

## **Condition of Distance Education in IGNOU Center, Manipur University**

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Continuous changes require continuous learning and continuous learning means lifelong learning and Education is a lifelong process. Hence, education is a continuous and dynamic process. Education as a process, is synonymous with the socialisation of the person. In the process of evolution through centuries human beings have been trying hard to explore new Molds to discover new vistas of knowledge for better existence. Majority of us have tried to learn either for expansion of knowledge or to be educated to be better place in the society. Gradually, either for the individual shortcomings or the limitations of the formal educational establishments, the distance education system or open learning systems emerged to supplement the demand for being educated. Distance education system can be defined as organized systematic educational activity carried on outside the framework of the established formal system.

Distance education provides equal opportunities to all to become productive citizens. The students here devote spare time to their studies and work at the speed that suits part of the students a good curiosity and a habit of self –study. The distance education denotes:

- Physical distance between the teacher and the learner.
- Time distance between preparation and delivery of the lessons or learning materials
- Time distance between delivery of lesson or learning material and its reception by the learner.

For the first time in the history of distance education it established the First Open University in India under the Andhra Pradesh Legislative Act in August 1982 in the name of Dr.B.R.Ambedkar Open University and in September 1985 the Government of India decided to set up the Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU).

Now, IGNOU has already established itself as a leader amongst distance education institutes and to realise the following objectives:

- 1) To make higher vocational and technical education available to large section of the population.
- 2) To give special attention to the needs of the disadvantaged groups in particular people in the rural areas, teachers and women.

- 3) To relate all courses to the development needs of the individuals, institutions and the country.
- 4) To provide an innovation and open system of education by using distance teaching methodology and by applying modern communications technologies to education.
- 5) To provide continuing adult and extension education. Special attention is to be given to retraining adults in new skills to enable them: to adjust to a changing technologies environment.

The Manipur University has no distance education of its own. However, the University extend its possible help in the opening and implementation of distance education mode of studies. The University signed a MoU with IGNOU and opened the first Imphal Study centre of IGNOU at the Manipur University in January 1987. The centre code No. is 1701. Dr. D.N. Asopa was the first coordinator of the centre. Diploma in management was the only course opened in that year and there were only 6 students. By that time the centre was under the direct supervision of IGNOU, Head quarter, New Delhi with the opening of the North East Regional Centre (NERC) of IGNOU at Shillong in 1988 the Imphal Study Centre was under the jurisdiction of NERC. From December 2000 onwards the Centre is under the jurisdiction of Imphal Regional Centre (IRC).

Normally the IGNOU study centres are housed in an institution of Higher education. As such the Imphal Study centre is also located at the Manipur University. The University spared a big building for office, library audio-visual, class room etc. Besides the University gives full co-operation to IGNOU by allowing the faculties and staff to spare their services on Sundays and holidays. The number of academic programmer and courses of IGNOU have been increasing tremendously. At present the University has more than 101 academic programmes and 900 courses. For every course there is a course material and the course materials are given to each and every student enrolled either in January or July session. The course materials are well prepared and excellent for preparation examinations. For the use of the counsellors extra copies of the course materials are also available in the libraries maintained by the Study Centres. Well qualified counsellors take classes during Sundays and holidays and the knowledge in the print media is supplemented by electronic media and Gyandarshan.

#### **Need of The Study**

Education is a never-ending process. Usually the formal education of the man ends at the age of 30 but knowledge in his field never end. In order to update his knowledge he has to get his new knowledge from distance mode of education. Nowadays with the development of Information Communication Technology (ICT) more and more latest information are coming up through electronic media. Highly qualified scientists, teachers and scholars are remaining busy in the preparation of the latest information. If a University teacher does not do distance learning he will be out dated and student will not attend his class. At the same time if a university student does not learn himself by distance mode of learning by seeing the UGC programme shown on TV his knowledge will not perfect. The government of India has already launched Educational Satellite (Edu-Sat). Now the University Community can participate in the programme and interact with the subject specialist face to face in teleconferencing mode.

#### **Objectives**

- 1 To study the development and functioning of the distance mode of education in Manipur University.
- 2 To examine the effectiveness of institutional components, course materials, communication between learners and centre etc.

3 To find out the problem faced by the students and teaching of IGNOU study centre in Manipur University.

#### **Hypotheses**

- 1) There exist significant development and functioning of the distance mode of education in Manipur University.
- 2) There exists significant effectiveness of institutional components .i.e. administration, teaching of the IGNOU study centre in Manipur University.
- 3) There exist significant problem faced by the students and teachers of IGNOU study centre in Manipur University.

#### **Methodology**

The study was particularly based on historical and descriptive survey method. For the present study the investigator had selected 80 students and 20 teachers of IGNOU study centre, Manipur University on the basis of purposive sampling technique.

#### **Scoring System**

The scoring in the present study was very simple as answers of each item were either 'Yes' or 'No'. 'Yes' responses were given sign of Y and 'No' responses were given N sign. Master charts were made total number of Y/N tallies and then calculated.

#### **Statistical Techniques**

In order to analyse and interpret the list scores, the investigator adopted Numbers and percentages as the statistical technique.

#### **Analysis**

Opinions of the students regarding the IGNOU study centre in Manipur University have been analysed with the help of a self constructed questionnaire, containing 34 questions and it was found that 80 per cent of the students of IGNOU study centre in Manipur University are satisfied with the present system of distance education in Manipur University while the remaining of the students are not satisfied. Therefore, it can be interpreted that an overwhelming majority of students are satisfied with the prevailing system of IGNOU Study Centre of Manipur University. 100% of the students willingly agreed that Manipur University is taking sufficient interest in the proper development of distance education in Manipur.

It is found that distance education helps to raise the standard of living for the people of Manipur. Therefore, it can be interpreted that management made regular inspection towards the academic and administration of the study centre.

It is clear that 35 percent of the students responded that the regional centre has difficulty in communicating academic problems and the remaining 65 percent said that regional centre has difficulty in communicating academic problem. So, it can be interpreted that, the centre is timely communicating the students regarding the academic problems.

The response pattern leads to the interpretation that the library facility was not satisfactory. The library is the heart of the institution, without the proper functioning of library, the institution could not developed well. So the higher authority should pay more attention for the development of library facility. And it is found that the centre does not provide computer application with internet facility. As it is computer age one should have the basic computer knowledge. Therefore, keeping this in mind centre must provide computer application to the students.

Therefore, it can be interpreted that students are quite satisfied with the present curriculum-syllabus and want no modification in it and the system of examination in distance education is reliable.

The above analysis shows that 7 i.e. 35 percent of the teachers responded that they use audio-visual aids in the class, But 13 i.e. 65 percent said 'no' to the statement. Therefore, it can be interpreted that teachers do not use audio-visual aids in the class.

### **Main Findings**

1. The study conducted by the researcher found the present system of distance education satisfactory both by the students and the teachers. Manipur University is taking keen interest for the proper development of distance education centre by allotting a separate wing of IGNOU study centre (1701).
2. Respondents in both groups felt that distance education should be made available to everybody in Manipur as it would help in raising the standard of living for the people of Manipur.
3. Distance education plays a vital role in maintaining the standard of living for the people of Manipur. So, there should be sufficient number of seats to fulfill the demand of students.
4. The management of IGNOU is co-operative and always responsible for smooth functioning of the centre. They also made regular inspection towards the entire academic and administration programme of the study centre.
5. The regional centre has difficulty in communicating academic problems with the teachers but communication between the centre and the students has no difficulty. The centre tries to solve the academic problems of the students in time.
6. The IGNOU study centre in Manipur University is not facing any financial problems.
7. The existing size of the building in the study centre is not satisfactory. It cannot accommodate sufficient class room, conference room, audio visual room etc. and the number of students and programmes which have been increasing every year.
8. As the needs and interests of learner are increasing rapidly, the centre should provide adequate library facilities to the students and teachers so that they may update their knowledge.
9. It is found that the centre does not procure enough computer for the students and teachers. However, the office of the centre has internet connectivity.
10. The curriculum and the course materials of IGNOU are excellent and of national standard. Nowadays many teachers and student of other universities read the course materials of IGNOU for their teaching and examination.
11. Though the curriculum/syllabus of IGNOU is relevant with the course, it is necessary to update from time to time so that it may go in conformity with the changing trend of information age.
12. Both the teachers and students found the system of examination followed in the distance education centre quite reliable. But centre should impose a system of internal assessment to supplement the external examination.
13. Highly qualified teachers selected by IGNOU Headquarter; Delhi set the examination papers according to the prescribed syllabus and the students are not allowed to use unfair means for passing the examination.
15. Teachers are highly satisfied with their profession and the salary being paid in the study centre.
16. Though teachers get opportunities for career growth etc. in their parent institutions their job engagement in IGNOU are however not secure.
17. Trainees' regularity and punctuality is highly needed for the proper functioning of the study centre and completion of their respective courses.

18. Classes being held on Sundays and holidays teachers are convenient with the working days and hours in the study centre.
19. Trainees are very attentive during the lecture session and they take the opportunity of interaction with their counsellors.
20. The overall performance of the students in the study centre is quite satisfactory.
21. The centre gives sufficient study material for the examination but it should reach the students in time so that students could submit the assignments in time and start preparation for the term-end examination timely.
22. It is found that admission process followed in IGNOU is quite transparent.
23. The existing fee structure seems to be high so students opined to reduce the admission fee.
24. There is no provision of reservation and relaxation in admission, fee etc. for SC,ST and physically handicapped persons as it is open to all the aspirants.
25. There is a good relationship between the students and teachers in the study centre and teachers are highly co-operative in solving academic problems of the students.
26. It is found that teachers hardly use audio-visual teaching aids in the class. In this scientific age such facilities should be made available to the counsellors and the students.

#### **Suggestions for Further Study**

Some of the suggestions for further study could be as under:

1. The same study can be conducted for IGNOU study centre in different universities.
2. Studies on the effectiveness of distance education in graduate level students.
3. The present study was confined only to 80 students and 20 teachers of Manipur University. Similar studies can be conducted with larger samples.
4. A study of the development of distance education in different states could be conducted.
5. Effectiveness of distance education programme with reference to the postgraduate courses of Manipur University.
6. A comparative study between traditional and open universities.

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