of observation and investigation in the scientific, managerial, technological, vocational and agricultural subjects;
* to provide training for the physically handicapped , and
* to instil a sense of love and appreciation for the country and its culture.

Students can enroll at any time. The college offers help in course selection to those who require it.

Check Your Progress 1

Give three main reasons for the organisation of distance education courses in the African countries.

Notes: a) Space is given below for your answer.
b) Compare your answer with the one given at the end of this unit.

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The problem of giving proper training to the teachers in-service as well as to the prospective teachers is a problem not only of the African countries, but also of Asia. One of the reasons for the establishment of open universities in the Asian countries is the felt need for giving adequate training to an astronomical number of teachers. Now, we shall look into the growth of distance education in the Asian region.

3.3 ASIA

In Asia, there has been a phenomenal development of distance education within the last two decades. Most of the countries in this region (see Table 2 in unit 2 of this block) have adopted the latest innovations of distance education and established open universities. The upsurge in enrolment rates in these institutions points to the ever-increasing demand for education at various levels. Further, it shows that distance education has been recognised as a viable and effective complementary or alternative system to the traditional one.

In this section, we shall take up for discussion a few distance teaching institutions in some Asian countries.

3.3.1 Bangladesh

The population of Bangladesh has crossed the 110 million mark and the country is thus one of the most densely populated areas of the world. One of the acute problems Bangladesh faces is that of the shortage of well-qualified and adequately trained workforce. Being convinced of the relevance of distance education to the country's educational needs, the Government of Bangladesh established the Bangladesh Institute of Distance Education (BIDE) under the Ministry of Education to tackle this problem. Some of the important programmes launched by the BIDE are:

i) Bachelor's education course for in-service school teachers,
ii) regular broadcasts and videos for school teachers, and
iii) support to primary teachers' training institutes and the national academy, and primary education for pre-service and in-service training of primary school teachers.

The institute was intended to serve as a new nucleus for an open university. Recently, the Government has established the Bangladesh Open University, to which BIDE was merged. BOU will provide not only higher education but also cover other educational and training needs for human resource development. It will focus on non-formal education through short courses in areas such as agricultural extension, community health and nursing. It also expects to make a contribution to informal education through the provision of courses and programmes of general value in areas such as environmental protection, health, hygiene, sanitation, family planning, women in development and poverty alleviation.

3.3.2 China

China has a long tradition of correspondence education from the beginning of the twentieth century.

Increasing population, the necessity to expand the educational base of people, upgrade the skills of workers and broaden the awareness of each Chinese person about the Cultural Revolution necessitated the establishment of correspondence education in China in dual mode universities. During 1960's, TV universities were set up in Beijing, Shanghai, Shenyang and some other cities in order to provide a convenient means for adult students to improve their education. The socialist modernisation project, which demanded extensive education facilities for the people, led to the establishment of the Central Radio and Television University (CRTVU) in Beijing in 1978 which is at present the largest distance education institute in the world with nearly two million students on its rolls. This university offers educational opportunities to workers all over China. Admission to this university is done mainly on the basis of an entrance test. Instruction is imparted chiefly through television, back up written materials and face-to-face sessions. The university also offers degree programmes in science and technology, social sciences, etc. By 1985, over 400,000 had graduated from the 28 provincial TVUs, set up all over the country. Besides, one million free viewers and listeners also benefited from the programmes on a nationwide scale. In all, there are 43 Provincial Radio and Television Universities, 595 Branch Schools and 1500 Work Stations which offer distance education programmes, mainly through radio and television. By 1990 a national system of higher education through radio and television had taken full shape. Out of a total distance education student strength of 2.4 million, more than 75 per cent study through the radio and television universities. Besides, to cater to educational needs at the school level, China uses correspondence, radio and TV school.

In Shanghai, there is a television university : the Shanghai Television University (STVU). It is an institution of adult higher education under the Shanghai municipality and is also one of the earliest radio and television universities in China. It was jointly founded by East China Normal University, Fudan University, East China Chemical Engineering Institute and a few other universities in Shanghai on April 6, 1960. It was temporarily closed down in 1966 during the Cultural Revolution and reopened in 1978. STVU has built co-operative relationships with open universities in Asia, Britain and the United States.

STVU has been offering courses in science and engineering, liberal arts, medicine, agriculture and economic management, etc., at the undergraduate and sub-undergraduate levels. STVU also offers over 140 non-degree programmes of different levels and types such as in-service training, training for advanced professional certificates and continuing education. Over 1,000 students have completed their undergraduate studies and over 62,000 have completed sub-undergraduate studies. So far, a total of 22,000 self-study adult students have been enrolled and of these approximately 200 have

obtained diplomas and 2,000 have obtained certificates.

The National Open University, established on August 1, 1986, began telecasting and broadcasting courses on November 1, 1986.

The objectives of the National Open University are to:

* provide opportunities for life long learning;
* offer equal higher education opportunities for all people who are unable to enrol in traditional colleges and universities;
* convey knowledge to the whole society via new communication technologies; and
* promote the quality of the country's human resources.

Courses are developed and offered in three categories : required courses, foreign languages, and specialized courses. The last category includes courses in three academic areas of study: business, humanities, and social sciences. Each area is further divided into several clusters of study. By 1990, the number of students had reached over 62,800 (including regular students and non-diploma students). Of these, 63.24% are female and 36.76% male. Regular students made up 64.23% and non-diploma students 35.77%. The largest age group was between 25 and 29, comprising 35.52% of the student population. Of the total number of students 26.10%, were businessmen, 25.02% public officials and 14.62% labourers. The rest of the students were teachers, self-employed, housewives, unemployed people and others.

3.3.3 India

With more than 240 Universities, 9000 colleges and over 6 million students involved in higher education, India has only about 6% of the age group in colleges and universities. It's literacy (at 52.21 as per the 1991 census) is still very low even for a developing country.

India is one of the earliest countries to apply itself to the concept of the 'open university' after the United Kingdom established one successfully at Milton-Keynes in 1969. In 1962 correspondence courses were introduced at the University of Delhi. It was during the 1970s that the momentum picked up with nineteen more universities introducing this mode of education, and the trend continued in the 80s. Now 70 universities are offering courses through the correspondence/distance mode.

In 1982, the first Open University which is now called Dr. B. R. Ambedkar Open University was established in Andhra Pradesh. The Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) was established in 1985. There are 9 more open universities at the state level in India.

The Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) has been mandated to perform the functions of a distance education university and also to function

as a national agency for coordinating and setting standards for various distance education systems in the country. To meet the latter purpose, a Distance Education Council (DEC) was established under the aegis of IGNOU in 1992. The university has been recognised as a Centre of Excellence for Training in Distance Education by the Commonwealth of Learning (COL). The Staff Training and Research Institute of Distance Education (STRIDE), partly funded by the COL, is instrumental in getting this recognition and is committed to the development of human resources for distance education in India and other developing countries. IGNOU is one of the very few open universities which offer a programme in distance education, as a discipline. Besides Indian students, 103 students from 18 commonwealth countries enrolled for the MA in distance education in the years 1995-97.

Currently it has 26 Regional Centres, 300 Study Centres and 78 Work Centres, and offers 50 programmes consisting of 610 courses. Besides print materials, the university uses audio/video cassettes for the dissemination of knowledge. For purposes of tutoring/counselling, the university has employed on a part-time basis, 21,800 academic counsellors. STRIDE has been publishing a journal, the *Indian Journal of Open Learning* since 1992. The total enrolment of distance learners in the country in 1998 was 1 million of which 50 percent is with IGNOU.

3.3.4. Indonesia

Universitas Terbuka (UT) the 45th state university in Indonesia, was established in 1984 as a distance teaching institution. It admitted 500,000 students in the very first year of its existence. By the end of 1994, the number of students had crossed 550,000. Apart from self-instructional learning materials, the university provides tutorials and general lectures on radio and television, for which satellite facilities are used.

The Universitas Terbuka is open to everyone who possesses SMA (senior secondary school) diploma. Students do not have to take any test or face any interview to enrol for the courses. The only exception to this 'open entry' rule is enrolment in the Faculty of Education, which provides courses only for in-service teachers.

3.3.5 Japan

University level correspondence courses in Japan are usually the regular courses within the framework of conventional universities and they form a part of the activities of the parent faculties. However, the operations of correspondence courses are carried out by the Correspondence Education Division. The school level correspondence courses were started as a part of the post-war educational reforms and the upper secondary correspondence schools have their own organisations.

Although qualifications for the university correspondence courses are stringently prescribed in the university departments, in centres that serve the

purpose of social education, admission is open to students who do not have formal entrance qualifications. They allow the students to take all or a part of the prescribed course, depending on their convenience. Students can obtain credits by using 'University Correspondence Lecture' on Japan Broadcasting Corporation Radio and Television.

In the beginning, correspondence education experienced a boom and spread like wild fire. Later, the enrolment saw some ups and downs. Ultimately, with the use of correspondence education made by the business sector and industries for the re-education of their employees, the training and retraining of teachers, and its popularity among women, enrolment continued to improve from 1960 onwards. This led to a new consciousness regarding the open education system in Japan. In 1978, the National Centre for Development of Broadcast Education was established as a cooperative organisation of national universities under the direct control of the Ministry of Education. This was a planned step towards the establishment of the University of the Air of Japan (UAJ), Japan's first independent single-mode distance institution. This was set up by the University of the Air Foundation, a special corporation which works in cooperation with both public and private universities. The first registration of students began in April 1985.

Television and radio broadcasts are used as core-media supplemented by face-to-face sessions, printed textbooks and audio visual materials. Broadcast programmes are prepared by instructors and programme directors at the National Institute of Multi-Media Education (NIME) and the academic staff of the University of the Air. Printed materials are prepared by instructors.

These broadcasts can cover only the Kanto area. The 8 study centres, and ten prefectures outside the Kanto area are provided with video-study centres. Plans are under way for the University to make use of satellite broadcasts to expand its educational programmes to cover the whole country. The language of instruction is Japanese.

The number of students at the University has increased from 30,000 in 1990, 34,900 in 1991 to 46,500 in 1992. There is a mix of full-time and part-time faculty members: full-time - 281 (academic 63; non-academic 218), part-time - 295. In the 15-week semester, 15 TV lectures (45 minutes each once a week) for 2-credit courses and 30 TV lectures (45 minutes each, twice a week) for 4-credit courses are broadcast to students of the Kanto area alone. Those outside the Kanto area get access to those programmes at video-study centres. In all, 153 courses and 146 courses were broadcast through TV and radio respectively in 1993. The recommendation of the Radio Regulatory Council has led to the perception of UAJ as one of the main enterprises to utilise a separate satellite which is going to be launched soon so as to have nation-wide coverage.

3.3.6 Korea: Republic of

Correspondence education in Korea began in the form of non-credit and non-degree correspondence courses around 1930. Later on when conventional

universities could not accommodate the ever-growing numbers of university aspirants, the Seoul National University established a Department of Correspondence Courses in 1972, offering junior college level courses. In 1982, the Department was elevated to the status of an independent university -- the Korea Air and Correspondence University. This is presently known as the Korea National Open University.

The estimated annual intake is 70,000 students, the total student enrolment in 1992 was 180,358. There are 186 full-time and 412 part-time staff members. The university offers 1 Bachelors Degree programme and 475 courses.

3.3.7 Malaysia

In Malaysia, the Universiti Sains Malaysia established in 1971 at Penang took the initiative of organising off-campus academic programmes to provide opportunities for university education to adults, to democratise education and also to cope with the increasing demands for higher education. The university organised a Regional Symposium on Distance Teaching in Asia, 1981.

There are also some private correspondence course institutes which offer various school level, commercial and vocational courses. Standford College Group has in particular been very active in catering to the needs of people for such courses in Singapore and Malaysia.

Modules are the main teaching materials in the Off-Campus Study Programme. A module is a set of printed materials consisting of teaching notes and activities which students work on independently. In addition, multi-media self-instructional teaching materials in the form of video-tapes, audio-cassettes, audio-graphics and slides are also provided.

To help students in their learning activities, 11 regional study centres have been set up throughout Malaysia. These centres are managed by a resident tutor with the assistance of part-time tutors who conduct weekend laboratory exercises and periodic tests, besides acting as occasional counsellors for students. The centres also serve as venues for discussion groups, and as examination centres for the various continuous assessments. In addition to a postal lending service provided by the Universiti Sains Malaysia Library, a basic reference collection is maintained by the university in eleven regional public libraries, thus making available to students basic reading materials closer to their homes.

Since August 1987, the university has introduced teletutorials through audio conferencing, and in December 1989 the system has been expanded to include audiographic facilities. This system enables two-way communication between the staff at the Universiti Sains Malaysia and the off-campus students at their respective regional centres. This interaction, among other things, ensures immediate feedback. Teletutorials have been implemented in all regional study centres throughout Malaysia except in Sabah and Sarawak. The university holds a compulsory residential school (temporary) programme

annually in mid-November. It runs for three weeks and provides an opportunity for students to meet lecturers and attend lectures, tutorials and laboratory classes on the campus.

Radio Malaysia's National Network broadcasts a special 20 minute off-campus radio programme every Sunday at 10.40 p.m. Total enrolment of students during the 1992-93 academic year was 2874.

3.3.8 Singapore

Though Singapore has had a late entry, it has made a remarkable progress in meeting its higher educational needs and the demands of its private business and industry. Since 1990, Singapore has trained thousands of its managerial cadre and those who wanted to upgrade their careerys as can be seen from the following information given by ICDL.

In June 1990, the National Productivity Board launched a new national training initiative called Fast Forward. The aims of Fast Forward are to offer companies and workers training programmes which can be pursued anytime, any place at the pace of individual workers and at relatively low costs; stimulate and sustain workers' interest in training through a familiar yet interesting medium of instruction; generate more training places for workers over 40 by developing programmes adapted to adult learnign styles; and allow workers to get into a training system that offers a progressive and continual job-related skills upgrading path.

It is believed that at least, 5000,000 workers who may never have participated in a formal training programme stand to benefit from Fast Forward. In particular, this training initiative will reach out to the following groups of workers: those who until now have not participated in any available training programmes; those working on shift; those who work overtime; workers aged 40 and above; female workers with family commitments; and workers who are less comfortable with the usual classroom-based training system.

Eight Forward courses have been launched -- Successful Supervision, Successful Selling, Easy English, Wordperfect, Working English, Easy Maths, Express Maths and In Healthy Company. Courses are available either in English, Mandarin or Malay. Other courses offered include NPB-Seiko On The Job Training courses for managers and instructors using self-study packs.

The Singapore Institute of Management (SIM) is an independent, not-for-profit, professional organisation founded in 1964 with the mission of helping to enhance managerial and organisational effectiveness in Singapore. Since its formation, SIM has played a major role in developing managerial skills and telent for the sound expansion of Singapore economy. Over 30 years of its development, SIM has so expanded its role and scope beyond management development that it is, today, the leading human resource development (HRD) private organisation in Singapore.

SIM is highly regarded for its comprehensive range of HRD programmes and services, its affiliation to prestigious universities and institutions, its close links with and relevance to industry, and the high quality and recognition of the services it provides.

The Institute's commitment is reflected through its vital role as:

- a training resource cnetre for executives' personal and professional development,
- a source of advice and help on organisational development,
- a forum for the sharing of knowledge and experience, and
- a centre for research and information.

3.3.9 Hong Kong

Hong Kong was a British colony enjoying the status of a free trade zone unitl 1997 and it became an integral part of mailand china in the same year. It has a number of institutions besides the Open University of Hong Kong (previously Open Learning Institute) which have been offering distance education courses in various subjects.

Caritas Adult and Higher Education Service is a non-profit making educational organization managed by Caritas-Hong Kong. It started its service in 1962. At present, it has 26 day and evening schools offering full-time and part-time programmes in commercial, language and practical areas. Multi Media Education Programme (MMEP) is a special department under Caritas Adult and Higher Education Service established in 1978. It offers distance learning courses to local learners ranging from primary to post-secondary levels.

In principle, their distance learning programme, based on target groups and level of studies, includes the following areas:

- Parents' education
- Secondary education and para-professional studies for working adults
- Overseas collaborative programmes
- Joint-programme with higher education institutions in China,
- Re-training programme for redundant workers.

Hong Kong Baptist University had a School formerly known as the Department of Extra Mural Studies of the Hong Kong Baptist College when it was first established. In 1983, the department was renamed as the Division of Continuing Education (DCE) of HKBC. In July, 1990, DCE was granted the status of a school and is now known as the School for Continuing Education. In November 1994 the Hong Kong Baptist College assumed the title of University.

The School has undergone considerable development and expansion and offers over 600 part-time evening short courses covering a broad range of

cultural, vocational and professional interests. The School is a self-financing unit whose aim is to promote open education in Hong Kong. It offers both academic and non-academic programmes to meet the educational demands and aspirations of working people. A number of part-time diploma and certificate programmes offered by the University are recognized by professional institutions in Hong Kong and the United Kingdom.

The Hong Kong Polytechnic University is the largest tertiary institution funded by the Hong Kong Government throgh the University and Polytechnic Grants Committee. Distane teaching activities began in 1986 with the launch of the Certificate in Fashion and Clothing Manufacture. This programme, is available in both English and Chinese streams since October, 1991.

The Open Learning Institute of Hong Kong (OLI) was set up by the Hong Kong Government in September 1989. It began its operations with over 4,000 students, many of whom did not have formal university entrance requirements. In the semester beginning October 1995, 20,000 students were studying with the Institute. OLI intends to offer educational opportunities at the tertiary level to the widest possible range of Hong Kong residents wishing to take advantage of the opportunity.

Hong Kong established the **Extra-Mural Department** in the University of Hong Kong (which was renamed the School of Professional and Continuing Education) in 1956. In this country, less than ten per cent in the relevant age group get opportunities to study in conventional institutions of higher learning. Therefore, the national priority, in the context of the fast changing economic scenario, is to provide other channels of opportunities for education for those who missed education earlier, who need further education, and those who want to upgrade/update their knowledge and skill to cope with changing business expectations or to change their career/ profession. In Hong Kong nearly 40 institutions have been empowered by law to provide distance education programmes.

3.3.10 Pakistan

Allama Iqbal Open University, Islambad (AIOU), was established in 1974, under the Open University Act XXXX. It provides continuing and higher education courses to students throughout the country. Its academic programmes cover four major areas: Functional Education; General Education; Teacher Education and Research and Development. It offers a wide range of over 200 courses from the 'literacy' level to the post-graduate level. The Integrated Functional Educatioin Programme (IFEP) of the university has achieved a significant breakthrough in teaching reading, writing, basic arithmetic and in providing functional education to people in the villages. The objectives of the university include taking education to the grassroot level, with a focus on women. The university operates through, 30 Regional Centres and 425 Study Centres/make-shift study centres, besides the headquarters . The AIOU is claimed to be the only open institution in the region which has a complete structure of distance education; starting from

literacy programmes to higher education and research programmes. There were 86,579 students enrolled during 1991-1992.

3.3.11 The Philippines

The distance study system was launched in the Philippines in 1976 to reach 350,00 teachers spread over 7,100 islands in the archipelago. A special feature of distance education in the Philippines is that curriculum materials are generally initiated by the 'consumers' and then revised and edited by experts. Courses are developed according to their relevance to social needs and are generally application-oriented, e.g. nutrition, cottage industry, environmental planning, poultry and live-stock, vegetable production, fruit production, etc. The requisite number of credits earned by doing the courses leads to the award of a degree. No learner fails in the distance education system of the Philippines, as it is a self-paced learning system in which the learner receives a final rating after completion of the package of self-learning modules. There is great emphasis on providing knowledge to teachers on problems of social importance so that others may be educated through them on those lines.

3.3.12 Sri Lanka

Apart from the need for expansion of educational facilities for those who were unable to go to the conventional universities, Sri Lanka faced a major problem of training a large number of teachers. To meet this demand the Government set up three special institutions during the seventies – External Services Agency (ESA) to take over the extension programmes of the universities, the institute of Workers' Education to extend opportunities for university education beyond the normal undergraduate category and the Sri Lanka Institute of Distance Education (SLIDE) to take over the Extension Services Programmes of the Ceylon Technical College.

The Open University of Sri Lanka (OUSL) was established in 1980 through the amalgamation of the External Services Agency (ESA) and the Sri Lanka Institute of Distance Education (SLIDE). It has the same legal and academic status as the other universities in Sri Lanka. It prepares its own courses and offers its own degrees, diplomas and certificates. The university's main campus is located on a 40 acre site at Nawala, about two miles south east from the centre of Colombo. The total number of students enrolled with the Open University of Sri Lanka had reached 19,622 in 1992, with an annual intake of 1,800. There are164 full-time and 516 part-time staff engaged to prepare, teach and support over 200 courses in the 20 programmes provided by the university. The Sri Lankan Government has collaborations with Swedish International Development Agency for their distance education programmes.

3.3.13 Thailand

Sukhothai Thammathirat Open University (STOU) was formally established as a single mode distance education university by a Royal Charter

on 5 September 1978. It was established as a national university under the Ministry of University Affairs in response to individual and societal needs. The university is situated on a 54 acre site in Nonthaburi Province 18 kilometers north of Bangkok .

STOU aims at contributing to citizens' personal development; the expansion of educational opportunities, life-long recurrent education, teacher education and training, training of skilled manpower, economic development, national development, political and economic ideology and promotion of democracy.

The university provides three kinds of courses – Bachelor's Degree Courses, Short-term Vocational Enrichment Courses, and Basic Rural Development Courses. Two marked features of the courses offered by this university are:

i) provision of training resources for several Government agencies for personnel development, etc., and
ii) new teaching programmes like agricultural extension and cooperatives, health, science, management, communication, arts, etc.

The estimated annual intake is 70,000 to 80,000 students. Total student enrolment to date is 250,000 students. The number of full-time staff is 1,985 (312 are full-time academics); in addition, there are about 4,000 part-time academic and professional staff from conventional universities, public agencies and private firms appointed as external experts in the various course teams for courseware and media production, conducting tutorial sessions, and preparing test and evaluating examination papers.

According to the 1980-1990 statistics, the largest group of students are those aged between 21 and 30, making up 64% of the student population, and those between 31 and 40 make up 25%. 11% of the student population are under the age of twenty-one. Students from urban areas comprise 26% and those from rural areas 74%. In terms of occupational composition, students from the public sector account for 60.14% and those from the private sector for 19.51% of the total. According to the 1982-1990 statistics, 49% of the students are male and 51% are female.

STOU's revenue comes from its tution fees, investment and the Government. There are 10 Certificate programmes and 20 Bachelor's Degree programmes available STOU, and the total number of courses is 448.

Check Your Progress 2

Point out one major difference between the distance education system of China and that of the various other countries in Asia

Notes: a) Write the answer in the space given below.
b) Compare your answer with the one given at the end of this unit.

3.4 AUSTRALIA AND THE SOUTH PACIFIC REGION

There has been a tremendous growth and consistent development of distance education in Australia. With a small population scattered widely over vast areas, Australia found that distance education proved a boon in meeting the individual educational needs of its society. Distance education courses were started at many levels during the first decade of the twentieth century. Over the past 90 years or so, distance education has developed into an integral part of all systems of Government funded education with each state having a correspondence school and programmes of technical training through correspondence. Australia founded an active regional association of distance education centre called the Australian South Pacific External Studies Association (ASPESA) to keep an eye on their functioning. This Association is now known as Open and Distance Learning Association of Australia. It publishes a reputed biannual international journal called 'Distance Education', founded in 1980.

3.4.1 Australia

Early in the twentieth century, distance education became part and parcel of universities and other institutions of higher learning in Australia. World War II provided a further boost to its development because of increasing demands for education from the American Armed Force personnel who were based

there. There has been a dramatic development of distance education in this in that region over the past few decades or so. Some of the well known universities/institutes providing distance education in Australia are Deakin, New England, Murdoch, Queensland, the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology and Gippsland Institute of Advanced Education.

Though distance education at the university level follows the 'integrated model' -- common faculty for both on and off-campus students, the universities/institutes that offer distance education courses have a special division, unit, department or school which is responsible for organising these courses. Technical and Further Education (TAFE) through distance education is a new form of tertiary education available in Australia in colleges of external studies. In this context, we shall make a mention of Deakin University here.

The university was originally established in Geelong by an Act of Parliament in 1974 and the institution was named after Australia's second Prime Minster, Alfred Deakin. The mergers with Warnambool Institute of Advanced Education in 1990 and with Victoria College have significantly extended the scope and size of Deakin University.

There is a student body of 22,000 studying a wide range of disciplines through both on and off campus study courses. The university offers programmes in the arts, social sciences, business studies and economics, education, sciences, technology, nursing and architecture. In 1992, new courses in law and engineering were also made available. The university is a leading provider of courses for external students and is one of the eight national distance education centres specialising in the delivery of off-campus courses. To support its off campus programme the university specialises in the production of high quality study materials, audio and video cassettes. Teaching using teleconferencing, teletutorials and computers is accepted as part of the university's programmes. The categories of entry which apply to off-campus undergraduate students also apply to on-campus students.

3.4.2 New Zealand

New Zealand is known for a well developed system of distance education providing instruction at all levels. A noteworthy feature of distance education in this country is that most of the institutes work in collaboration and avoid aggressive competition. The New Zealand Technical Correspondence Institute, the largest distance education institute in the Australian region offers a wide range of technical and vocational education at a distance. The Institute plays a vital role in development programmes in the Pacific area with regard to building up technical and vocational skills.

In addition, the New Zealand Correspondence School has been serving the needs of students in remote areas through packaged correspondence lessons, school broadcasts and television programmes. It has introduced advanced studies for teachers as well. Besides, a number of other organisations and the

New Zealand Radio provide distance education courses.

In New Zealand, distance education was first introduced when the New Zealand Correspondence School (NZCS) was established in 1922. Also, the Centre for university Extramural Studies at the Massey University, the Open Polytechnic, and the University of Otago provide distance education programmes. Besides print, the distance teaching institutions expose students to radio programmes, television through public TV network, video-letter, computer communication, and tele-conferencing. While the first radio broadcast for distance students was started by NZCS in 1931, the teachers started visiting the homes of distance students in 1935. There is a strong teacher guidance arrangement in place for all types of students – starting from pre-school to adult continuing education. Around 300 courses offered by the School have 15-20 assignments (called sets or lessons) for each course, which are complemented by audio and video programmes, print materials, kits, etc. Increasingly, telephone and audio-video tapes and letters are used by teachers to encourage and provide personalized support to students. CAL (Computer Assisted Learning) programmes are also being produced to individualise learning; and teachers maintain records of each student on the computer so as to review progress and arrange for extra support.

Massey University, situated on the outskirts of the city of Palmerston North, is the only university in New Zealand which offers degree and diploma level courses through correspondence. It was established in the beginning of 1964 when Massey agricultural college was combined with a branch college of Victoria University, Wellington, The history of Massey's extramural study programmes, however, goes back to 1960.

With a few exceptions, extramural courses parallel internal courses. It is therefore possible to switch to full-time study if a student so wishes. Students have over 800 courses to choose from within approximately 70 programmes (degrees, diplomas, certificates) offered by Massey University. Currently its student population is 18,000 with an annual intake of 5,000. The total staff within Massey University's extramural studies programme is 450, of whom 300 are engaged full-time. The annual budget for the entire university during 1994 was 110 million New Zealand dollars.

3.4.3 Papua New Guinea

Papua New Guinea, with diverse communities isolated from one another and the outside world on account of various geographical factors, offers a vast scope for distance education. In 1974, a Department of External Studies was established at the University of Papua New Guinea. Along with the College of External Studies in Port Moresby, it has instituted varied distance education courses to meet the educational demands of the people.

The Department of External Studies was established in 1974, following the submission of the Gris Committee which recommended an 'expanding

service' with programmes to be offered 'beyond the capital city'. The Committee also advocated the development of both a continuing education programme for graduates and formal external courses meant to 'broaden the base of higher education, and produce graduates and diplomates who are likely to be less elitist in outlook'.

The Department of Extension Studies is based in the Education Faculty at Waigani campus, which is the main campus of the University . In addition, there are eleven University Extension Centres.

The Advanced Diploma in Teaching was introduced in 1984 by the University at the Goroka Teachers' College campus as an in-service programme for practising provincial high school teachers and is available in the distance learning mode. The programme is a significant innovation for the education of teachers in the country. It has the potential to assist all provincial high school teachers to undertake their duties in a more professional and confident way.

3.4.4 The Pacific Islands

Up to 1970, students in the Pacific Islands desirous of tertiary level education had to go to Australia or New Zealand. The establishment of the University of the South Pacific (USP) brought these facilities to the doorsteps of the people, through off-campus studies supported by a strong satellite network. It was established in 1968 in Suva, Fiji.

Those students who cannot come to a campus are able to begin their studies through one of the centres as part of USP's University Extension scheme. By using various means of communication – course books, written assignments, audio tapes, the satellite USPNET – the university is able to bridge the distance between its campus and non-campus students.

The total annual intake of students in the USP distance teaching scheme is 10,000 with as many as 5000 enrolling in a semester. 150 courses are available within 25 programmes. Although the need for part-time staff varies according to the number of programmes and according to the funding available, the number of full-time staff involved is 120, 51 of who operate from the headquarters in Suva, Fiji.

3.5 MIDDLE EAST

The impact of distance education may also be seen in West Asian Countries like Iran and Israel. These countries have made good headway in the field of distance education.

Payame Noor University (PNU) was founded in Iran in 1987 to challenge the staff shortage of schools and the pressure of numbers at the tertiary level. It

is situated close to the Alborz mountain and its headquarters serves as the heart of the system, as it controls and maintains 72 active study centres, operating throughout the country.

Payame Noor University aims to meet the cultural, scientific, religious and linguistic needs of the people of Iran at the higher education level.

In 1997, a total number of 70,000 students were enrolled in PNU.

Israel set up the Open University of Israel in 1974 to provide pre-academic vocational and adult education courses. Vocational courses are planned in conjunction with the Ministry of Labour, these include courses for electronic technicians, accounting, technical drafting, etc., and adult education courses pertaining to areas like environmental studies, spoken and literary Arabic and special interest courses. 1,000 students in Russia and Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) are enrolled in the Open University Judaic Studies programmes. They are taught in Russia and in the CIS in a format similar to studies in Israel, with tutors assisting students there and a course coordinator in Israel responsible for supervising the work of tutors; preparing assignments and exams.

The University has an enrolment of approximately 20,000 students. There are some 80 study centres throughout Israel and 650 tutors involved in course offerings.

3.6 NORTH AMERICA

Distance education has greatly influenced the educational systems of North America, particularly in the USA and Canada. North America has a fairly large network of distance education institutions offering school and university level courses and also a wide variety of continuing education and non-credit courses. There has been a remarkable development of distance education in varied directions in, these countries. What follows is a brief commentary on their system of distance education.

3.6.1 Canada

Canada is one of the more important regions in North America as far as distance education is concerned. Here, in this sub-section, we will be talking about the development of distance education in Canada with particular reference to Athabasca University. But before we deal with this university, we shall touch upon British Columbia, which is the birth place of the International Council for Correspondence Education (now, ICDE). It has established the Open University Consortium to facilitate the offering of degrees, certificates, diplomas, etc. The Consortium allows students to obtain degrees by choosing any courses from the three universities of the Consortium and the Open Learning Agency. The courses offered by these three universities and the Open Learning Agency are listed in the Consortium

calendar and a student can make his/her own choice of courses for obtaining a degree. To complement the course materials the Consortium has established high quality satellite and cable TV prgrammes of the Knowledge Network. In fact, the distance education programmes of British Columbia have received wide publicity through out the world.

Check Your Progress 3

State with at least one example how 'learner autonomy' has been exercised in the Philippines and in British Columbia.

Notes: a) Write the answer in the space given below.

b) Compare your answer with the one given at the end of this unit.

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The Athabasca University, conceived in 1970, marked a significant development in the field of distance education in Canada. It was set up in 1975 at Edmonton, to meet the rapidly increasing demand for university education at universities in Alberta and to explore new ideas in education. A sudden drop in enrolments at other universities in Alberta and a change of government brought about a change in the original mandate given to the university. The university was authorised to undertake a pilot study to develop home study courses. The government eventually granted permanent status to the university as an undergraduate degree-granting institution. In 1978, Athabasca University was formally established under the Universities Act to provide higher education opportunities to adults who were deprived of this privilege at the conventional universities.

The university is partly modelled after the UK Open University. Housed at Athabasca Village, it offers four kinds of distance education programmes.

i) Degree Programmes – Bachelor of Arts, Administration and General Studies;

ii) Transfer Programmes for students wishing to start, add to or complete degree programmes at other universities;

iii) Non-programme studies for adults who want to pursue personal or career related interests without working towards a specific degree or for

those who wish to explore their interests before choosing a particular programme;

iv) Visiting Students' Programmes for students at other universities who are unable to study full time and would like to take some distance education courses at Athabasca University for adding credits to their degree programmes.

Since 1980, the student body has more than tripled from 3,446 in1979-80 to 11,351 in 1991-92. The number of courses has also increased six fold, from 40 in 1980 to 248 in 1993. The university brought out a quarterly namely Research in Distance Education. It was however suspended after 1993 owing to financial difficulties.

Instruction is imparted to students registered for various programmes through home study courses, television programmes, seminar-supported tele-conference courses and reading courses. Canada has, moreover, a number of correspondence schools which were set up mostly on account of shortage of teachers. These schools help provide educational opportunities to children. One of the best known schools in this category is the Alberta Correspondence School which was established in 1923.

In June 1983, the Canadian Association for Distance Education (CADE) was formed. It operated for sometime under the Canadian Association for Continuing Education and then developed an independent identity of its own. Since 1986 CADE has been publishing a biannual international journal called *Journal of Distance Education.*

3.6.2 The United States of America (USA)

Though the role of distance education in the USA is a limited one, it is more extensive than in most other countries. The largest user of distance education is the US Federal Government, especially the Armed Forces.

The United States Armed Forces Institute (USAFI)

It is a unique distance education organisation offering an extensive array of correspondence courses to enable the Armed Forces to acquire secondary and post-secondary, occupational and traditional education. The chief motive of the distance education programme offered by USAFI is to facilitate rehabilitation of the soldiers, sailors and airmen after their retirement from active service. The Inter-Service Correspondence Exchange (ISCE) formed by military distance educators serves as a forum for the exchange of views, researchers and ideas on distance education. Over two million defence service personnel take diverse military speciality subjects offered by the ISCE. Further, distance education plays a prominent role in the professional fields as well.

The area in which distance education plays an important role in the USA is adult and continuing education. The fast growth of knowledge,

particularly in the professional fields led to popularisation of the concept of 'continuing' or life-long learning. The induction of highly sophisticated machines which resulted in greater leisure for the working people also contributed to this popularity, because the working people wanted to utilise their leisure hours to enrich their knowledge and skills or to acquire new skills for improving their career prospects. Thus, the education system in the USA, as in other developed countries, had to be geared to meet the varied educational needs of the adult population. This obviously led to the remarkable development of distance education in the USA.

The extension departments of the universities and independent study institutes provide a wide range of vocational, technical and career-oriented courses, besides continuing education courses, to keep people up-to-date in their profession. According to a 1982 survey of the correspondence programmes of the National University Continuing Education Association of the USA, there were 71 American institutions with 240,488 new enrolments.

The following 10 universities have well known correspondence institutions/ directorates/departments with annual enrolments varying from 17,500 to 800.

Brigham Young University; University of Missouri; University of Nebraska; Indiana University; Pennsylvania State University; Texas Technical University; University of Wisconsin; Louisiana State University; University of Minnesota; and University of California.

The University of Wisconsin has done commendable work through its Communication Programmes Department in developing telephone as an effective educational tool. It has a state-wide Extension Education network which uses leased, commercial telephone lines to simultaneously transmit audio and visual materials to a number of classrooms at different places.

The American Journal of Distance Education is being brought out by the Pennsylvania State University (3 issues per year).

Hadley School for the Blind

The institution of correspondence courses for the visually handicapped at Hadley School for the Blind at Winnetka, Illinois, is indeed a laudable feature of distance education in the USA. It started with 100 students. The students are spread out throughout the United States and more than 60 other countries. The school was granted accreditation by the National Home Study Council in 1958 by the National Accreditation Council for the Blind and Visually Handicapped in 1970 and by the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools in 1978. Apart from courses that help the blind to learn the Braille system, the school offers over 100 varied types of rehabilitation, high school, vocational and college level courses to enable the visually handicapped to achieve their educational goals or learn vocational skills. The school has its own amateur radio station. The students in the USA communicate with the school staff through the Hadley Wats line which is available non-gratia for eight hours every day. The students have easy access

to information through the combination of micro-computers and voice synthesisers.

Almost all independent study programmes in the USA are wholly or largely self-supporting. The whole-time staff of these programmes is usually very small – 2-5 professionals and 5 office workers for 3,340 enrolments. The national ratio is 1:463.

There are two well known national associations/organisations in the USA which are devoted to the development, collaboration, accreditation and maintenance of standards of distance programmes. These are:

i) National Home Study Council (NHSC) based in Washington and recognised by the Federal Government. The council has a well organised Accrediting Commission which celebrated its 40th Anniversary in 1995.
ii) National University Continuing Education Association (NUCEA), Washington.

These associations regularly organise seminars/workshops/conferences for the benefit of distance educators. The NHSC also publishes a Newsletter.

3.7 SOUTH AND CENTRAL AMERICA

Costa Rica, Venezuela, Argentina and Brazil are the regions in the Central and South America which have made good progress in developing distance education. In this section, we have given brief accounts of the distance education scenario in these countries.

3.7.1 Costa Rica

Distance Education in Costa Rica has taken a leap forward with the establishment of *Universidad Estatal a Distancia* (UNED) in 1977. Originally the university developed a series of professionally oriented diploma and degree programmes comprising courses like general studies and professional studies in educational sciences, educational administration, business administration, public administration and banking, farm management and nursing, health services and child social services.

The university also launched some extension courses, such as environmental studies, teaching of geography, professional education, development of scientific interests and extension studies in health, family life, agriculture, crafts, etc. Moreover, the university allows Free Studies Programmes under the scheme in which students can take any diploma or degree level programmes. Currently, nearly 15,000 are on rolls. The annual enrolment is approximately 7,000. Since 1980 the university has been collaborating with the Ministry of Public Education in developing course materials and training tutors for the Ministry. Thus, in addition to going some way towards alleviating the shortage of places in higher education, it was hoped that the

university would fulfil two other functions -- it should make higher education accessible both to those who could not take advantage of traditional courses, and to the agricultural and working populations.

3.7.2 Venezuela

Venezuela has taken to distance education in a big way to meet the educational needs of her people. Since university education is considered a means of furthering one's socio-economic status, it was felt that lack of adequate facilities to meet the demands of the people for higher education could lead to frustration. To check this frustration and to make higher education relevant to the needs of the country, the government of Venezuela decided to establish a distance teaching university in 1957, and appointed a planning committee for the proposed *universidad Nacional Abierta* (UNA). The University was established in 1977, on the principles of open education. The main aims and objectives of the university are:

- to train professionals in areas which are priorities for national development, and
- to offer educational opportunities to those who have been unable to attend traditional higher education institutions.

There is one national centre in Caracas and 20 regional centres have been set up throughout the country. A Centre of Excellence in Distance Education has been established at UNA. It offers mostly formal academic programmes. But prior to admission to these programmes, the students are required to pass introductory courses which aim at orienting them to the practice of learning at a distance. After completing the introductory courses, the students can go in for their degree programmes which comprise general studies followed by professional studies. While the general studies provide an inter-disciplinary foundation to facilitate subsequent studies, the professional studies provide technical level short courses and full length professional courses leading to a degree in Administration, Education, Engineering, Mathematics, etc. In 1978 itself the university had registered 17,160 students for its introductory courses.

3.7.3 Brazil

Brazil is an important country with a large population and a long academic tradition. Distance education in Brazil offers a variety of programmes in academic disciplines, teacher training, and training of health workers, using print and electronic media. There is little imformation available in English on the practice of distance education is the Latin American countries, including Brazil. Based on the ICDL database, we are giving you the following information about the five leading universities offering distance education courses/programmes in Brazil. Portuguese is the medium of instruction.

Centro de Ensino Technologico de Brasilia (CETEB) - Centre for Technological Teaching in Brasilia is a human-resource training agency. Its main activities are research, development and application of teaching

methodologies that best suit the Brazilian needs.

CETEB was established in the 1960s and is situated in the heart of the country, in Brasilia, the capital of the Federative Republic of Brazil, which is the only Portuguese speaking South American ountry.

The first distance education course was planned in 1973. CETEB's experience has shown that distance education is viable and appropriate to offer general knowledge to those who could not complete their primary and secondary studies by the age of 14, and for professional qualification at various levels, including the technical teaching and training of professionals in some areas with specified and limited demand. The courses offered by CETEB include:

- courses for youngsters and adults who have not attended school at the appropriate time
- in-service training to the vocational school goers at their own workplaces
- a range of programmes for teachers.

Since 1994 CETEB has been developing an advisory project on education in Mozambique. The project, financed by UNDP and BIRD aims to develop a distance education strategy to train 3,000 primary teachers in the country.

Courses are delivered using printed correspondence texts prepared by/for the institution. Primary and secondary school courses (for youngsters and adults) take place in Pedagogical Centres that are located in CETEB, in companies or even in other states.

CETEB had offered education to over 25 000 students by 1995.

Fundacao Brasileira para o Desenvolvimento do Ensino de Ciencias began its distance education programme in 1987. This institution offers a continuing education programme -- Maths for Primary Teachers. Subjects offered in the programme include: mathematics education; mathematics; mathematical sciences. Courses are delivered using printed correspondence texts prepared by/for the institution. The duration of the course is 34 weeks. There were 17,631 students enrolled with the institution in 1992; the annual intake was 4,731 students and 4,000 students had completed the programme.

Fundacao Educational e Cultural Padre Landell de Moura was established in 1967. The main aims and objectives of the institution are:

* To spread education by means of sound and images
* To reach deprived and under-educated adolescents and adults in the outer urban zones and rural regions.

The institution offeres Literacy, Pre-Primary and Primary courses, and Community Education courses on: Civic/Social Issues; Rural Life; Health,

Car Mechanics; Domestic Electrical Appliances; Radio, Television and Printing. No specific entrance qualifications are required for admission. Courses are delivered using printed materials; radio; television; audio and video cassettes; slides; an instructor-monitor.

Instituto de Radiodifusao Educative da Bahia commenced its distance education programmes in 1963. It offers a Secondary School programme (for adults) and a Training of Primary School Teachers programme. Subjects taught include curriculum development; educational psychology; mathematics education; science education; foundations of education; social integration; art education; communication; sex education.

Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul was founded in 1934 as Universidade do Porto Alegre, a State institution. It acquired its status as a federal institution and its present title in 1965. It began its distance education programmes in 1988.

Subjects offered include; agricultural sciences; agriculture; architecture and planning; architecture; town planning and urban studies; humanities; history; literature and regional studies; English, Spanish, French, Hebrew, Russian, Polish and Japanese languages; commercial and management studies; accountancy; administration; office studies; public administration; education and teaching; curriculum development; educational policy and management; mathematics education; science education; mathematics; mathematical sciences; medicine and health; medicine; nursing; pharmaceutical sciences; science and technology; genetics; engineering and technology; civil engineering; electrical, electronic and microelectronic engineering; materials science and metallurgy; mechanical and production engineering; physical sciences; physics; services; library and information studies; social studies and geography.

In 1992 there were 2,000 members of staff involved part-time in the production and delivery of the courses. There are currently 15,000 students enrolled on courses and 28,000 students have completed programmes.

3.7.4 Argentina

Argentina too has a similar profile of distance education as Brazil, though its additional interests are in military training and training of industrial work force. The following information about the seven institutions offering distance eduation programmes in Argentina would give you an idea of the country's priorities and concerns.

Circulo de Suboficiales de Suboficiales del Enjercito (CIRSE) started its distane education activities in 1978. Courses are offered in the areas of arts; humanities; contemporary and cultural studies; history; Spanish and English languages; Argentine literature; commerial and management studies; accountancy; personnel and industrial relations; law; medicine and health;

health education; soial studies; geography and psychology.

Escuela de Ingenieria Aeronautica was founded in 1947 and began its distance teaching programmes in 1987. The main aims and objectives of the institution are to help military and civilian personnel, both in Argentina and other Latin American countries, who cannot attend courses offered by conventional systems.

The institution offers courses at degree level. Subjects include Systems Engineering (Systems analyst); epistemology; English; administration; introduction to law; computing; information technology and systems; mathematical sciences; operational research; statistics, decision making; electronics and microelectronics; physics; economics; behavioural sciences; how to study; drawing and introduction to technology. Courses offered in the area of Business Administration include: philosophy; accountancy; administration; public law; private law; computing; mathematical sciences; statistics; economics; professional ethics and taxation.

Universidad de Belgrano was established in 1964 and began its distance teaching programmes in 1983. The courses offered as continuing education programmes are: agricultural sciences; agriculture; agricultural engineering; veterinary sciences; humanities; history; administration; business administration; finance; management; marketing; personnel and industrial relations; public administration; education and teaching; teacher upgrading; educational objectives; evaluation; psychology and educational technology.

Universidad Nacional de la Patagonia San Juan Bosco Region was founded in 1980 as a result of the merger of Universidad de la Patagonia San Juna Bosco and Universidad Nacional de la Patagonia. Distance Education commenced at the University in 1987. Its primary aims and objectives are to solve the problem of shortages of trained teachers in certain subjects and to extend the education to other places. A survey was carried out in several regions of Patagonia during 1987/88 to ascertain the socio-economic, educational, political and cultural problems of the region and what role distance education might have to play to solve them. The survey brought to light serious problems in the area of health, and the university decided to offer a distance education course for practising health workers.

Universidad Nacional de San Luis started its distance education courses in 1971, which came to an end in 1976. It was again revived towards the end of 1990. The courses which the university was hoping to offer include curriculum development and adolescent group learning at Diploma and Certificate levels.

Universidad Naional de Tucuman was founded in 1914 and began its distance education programme in 1988. Its main aim is to revitalize the higher education teaching function. The university offers a Post-graduate Certificate (Formacion Pedagogica para Docentes Universitarios) in the

distance teaching mode. Subjects taught include education and teaching; curriculum development; educational psychology and university teaching.

Universidad Tecnologica Nacional (UTN) was founded in 1959 and began its distance education programme in 1985. The university offers distance courses and training on specific subjects as continuing education programmes.

Distance Education in Latin America in general has also been discussed in Block 1, Unit 1 of this course.

Check Your Progress 4

Indentify and write about one conspicuous feature that markedly differentiates the distance education system of Venezuela from that of the other countries of Central and South America, particularly Costa Rica.

Notes: a) Space is given below for your answer.
b) Compare your answer with the one given at the end of this unit.

3.8 MEGA OPEN UNIVERSITIES

During the course of our discussion on the distance education system in various countries, we have referred to the contribution of some of the open universities, ten of which were categorised as mega-open universities of the world at the Seventeenth World Conference of the International Council for Distance Education (ICDE) in Birmingham, U.K. Mega Open Universities are those institutions which have a student enrolment of over 100,000. These universities between them share a staggering total of over 2,5000,000 enrolled students.

We provide here some information complementary to that presented in this unit and in unit 2 with reference to the growth and structure of open/distance education in different countries.

1. Anadolu University, Turkey

The Academies of Economics and Commercial Sciences founded in 1958 and the Academies of Engineering and Architecture founded in 1970 were recognised and united as Anadolu University in 1982. The Open Education Faculty (OEF) was initally set up to offer the BA degree through the distance mode. Over the years, the faculty has developed associate degrees and certificate programmes in different fields, including teacher training, tourism and hotel management, health education, social sciences and support programmes for high school students. The OEF also runs degree programmes for Turkish nationals in Western Europe.

OEF students are placed in various programmes through an admission examination held by the State Central Student Placement. All students taking these examinations must be high school graduates. The total number of students enrolled in the distance education programmes in economics and business administration in 1992-1993 was 470,072. The Executive Officer of the University is Professor Dr. Akar Ocal.

2. Central National d' Enseignement a Distance (CNED), France

CNED was established in 1939 to cater to the needs of young refugees of the War. In 1991, CNED was partly decentralised from its Paris operational base as a result of the new national and regional development schemes. Its Directorate General is being established near Poitiers, on the Futuroscope site, a symbol of innovation. At the CNED headquarters, a single telephone reception video transmits applications from students all over the world and allows interactive sessions to take place during the video transmissions.

CNED offers all levels of studies from first year infants' school to higher education and vocational and in-service training. Besides, it offers home packages for subjects which are not taught in schools. From 83,000 students in 1950 the number swelled to 350,000 in 1995. Of the present total, 26,500

are scattered in 176 different countries. Twelve countries in Central and Eastern Europe receive the CNED's programmes through the satellite interaction video transmissions of the Ecole Francophone de Droit, the French Law School which facilitates live dialogue with academics and legal specialists.

CNED has about 1,800 full-time and 3,000 part-time teachers. The CNED Directeur Generale is M. Michel Moreau.

3. China Central Radio and TV University (CCRTVU), China

The national network of Radio and Television Universities was set up in 1979. The system of RTVUs is organised at central and regional levels and has a five tier structure. At the apex is the CCRTVU and at the provincial level, there are Provincial Radio and Television Universities (PRTVUs). A diagrammatic representation of the structure is given below:

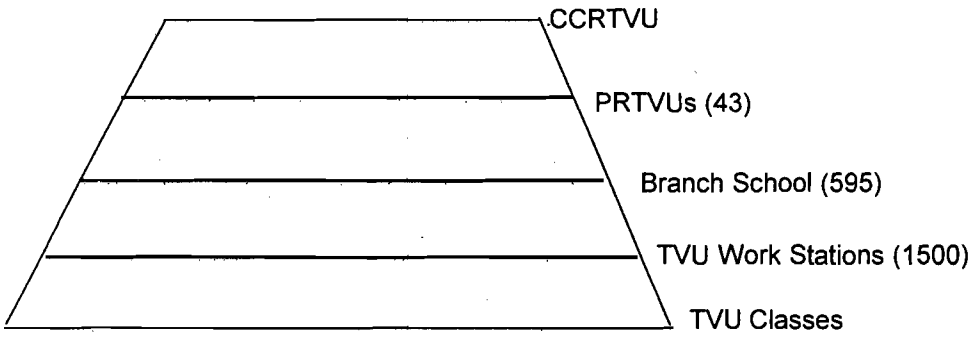

Figure 4 : The Chinese National Network of RTVUs

While the CCRTVU offers courses at the degree and continuing education levels, the PRTVUs offer courses that meet local economic and educational needs. In 1992, the number of students enrolled was 146,000; the number of graduates was 121,000 and that of registered students was 330,400. Students are required to complete 114 credits, (one credit is about 18 hours of study), for a three year full-time equivalent degree and 76 credits for a two year full-time equivalent degree. The CCRTVU follows both continuous and final assessment schemes. The former is done through written assignments and tests, attendance at regular workshops and seminars at other institutions/study centres and contact with the tutor, and the latter is done through written examination.

In CCRTVU, nearly 15,300 full-time and 12,500 part-time academic staff are involved in the process of teaching/learning at a distance. Dr. Wei Yu is the President of the CCRTVU

4. Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU), India

Established in September, 1985, IGNOU started offering academic programmes in January, 1987. Over a span of 15 years, the university now has a wide range of programmes in various disciplines at different levels --

certificate, diploma, first degree and postgraduate. As a matter of policy, the university has relaxed entry requirements. However, they vary from one programme to the other depending on the level and size of the student clientele. Besides, nearly 400 Study Centres functionally governed by 25 Regional Centres, IGNOU has 100 Work Programme Centres to serve the students. It has nearly 50 programmes with about 610 courses.

In 1999-2000, the total number of students was above 600,000 with an estimated annual intake of 150,000. IGNOU has 216 full-time and 12,800 part-time teachers. The Vice-Chancellor of the University is Professor A. W. Khan

5. Korea National Open University (KNOU), Korea

As mentioned earlier (see 3.3.6), in 1994 the Korea Air and Correspondence University (KACU) was renamed the Korea National Open University (KNOU). The University offers one Bachelors' Degree programme and 475 other courses.

There are 12 Regional Study Centres and 27 Local Study Centres to serve the students. In 1995, the total student enrolment was 196,175. The estimated annual student intake is 70,000. KNOU has 678 full-time and 2,6449 part-time staf. The Executive Officer of the University is Dr. Wansang Han.

6. Open University (OU), United Kingdom

Established by a Royal Charter in 1969, OU offers three types of programme -- undergraduate, postgraduate and continuing education. A range of free-standing self-study packs are also available. The university offers more than 400 programmes in all, both courses and study packets.

No educational qualifications are required for admission to undergraduate courses, but students must be at least 18 years old and resident in any European Union country.

OU has 13 Regional Offices and 290 Student Centres. Attendance in the tutorial and counselling sessions available at the Study Centres is optional. A student newspaper, '*Sesame*', is published regularly and circulated to current students. The Open University Students' Association organises study-related and social activities.

More than 200,000 students study with the OU at present; 132,000 are taking undergraduate level courses and another 10,000 are enrolled at the postgraduate level. Approximately 157,000 students have graduated with BA/BSc degrees. The university employs more than 3,000 full-time staff and 7,000 part-time tutorial and counselling staff. The Vice Chancellor of the University is Sir John Daniel.

7. Sukhothai Thammathirat Open University (STOU), Thailand

STOU offers distance education programmes at Certificate (15), Bachelor's Degree (21) and Masters Degree (13) levels. Further, STOU offers 598 other courses. Applicants are required to have a secondary school certificate or its equivalent. For student support services, STOU has various kinds of educational service centres: Resource Centres (7); Local Study Centres (78); Special Study Centres for Health Sciences (63); Local Study Centres for Agricultural Extension and Cooperatives (7); 'STOU Centres' in provincial libraries (75) and Area Resource Centres.

The estimated annual intake of students is 80,000 to 90,000. The total student enrolment at present is approximately 250,000. The largest group of students are those from the 21 to 30 age groups, making up 64% of the student population. Those between 31 and 40 make up 25% and 11% of the students are under twenty-one years. Students from urban areas comprise 26% while those from rural areas account for the rest. Of STOU's students, 49% are male and 51% female.

The number of full-time staff is 2,136 (429 full-time academics). In addition, there are about 4,000 part-time academic and professional staff from conventional universities, public agencies and private firms appointed as external experts in the various course teams for courseware and media production, the conduct of tutorial sessions and the preparation of test and examination papers. The President of STOU is Dr. Iam Chaya-Nigam.

8. Universidad Nacional de Education a Distancia (UNED), Spain

UNED was legally founded by an Act of Parliament on 18 August, 1972. It forms part of the structure of Spanish higher education and shares many characteristics including the syllabi with the other Spanish universities. Courses are offered at undergraduate, post-graduate and continuing education levels.

The total enrolment in 1993-1994 was 133,651. Of these, nearly 109,699 were enrolled in degree courses and 24,000 in continuing education courses. Applicants to degree courses are required to have obtained the Bachillerato or to have successfully completed the UNED direct access programme, a preparatory admission course for applicants aged over 25 years and lacking university entrance qualifications. No academic qualifications are required for admission to the Open Distance Education-Programme, which is offered in the continuing education area and enables students to enrol in individual courses without taking a degree.

UNED has 60 study centres and 21 sub-centres. Besides, it has established 9 support centres in several European and Latin American countries. The Rector of UNED is Dr. Jenaro Costas Rodriguex.

9. University of South Africa (UNISA), South Africa

The history of UNISA dates back to the establishment of the University of the Cape of Good Hope in 1873. It was initially an examining and not a teaching university, with which some teaching colleges were affiliated. In 1946, the University was renamed the University of South Africa and moved to Pretoria. In January, 1964, the University of South Africa started giving distance education courses to off-campus students.

UNISA offers educational opportunities for degrees and diplomas, ranging from undergraduate diplomas to doctorates. For admission to undergraduate diplomas, candidates must hold a senior School Leaving Certificate with at least five subjects on Higher and/or Standard Grade, or qualify for a certificate of full or conditional exemption.

In 1995, UNISA had about 130,000 students with equal representation from both males and females. It has a staff of 3,400. There are six faculties with a total of 59 departments.

10. Universitas Terbuka (UT), Indonesia

UT was established in 1984 as the first distance teaching university in Indonesia. The Universitàs Terbuka is open to everyone who possesses the senior secondary school diploma. Students do not have to take any test or face any interview to enrol for the courses. The only exception to the 'open entry' rule is registration in the Faculty of Education. At the end of each course, usually at the end of a semester, students sit for an examination. After registration with the university, those who have already earned a number of credits from other universities may claim the transfer of credits.

By the end of 1995, the number of students had reached 353,000. The Rector of UT is Professor B. Suprapto Brotosiswoyo.

3.9 LET US SUM UP

In this unit, we have been talking about the 'wild-fire spread' of distance education in four continents -- Africa, America, Asia and Australia. What do we notice? The following table will give you the summary of the state of distance education in these continents (Europe has already been discussed in Unit 2).

Table 3: Status of distance education across the world

Continent	Aims and Features
Africa	* To train the teachers and to educate the masses, countries like Nigeria, Kenya, Tanzania, Guyana, Ethiopia and Ghana offer distance education courses. * Print and electronic media and personal contact programmes are the primary means used to impart

	knowledge and skills.
America (North, South and Central)	* Distance education has grown considerably in the USA, Canada, Venezuela, Costa Rica, Brazil and Argentina * Application and professionally-oriented courses are being offered. * Print and electronic media play an important role in disseminating information, knowledge and skills.
Asia	* An ever increasing demand for education and the policy to democratise education compelled countries like India, Pakistan, Thailand, Sri Lanka, the Philippines, China, South Korea, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Hong Kong, and Japan to adopt the distance education system. * The spurt of enrolment rates in distance education institutions reveals the academic feasibility and pedagogic viability of distance education. * Courses are based mainly on print materials which are supplemented by electronic media and contact programmes.
Australia	* New Zealand, Papua New Guinea and the Pacific Islands are the countries which promote distance education in a big way. * The university courses of Australia are based on an integrated model.

PUTTING UNITS 1, 2 AND 3 TOGETHER: THE EMERGING TRENDS

The analysis of the development of distance education in various regions of the world helps us discern some of the emerging trends and draw inferences regarding the future of this innovative teaching/learning system. It is clear that distance education ;

i) has established its credibility as an academically viable and cost-effective alternative channel for imparting education with considerable improvement in the quality of teaching materials, support services and integration of new communication technology,
ii) has the potential to extend and equalise educational opportunities and take education to the doorsteps of the neglected or poorly served segments of population — even to those who live in remote and sparsely populated areas,
iii) is specially suitable for the education of adults, drop-outs from the formal system and the working people,
iv) can provide education at all levels and to varied clientele,
v) is capable of providing a wide range of varied types of courses under

general education, basic education, continuing education, vocational, technical, professional education, including in-service training/refresher/enrichment courses, further education, extension education, hobby courses, etc.

vi) is specially relevant to the ever-increasing educational needs of developing countries,

vii) can reduce pressure on the conventional universities/colleges and schools which have only a limited intake capacity,

viii) has the potential to bring about innovations and improve the of quality of education,

ix) is more learner-oriented and therefore capable of making the learner more self-reliant and confident,

x) is capable of allowing considerable flexibility to the learner with regard to choice of study areas, completion time, etc.

xi) gives a chance to those who do not have formal academic qualifications to fulfil their desire for higher education.

Distance education has been continuously evolving in response to the educational needs of society and the expectations of the learners. This, indeed is a very progressive and healthy trend which is bound to further enhance the credibility of the system and the consequent benefits accruing to the learners. It should be noted that from mere home study, independent learning, correspondence education, the distance mode of teaching/learning has developed into a multi-media teaching/learning system. The explosion in the field of communication technology has led to the integration of new and innovative communication media with the distance education system resulting in new types of distance education institutes such as Universities of the Air, Tele-Universities and Open Universities. It has made education open to many, irrespective of age, formal entry qualification, place of residence, sex, pace of learning or completion time, etc. Distance education system gives orientation to in-service teachers, specially in countries where there is a shortage of teachers, espesially properly trained ones.

Active regional, national and international level rapport and collaboration among distance education institutes has led to significant collective thinking and sustained efforts for further improvement in the range of course offerings, teaching/learning methodologies, etc. It should also be mentioned that in some countries where private enterprise has made a considerable contribution towards providing distance education, useful collaboration between private and pubic sectors has become a reality.

With growing collaboration at regional, national and international levels and strong international forums like the ICDE, AAOU and COL, distance education has developed into a highly specialised teaching/learning methodology based on the principles of adult learning. As the traditional system is too rigid to meet the educational and professional challenges of modern society, distance education by virtue of its openness, flexibility and multi-media teaching/learning methodology promises to play a pivotal role in the future by restructuring the 'delivery system' of education and information and by making education responsive and relevant to the needs of the learner.

To achieve this, within distance education, attempts have been made to evolve an alternative kind of education or curriculum, rather than impart the conventional type of education through an alternative channel. The discernible developments during the past two decades or so resulting in the establishment of open universities across the world are clear pointers in that direction.

Countries with large populations, particularly the developing countries, will be able to meet the challenge of ever-increasing demands for varied kinds of education only if they take to distance education in a big way. But the success of the open universities would depend upon the spirit of innovation and enthusiasm to come out of the cocoons of the rigid conventional system of education. The future also demands a chain of open schools which could help us build up a truly open distance education system from a lower level upwards.

It is a healthy indication that there is growing awareness and earnestness for organising and strengthening varied 'support services' -- information dissemination, counselling, study centres, contact sessions, library facilities, mobile learning centres, prompt evaluation of the assignment-responses in the minimum turn around time, telephone tutoring and varied media back-up. These support services would bring about yet another development, i.e., from individual learning to group learning, in distance education. It makes education not only interactive but also reactive, collaborative and creative.

Distance education has emerged as a distinct discipline and considerable research is being carried out on various aspects of this innovative system. This is bound to lead to further improvement and integration of the variety of new communication media which are now easily available. The areas, range and variety of distance education courses is ever widening. This will make such education relevant to the needs of society, and bring about reforms in curriculum development and in the evaluation of students' performance.

Now before we conclude this block, let us have a look at a listing of some Open Universities and some important Journals, Bulletins, Periodicals, etc., on distance education, across the world.

SOME OTHER WELL KNOWN OPEN UNIVERSITIES

1974 Allama Iqbal Open University, Islamabad, Pakistan
1974 The Open University, Israel
1975 Fern Universitat, Hagen, Germany
1975 Athabasca University, Edmonton, Canada
1978 Universidad Nacional Abierta (UNA), Venezuela
1980 Open University of Sri Lanka
1982 Dr. B. R. Ambedkar Open University, Hyderabad, India
1983 The University of Air, Japan
1983 The Netherlands Open University, Netherlands
1984 The Dutch Open University, Netherlands
1987 Payame Noor University, Iran

1987 Kota Open University, Rajasthan, India
1987 Nalanda Open University, Bihar, India
1989 Yashwant Rao Chavan Maharashtra Open University, Maharashtra, India
1992 M. P. Bhoj Open University, Madhya Pradesh, India
1994 Ambedkar Open University, Gujarat, India

Journals, Bulletins, Periodicals, etc.

1. *Open Praxis* - Bulletin of the International Council for Distance Education
2. *Distance Education* - Journal of the Open and Distance Learning Association of Australia
3. *About Distance Education* - International Extension College, Cambridge, UK
4. *Open Line* - OU (UK/BBC magazine)
5. *Continuing Education Newsletter* - OU (UK)
6. *Data link* - OU (UK)
7. *Open Tech-programme* News - Manpower Services Commission, UK
8. *EHS Newsletter* - European Home Study Council
9. *Epistolodidaktika* - Association of European Correspondence Schools
10. *Home Study* - International Extension College, Cambridge
11. *The Home Study Review* - Washington
12. *ICS News* - Journal of International Correspondence Schools, London
13. *The Independent Study Newsletter* - National University Continuing Education Association (NUCEA), USA
14. *International LOI Bulletin*
15. *NUCEA News* - National University Continuing Education Association, Washington
16. *NHSC News* - National Home Study Council, Washington
17. *NUEA Correspondence Study Newsletter* - National University Extension Association, Madison, Wisconsin, USA
18. *Open Campus* - Centre for Educational Services, Deakin University, Australia
19. *Open Circuit* - Newsletter of Telecommunication Development, OU (UK)
20. *Open Learning* - OU (UK) Longman Group Ltd.
21. *Innovative Higher Education* - University without walls - International Council, Toronto, Canada
22. *Journal of Distance Education* - Canadian Association for Distance Education (CADE)
23. *American Journal of Distance Education* - American Centre for the Study of Distance Education, College of Education, the Pennsylvania State University
24. *Indian Journal of Open Learning* - STRIDE, Indira Gandhi National Open University, India
25. *Comlearn* - News Publication of the Commonwealth of Learning

A word of caution : We do not claim that the above list is comprehensive. Besides these, there are quite a number of books now available on various aspects of distance education.

Check Your Progress : Possible Answers

1 Distance education courses have been organised in Africa with the purpose of

i) improving the general educational standards of the people,

ii) giving proper training to a vast number of in-service as well as prospective teachers, and

iii) catering to the educational needs of refugees/ the disadvantaged .

2 In China, primary importance is given to electronic media. To be precise, instruction is imparted chiefly through television, and is supported by print materials and face-to-face contact programmes, whereas in other countries, the emphasis is primarily on the print medium, and the electronic media are normally used as supplementary or complementary aids.

3 In British Columbia, the distance education system does not restrict the students to choosing a particular combination of courses to obtain a degree. The option, more often than not, is left to the students themselves. The students, however, have to choose from among the courses given by the three universities of the Consortium and the Open Learning Agency.

In the Philippines learners are given the autonomy to initiate the curricular materials. These materials may at a later stage be revised and vetted by the subject experts.

4. Distance education system in Venezuela requires the students to get through the introductory courses in order to be admitted to formal academic courses. Such restrictions are usually minimal in most of the open universities. For example, those who join the open system study in Costa Rica can obtain a degree/diploma even without registering themselves for the courses.

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