
UNIT 3 THE INTERNATIONAL SCENE-2

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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 education practices in the major regions.

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This unit complements the previous one in which we discussed the growth of distance education in Europe. Consequent upon the cost efficiency and effectiveness its accessibility and its flexibility and longing for education equality 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 related to the training of teachers. Most of the school teachers were either under trained or untrained. Considering the necessity of training the in-service teachers and the future need of employing large number 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.

Growth and Present Status

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 established 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 organisation 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 instill 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

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

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

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

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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:

- Bachelor's education courses for in-service school teachers,
- Regular broadcasts and videos for school teachers,
- 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 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.

The need for an Open University in Bangladesh was felt long ago. The history of distance education in Bangladesh dates back to 1956, when the education Directorate was assigned with the responsibility for distribution of 200 radio receivers to educational institutions. This led to the creation of an Audio-Visual Cell and later the Audio-Visual Education Centre (AVEC in 1962). No further progress in distance education was made till 1971.

After Independence Bangladesh faced the challenge of meeting the educational needs of mass people. To meet this challenge the necessity for a new mode of education was widely felt. As a sequel to that feeling, the School Broadcasting Pilot Project (SBP) was launched in 1978. Later in 1983, the project was transformed into National Institute of Educational Media and Technology (NIEMT).

NIEMT was later replaced by the Bangladesh Institute of Distance Education (BIDE) in 1985. Apart from producing audio-visual materials, BIDE offered the Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) programme in distance

mode. The success of BIDE encouraged policy makers to take up a major plan for establishing an open university. The plan became a reality in October 1992 when the Bangladesh Open University Act 1992 was passed in the Parliament

Objective of the University

Bangladesh Open University (BOU) is the only public institution in the country that imparts education in distance mode. In place of campus based teaching, this university uses technology including electronic devices to reach people in different corners of the country. The learner in this system is not restricted by time, space or age. A learner can think and learn at his own will, at his own place and at any time whenever he/she feels free to learn.

The main objective of the university is to expand all levels of education in different dimensions in science, agriculture, humanities, social science etc. and all other that come under the purview of human knowledge and understanding by diversity of means including the use of digital technology. It intends to provide opportunities of education to all classes of people and create efficient and skilled manpower by improving the quality of education.

As it is obvious from the objectives, BOU has opened a new horizon for the vast majority of eager learners of Bangladesh who for various reasons drop out of the conventional system of education. BOU serves another target group who wishes to continue to update their knowledge by becoming a life long learner. By imparting knowledge and skill to them, BOU is contributing to human resource development in the country.

In the national education arena this university therefore carries enormous responsibilities and possibilities. BOU is the only Institution in the country which can contribute a lot in fulfilling the objective of the Government regarding eradication of illiteracy from the country. The main campus is at Board Bazar, Gazipur covering the area of 35 acres established in year October 1992, 6 Schools and 09 Divisions, 12 Regional Resource Centres, with 80 Coordinating Offices, 1106 Study Centres, with 23 formal programmes and 19 non formal programmes, with a student enrolment of 2,71,630 (Source: <http://www.bou.edu.bd/>).

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, to upgrade the skills of workers and to 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. Further, 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 those 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 women and 36.76% are men. 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

IGNOU is actively working towards providing Inclusive Growth and enhancing the Gross enrolment ratio (GER) of India.

IGNOU PROFILE

Schools	21
Divisions	14
Chairs	5
Centres	1
Institutes	1
Regional Centres	67
Teachers and Academics	538
Administrative personal	1303
Learners Support Service centres	3252
North Eastern Educational Development Project	9 Regional Centres
Learners support centres	552
Institute	5
Overseas Learners support service centres	70
Overseas Learners enrolment.	43500
Academic Counsellors	48000
Ph D Programmes	49
Academic programmes	511
Online Programmes	27
Community Colleges	258
On campus programmes	26
Uploaded study materials (open sources)	95% (in total)
Active registered users repository (OER)	60000
Learners on rolls	1,11,898
Active learners	3.5 millions
Degrees, diplomas and certificates awarded (2011)	1.5 millions`
Volumes of Course Materials	162,99.063
Audio Video Programmes	3,718
Learners taken term end expatiations (2011-12)	28,73,147
Learners awarded Degrees (2011-12)	14,80,393
Available SMS alerts	All over the country
Free education for prisoners	4110 (jails in India)

Source: 24th Convocation Vice Chancellor's Report; Sep. 2011

Higher education scenario in India according to:

Higher Education Statistics in India

- 367 universities level institution
- 20 Central universities
- 217 State open universities
- 104 Deemed universities
- 5 universities established under state legislature
- 13 institute for national importance established under central legislation
- 6 private universities
- 18000 degree and post graduate colleges (including around 19000 to women colleges)
- 13.9 million students in higher education
- 0.488 million faculty 4.466 women students (40.40 % of total enrolment 12.35 women in professional courses)
- India has third largest higher education system in the world , only to china and united states
- 40% of enrolment in higher education coming from lower social economic
- 35% women from lower enrolment

Source: Draft Report of Working Group on Higher Education for 11th Five-Year Plan.

Higher Educational profile In India

- The 7 to 9% if higher education enrolled elite educated made remarkable mark in their performance at International Scenario as Asians (Kulandai swamy 1994).
- National higher education council expecting 54% increase in Higher Education enrolment knowledge communities.
- Kapil Sibal, Union Minister for Human Resource and Development (HRD) while inaugurating the World Education Summit 2011 said, "At present we have Gross Enrolment Ratio of 15 per cent and through Right to Education Act and Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan we are trying to ensure that it reaches 30 percent by 2020 which will allow about 45 million children to go to colleges for teaching."
- 574 – Universities
- 268 – State Universities
- 40 – Central Universities
- 145 – Dual Mode Distance Educational Institutions
- 14 – State Open Universities
- 1 – National Open University
- 80 – Private Institutions running distance educational programs

- 33 – Institutes of National importance
- 43000 – Colleges
- 2665 – Woman Colleges
- 53 – Private Universities
- 130 – Deemed Universities
- 11973 – Affiliated Colleges
- 66 – Academic Staff Colleges
- 500 – Autonomous Colleges
- 8 – IITS
- 7 – IIMS
- 10 – NITS
- 1000 – Polytechnic
- 374 – New Degree Colleges

Table 3.1: Enrolment Rate in Higher Education by Regions—2001-02

Groups of Countries	GER
Countries in Transition	36.5
Developed Countries	54.6
Developing Countries	11.3
World	23.2
Inida(Tentative)	About 10%

Source: Higher education in the world 2006, the financing of University, 2006, (Palgrave Macmillan)

Table 3.2: Current Quality Status in Colleges of Higher Education in Inida (as on March 31, 2005)

Details	Number
Total Number of Colleges	17,625
Number of Colleges under UGC purview	14,000
Number of Colleges recognized under section 2(f) of UGC Act	5,589(40%)
Number of Colleges recognized under section 12(B) of UGC Act	5,273(38%)
Number of Colleges actually funded by the UGC	4,870(35%)
Number of Colleges accredited by the NAAC	2,780 (20%)
Number of Colleges accredited by the NAAC and scoring above 60%	2,506 (17.9)

Some Public Initiatives: The success stories of the initiatives of the Government in the field of higher education, which have already received both national and international recognition, are only a few:

Growth and Present Status

- The setting up of Central Universities, with a high quality of infrastructure for teaching and research.
- Setting up Indian Institutes of Technology and Indian Institutes of Management, which are leaders in Technical and Management Education in the country and have earned very high reputation for their graduates internationally.
- Opening up the Professional Education Sector to large scale private investment and permitting the investors cost recovery from student fees.
- Establishing Indian Institutes of Information Technology both in the Public and Private sectors, and crating a new phase of public/private partnership in the IT area with the Institutions given Deemed University Status and ensuring active Industry involvement in Governance.
- Implementing the plan for producing the required human resource for the rapidly growing Information Technology Industry permitting private sector to establish in Management (ISB at Hyderabad) with linkages with world class institutions.
- Permitting some deemed Universities to pen campuses both in other states and abroad.

Some Recent Policy Initiatives by the Government for Higher Education

- Prime Minister's speech on 15th August 2007 announcing Government's decision to establish many centrally funded high level institutions and help states to establish degree colleges in districts having poor enrolment
- National Development Council's approval to increase X1th Plan allocation to UGC by four fold compared to the Xth Plan allocation
- Prime Minister Speech inviting active public-private partnership while dedicating the Bharti School of Telecommunications Technology and Management at IIT Delhi, and promising liberalizing rules and procedures to make the partnership effective (March 20, 2006)
- Finance Minister's allotment of an additional INR 1000 million each to Universities of Mumbai, Kolkata, Chennai and the Punjab Agricultural University to make them world class (Budget Speech 2006)
- Finance Minister's allotment of an additional INR 1000 million to Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore to become a world level university (Budget speech 2005)
- Setting up of a Knowledge Commission(2005)
- Draft National Biotechnology Plan (2004/05)
- Liberal grant of Autonomy-Deemed University Status to IITs, NITs (2004)
- Setting up Indian Institutes of Information Technology, Design and Manufacturing (IITDM) at Kancheepuram and Jabalpur in 2003-04. These institutes are to provide a sustainable competitive advantage to the Indian industry in the area of design and manufacturing of new products

- New Science and Technology Policy (2003).
- Setting up an educational Satellite (2003)
- Transforming India into a Knowledge Superpower (2003)
- Ambani Report on “A Policy Framework for Reforms in Education” submitted to the then Prime Minister as part of a special subject group on policy frame work for private investment in Education, Health and Rural Development (April 2000)
- National Policy on Education (1986/92/2000)
- Information Technology Action Plan
- Technology Vision of India 2020(1996)
- Establishment of NAAC, NBA (1994)
- Encouraging Private Investment in Professional Education (Since 1980s)
- Upgrading Technical Education System through World Bank Assistance-Tech Ed.I,II,III and TEQIP (1987-2008).
- Selecting Universities and Colleges with “Potential for Excellence” started by UGC during Xth Plan to identify at least 161 colleges during the Plan period. So far 9 Universities and 97 colleges have been identified and given special grants.

Table 3.3: Distribution of Central and State Universities into types of Discipline

Type	Number	%
General	126	54
Agricultural	35	15
Technological	14	6
Language	11	5
Medical	9	4
Law	6	2.6
Woman	5	1
Animal & Fishery	4	1.7
Open	11	5
Others	16	5.7
Total	237	100

The Working Group for Higher Education for the 11th Plan has projected a growth of GER based on SES from current 10.5 to 15.5 by the end of the plan period as well as based on census data from 15.6 (current) to 20.6 by the end of the plan. Table 8 details the projection based on enrolment in the base year 2006-07.

Teachers in Higher education

- 1) 472,000 teachers in Higher Education
- 2) 77,000 are in University departments whereas
- 3) 3,95,000 are in affiliated colleges
- 4) The student/teacher ratio in University departments is 18:1
- 5) In affiliated colleges is 23:1

State Open Universities In India

- 1) Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Open University, Hyderabad
- 2) Indira Gandhi National Open University, New Delh
- 3) Vardhaman Mahaveer Open University, Kota
- 4) Nalanda Open University, Patna
- 5) Y C Maharashtra Open University, Nashik
- 6) Madhya Pradesh Bhoj Open University, Bhopal
- 7) Dr. Baba Saheb Ambedkar Open University, Ahmedabad
- 8) Karnataka State Open University, Mysore
- 9) Netaji Subhas Open University, Kolkatta
- 10) U.P. Rajarshi Tandon Open University, Allahabad
- 11) Tamil Nadu Open University, Chennai
- 12) Pandit Sunderlal Sharma Open University, Bilaspur, Raipur
- 13) Uttaranchal Open University, Haldwani
- 14) Krishana Kanta Handiqui Open University, Guwahati

Besides, we have 140 dual mode distance educational Institutions and around 1000 distance educational institutes in private and pubic sectors.

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 12 more open universities new 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. The total enrolment of foreign students in all courses is 4, 03,500 in 40 overseas centres.

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 universities they could not accommodate the ever-growing numbers of university aspirants. The Seoul National University established a Department of Correspondence Courses in 1972, to offer 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. Admission in this university 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. While the 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 the instructors themselves.

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 to 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. 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 180,538. 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 in 1981 on Distance Teaching in Asia.

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, multimedia self-instructional teaching materials in the form of video-tapes, audiocassettes, audio-graphics and slides are also provided.

To help students in their learning activities, eleven 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 lectures and attend lecturers, 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 academic year 1992-93 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 careers.

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; to stimulate and sustain workers' interest in training through a familiar yet interesting medium of instruction; to generate more training places for workers over 40 by developing programmes adapted to adult learning styles; and to 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; women 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, Word perfect, 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 talent 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 centre 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 until 1997 and it became an integral part of mainland 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 organisation managed by Caritas-Hong Kong. It started its service in 1962. At present, it has 26 day and evening schools offering fulltime 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 postsecondary 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, and
- 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 recognised 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 through the University and Polytechnic Grants Committee. Distance 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 percent 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, Islamabad (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 Education 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 grassroots 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 Newalla, 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 are 164 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 ranges from 10,000 to 80,000 students. Total student enrolment to date is 250,000. The number of full-time staff is 1,985 (312 of these 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 tuition fees, investment and the Government. There are 10 Certificate programmes and 20 Bachelor's Degree programmes available in STOU, and the total number of courses is 448.

Check Your Progress 2

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

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

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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 is a boon in meeting the individual educational needs of its society. Distance education courses were on offer during the past 90 years or so; distance education has developed into an integral part of all systems of Government funded education with each stage having a correspondence school and programmes of technical training through correspondence. Australia founded an active regional association of distance institutions 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 demand for education from the American Armed Force personnel who were based there. There has been a dramatic development of distance education 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 Minister, 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 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 personalised 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 diplomats 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 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.

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 campus are able to begin their studies through one of the centres as part of USP's 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 12,051 of those 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 meet the challenge of 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 educational level.

In 1997, a total number of 70,000 students were enrolled in PNU. Presently the university has 3,500 academic members and 1,000,000 student.

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, which 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 countries 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 the tutors.

The University has an enrolment of approximately 20,000 students. There are some 80 study centres throughout Israel and 650 tutors are 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 most 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 programmes of the Knowledge Network. In fact, the distance education progress of British Columbia has received wide publicity throughout the world.

Check Your Progress 3

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

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

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

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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 in 1979-80 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 teleconference 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 80,000. 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 challenged 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 challenged 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 enrolment. 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 South and Central 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* (UJNED) 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 were 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 information available in English on the practice of distance education in 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 Tecnológico 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 1965 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 country.

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; mathematical sciences. Courses are delivered using printed correspondence texts prepared by 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 offers 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; and 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 and 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 staff members 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 education 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 distance education activities in 1978. Courses are offered in the areas of arts; humanities; contemporary and cultural studies; history; Spanish and English languages; Argentine literature; commercial and management studies; accountancy; personnel and industrial relations; law; medicine and health.

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 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 revitalise 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

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

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

Identify 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.

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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 2,500,000 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 initially 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:

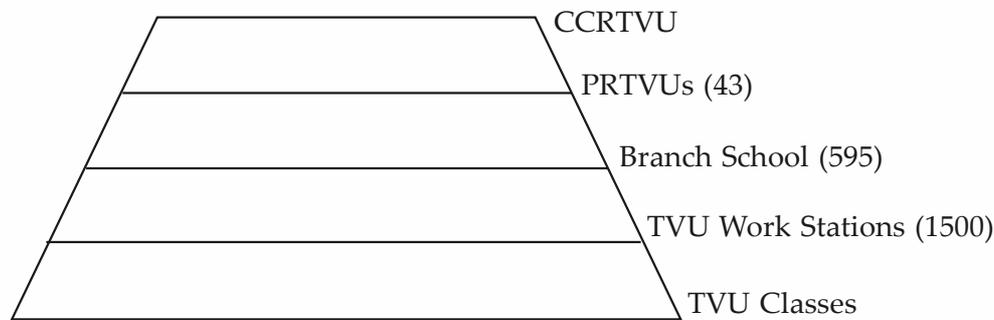


Fig. 3.1: The Chinese National Network of RTVUs

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 student 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.

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

Established in September, 1985, IGNOU started offering academic programmes in January, 1987. Over a span of 25 years, the university now has a wide range of programmes in various disciplines at different levels appreciation, certificates, diploma, post graduate diploma, degree in both general and professional, postgraduate in both general and professional, research degree programme in various systemic and discipline areas besides networking collaboration with various institution and universities also piloted communities colleges. As a matter of policy, the university has relaxed entry requirements adopted flexible models of course design development, evolved an appropriate delivery strategies to suit individual courses and programmes. The university has also its own student evaluation models such as on-demand examinations are vogue. However, they vary from one programme to the other depending on the level and size of the student clientele. Besides, nearly 11,000 different Study Centres functionally governed by 58 Regional Centres, IGNOU has more than 100 Work Programme Centres (diversified approach to its learner support system) to serve the students. It has nearly 200 programmes with about more than 3000 courses.

In 2011-2012, the total number of students was above 12,00,000 (30,00,000 enroll students) with an estimated annual intake of more than 2,50,000. IGNOU has 500 full-time and 30,000 part-time teachers. The Vice-Chancellor of the University is always find a fertile land to undertake innovations, experimentation and creativity, in ODL system. India is a country with lots of potential to educate all with various innovations and experimentation in emerging global market in the globe.

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 staff.

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 freestanding 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 of age and residents 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 past Vice Chancellor of the University was Sir John Daniel who has made experiments in teaching learning with extensive media components known as knowledge media is remarkable. Further, his role as President COL is highly placed in the sphere of open and distance education in the global learning.

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 age group between 21 and 30 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 men and 51 % women.

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.

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 nine support centres in several European and Latin American countries.

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 doctorate degrees. 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 men and women. 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 Universitas 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.

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).

Status of distance education across the world

Continent	Aims and Features
Africa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 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)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 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.

The Emerging Trends

The analysis of the development of distance education in various regions of the world helps us to comprehend some of the emerging trends and draw inferences regarding the future of this innovative teaching/learning system. It is clear that distance education created a credible form of teaching learning system on par with face-to-face system of education.

The regions are as under:

- 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, especially 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 public 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

Year of Establishment	Name of the University
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),
1980	Venezuela 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
1985	Indira Gandhi National Open University, New Delhi, India
1987	Payame Noor University, Iran

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
- 13) *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.

3.10 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS: POSSIBLE ANSWERS

Check Your Progress 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.

Check Your Progress 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.

Check Your Progress 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 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.

Check Your Progress 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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Indira Gandhi National Open University

STAFF TRAINING AND RESEARCH INSTITUTE OF DISTANCE EDUCATION

Dear Student,

While studying the units of this block, you may have found certain portions of the text difficult to comprehend. We wish to know your difficulties and suggestions, in order to improve the course. Therefore, we request you to fill up and send us the following questionnaire, which pertains to this block. If you find the space provided insufficient, kindly use a separate sheet.

Please mail to:

Course Coordinator (MDE-411)
STRIDE, IGNOU, Maidan Garhi
New Delhi-110068, India

Questionnaire

Enrolment No.

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1) How many hours did you need for studying the units?

Unit no.	1	2	3	4
No. of hours				

2) Please give your reactions to the following items based on your reading of the block:

Items	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Poor	Give specific examples If poor
Presentation Quality					
Language and Style					
Illustrations Used (diagrams, tables, etc.)					
Conceptual Clarity					
Check Your Progress Questions					
Feedback to CYP Questions					

3) Any other comments: