



Report
Of



**National Conference on
VISION-2025: CONNECTING NORTH EAST THROUGH
OPEN AND DISTANCE LEARNING**

Organized by
IGNOU Regional Centre Jorhat

In collaboration with



**KRISHNA KANTA HANDIQUI STATE
OPEN UNIVERSITY, ASSAM**

And



**CSIR-NORTH EAST INSTITUTE OF
SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY, JORHAT**

Acknowledgement -

VISION-2025: CONNECTING NORTH EAST THROUGH OPEN & DISTANCE LEARNING is the first conference organized by Jorhat Regional Centre which aimed to discuss the present scenario of Higher Education in the region and to find out the educational needs of prospective learners so that required intervention by Open and Distance Learning (ODL) could be anticipated on the basis of ground level data. Response to the conference from researchers, teachers, and academicians from different institutions from all over the country was overwhelming.

I express my heartfelt gratitude to our Hon'ble Vice Chancellor Prof. Ravindra Kumar for providing such an opportunity to the youngest Regional Centre and for his constant support, guidance and encouragement. I also offer my sincere gratefulness to Dr. V. Venugopal Reddy, Director, Regional Services Division for his continuous guidance and encouragement. He has been the driving force in all spheres of activities of the conference. I take this opportunity to offer my sincere thanks to Sjt. Hitendra Nath Goswami, Hon'ble Speaker of Assam Legislative Assembly for inaugurating the conference. I express my appreciation to Dr. Purnendu Tripathy, DD (RSD & VCO), and other academics of RSD particularly Dr. V. P. Rupam, DD; Dr. Bini Toms, DD; Dr. Hema Pant, DD; Dr. Ataur Rahman, AD; and Ms. Moni Sahay, AD for their support .

The conference was organized in collaboration with CSIR-North East Institution of Science and Technology (NEIST) and Krishna Kanta Handiqui State Open University (KKHSOU). I express my gratitude to Hon'ble Dr. Hitesh Deka, VC (KKHSOU) for continuously encouraging us and for partially funding the conference. I am grateful to Hon'ble Dr. D. Ramaiah, Director (CSIR-NEIST) for collaboration and providing physical infrastructure to organise the conference. We express special thanks to Prof. Arupjyoti Choudhury, (Dean Academics), KKHSOU and Prof. Nirode Baruah of Dibrugarh University for delivering the plenary talks in the conference.

The academic members of the conference Dr. A. S Guha, RD, RC Shillong; Dr. T. Iralu, RD, RC Kohima; Dr. Ila Das, RD, RC Guwahati; Dr. S. R. Zonunthara, RD, RC Aizwal; Ms. Namrata Hagjer, DD, REC Shillong; Dr. Yonah Bhutia, RD, RC Gangtok; Dr. S. D. Singh, RD, RC Imphal; Dr. S. Katakya, RD, RC Itanagar; Dr. Sujata Dutta Hazarika, DD, RC Guwahati; Dr. Joseph Somi, DD, RC Guwahati; Dr. Md. Baniyamuddin, ARD, RC Guwahati have been supporting continuously and edited the abstracts. I express my gratitude to all of them. I express my sincere thanks to Dr. Jiban Chandra Sarma Katakya and Dr. Kutubuddin Ahmed for their contribution in editing the abstracts. I thank all the paper contributors and the participants for attending the conference and for illuminating academic discussions during the conference.

Such an event is possible because of group work involving many individuals. I thank all the staff members of RC Jorhat and all those who are directly or indirectly involved in organizing the conference.

Dr. Anil Ch. Borah
Convener and RD, RC Jorhat

Report of the Chief Rapporteur-

The Two Day National Conference was held by IGNOU Regional Centre Jorhat on the 8th and 9th July, 2017. The venue of the Conference was CSIR-NEIST Jorhat and the partners of this Conference were KKHSOU and NEIST Jorhat.

Inaugural session began at 10 a.m. after the lighting of the lamp, invocation and felicitation. The Chief Guest Sjt. Hitendra Nath Goswami, Hon'ble Speaker of Assam Legislative Assembly spoke about the usefulness of distance education and open learning for the disadvantaged groups of people. He also highlighted the changing faces of technology in distance education and continued with distance and open learning as a media mix. Dr. Anil Ch. Borah, Regional Director Jorhat proposed the vote of thanks.

There after followed by plenary session. The keynote addresses were on Skill Development in North East India through Open and Distance Learning and, ODL in the NE: Problems and Prospects. In the first plenary session Prof. Arupjyoti Choudhury, Dean Academic KKHSOU spoke about the disconnect of North East India and mainland India. He proposed three ways of connect: (i) Cultural connect (ii) Connect with Nature (iii) Technology connect. Culture connect he said would be useful for indigenous and vocational skill development. This model can be developed by practitioners.

The second plenary session was taken by Prof. Nirode Baruah, former Director Distance Education, Dibrugarh University. Prof. Baruah spoke about problems of students bedeviled by the fact that distance education graduates are not given preference in the employment sector lamented that Distance and Open University learning system are generally considered to be second grade. Then followed two parallel sessions from 2.30 p.m. to 3.45 p.m. The first parallel session works on the theme: ICT for Distance Education in the North East Region. The second was Open and Distance Learning in North East Region. In the former sessions the speakers emphasized on information technologies which could synergize distance education and ICT and bridge the gap between teaching and learning. One paper highlighted how women can be empowered through distance education in North East India citing several examples. In the latter session on Open and Distance Learning in North East India there were interesting presentations on extension education and agriculture, what students expects from distance learning, challenges faced by the distance education learner etc. These sessions gave an overall view and status of distance education in North East India with reference to employment, teacher education, higher education and agricultural education.

In the evening from 4.15 p.m. to 5.30 p.m. there were two parallel themes. These were Skill Development for North East Region and Emergence of Trends And Strategies for Educational Development in North East Region. In the former session all papers emphasized on skill development, vocational training, capacity building etc. One paper looked at skill gap as a review of the food processing sector in Assam.

In the session on Emergence Of Trends and Strategies for Educational Development in the North East Region there were at least three interesting papers on emerging technologies, how to use them and adapt them to learning as well as agriculture education.

On the 9th July morning parallel sessions from 9 a.m. to 10.30 a.m were on two themes: Higher Education in North East Region and Inclusive Education. In the former session higher education was conjoined with distance education, and skill development. Some of these papers focused on possible intervention IGNOU in the higher education sector of upper Assam. There was a very interesting paper on juvenile delinquency and what could be done for such people with reference to educating

them and imparting skill development to them. In the theme on inclusive education, inclusive education was viewed in terms of empowerment, i.e. empowering women, weaker sections of the society and the social distance. There was a paper on skill development for employment of women in North east India. In the parallel sessions from 10.45 a.m. to 12.15 p.m. there were again the same themes i.e. higher education in North East Region and Inclusive Education.

In the former session once again technology was brought in and the role of ICT in ODL. There was a paper on community based education.

In the theme on Inclusive Education furthering the cause of the disabled was given emphasis. There was a paper on the tribal tea garden community of Assam, exploring the possibilities of education for them. Two interesting presentations were made on Privatization of Higher education.

In the last two parallel sessions from 12.15 p.m. to 1.45 p.m. themes on higher education and inclusive education continued to dominate the discussion board, the problems of higher education in Assam were discussed. Also the kind of impact IGNOU and KKHSOU are making in the upper Assam region were also analyzed in the papers.

After lunch at 2.45 p.m. there was the valediction session where Dr. D. Ramaiah, Director CSIR-NEIST highlighted the changing world today and how despite many problems our country is managing well in terms of life in general and education in particular. The theme of the Conference Vision 2025: "Connecting North East India through Open and Distance learning" was done justice by each of the sessions which looked at technology, vocational and skill education, inclusive education, status of higher education in North East India and emerging trends and strategies for educational development in North East Region. All these trends were connected to factors such as technology development in learning, skills development as a kind of blended learning, inclusive education for the weaker sections of the society, women and the disabled. Higher Education and Privatization of Education also got attention.

That some of the sessions like Higher Education in North East India were generally stand alone and did not necessary bring distance education and open learning perspective into the papers, that however must be seen as an underpinning of how methods of distance education could be applied to ODL. For example if there are 16 Colleges in the Moregaon district of upper Assam then we can explore establishing study centers, vocational centers or community centers

The significant aspect of the Conference was continued emphasis on leveraging technology for learning and teaching. ICT enabled sectors will go a long way in furthering the cause of open and distance learning also to emphasize on skill development and training should be taken at tandem together with agriculture and extension education. A very interesting point that emerged out of the discussions was the aspect of research methodology, use of primary and secondary sources, empirical study, concept study, descriptive study etc.

In the overall context of the philosophy of distance education most of the papers strongly expressed the view that distance and open learning cater to many critical aspects of education: adult education, continuing education, teacher training, women education. Inclusive education and of course higher education. In fact extension, training and research are its hall marks.

It is hoped that out of the deliberations of this conference specific recommendations will be tabled to the policy makers.

Dr. A.S Guha
Regional Director, RC Shillong

Session Wise Report -

Parallel Session I: Date- 8th July, 2017

Theme: ICT for Distance Education in North East Region (NER), Skill development for NER and Inclusive Education

The first session was chaired by Prof. Jiten Hazarika and Dr. Malik R Faisal acted as the rapporteur.

The first paper titled “*Bridging the Gap: Synergising Distance Education and ICT, a Study of the State of Meghalaya*” authored by Isagaiah Lawrniang & A.S.Guha was presented by Isagaiah Lawrniang. The paper attempts a resource mapping of education in the state of Meghalaya with reference to literacy, rate of dropouts at school/colleges levels, status of colleges/private/aided/adhoc-in –grant/ deficit etc, men/women ratio of IGNOU learners, tele-density in the state etc. These will help in critically examining the gaps in higher education and how the IGNOU advocacy of flexibility in studies, short term vocational training and use of ICT (integrated technology) can take education to the farther most corners of the state, to dropouts, working men and women and school and college teachers. Internet learning on the computer, mobile phones, e-books and free and open source software will be exacerbating factors in such learning, where geographical settings may be isolated but technology will break barriers imposed by distance and poor road connectivity. But technological connectivity can be available and today’s user of such technology both young and adult are readily adapting to such changes. ICT would imply integration of radio, television, internet and the mobile phone. Also with the ushering of web-based and digital libraries in the new technological era we have been prevailing upon our study centres to impress upon Academic counsellors for use of intelligent web based learning among the different levels of our learners. Web based learning/e-learning, use of social networking sites for group learning and video streaming are the *new typologies of learning today in a world which is both ‘real’ and ‘virtual’*. Distance learning is moving away from the text to the hypertext granting the students more autonomy and creativity in learning.

The second paper titled “*Technology Widening the Scope of Learning and Teaching*” authored by Suchibrata Chellang and Nitu Konwar was presented by Suchibrata Chellang. This paper discusses various ICT resources/tools available as alternative mode of providing education service. The paper recommended the following-

1. It is required to bring a change in the attitude. The teachers should be facilitated with computer and internet for creating an enabling environment.
2. The present syllabus and examination system provide for 20 marks internal assessment for students. The assignments should be so that the student gets accustomed to ICT based learning.
3. There should be programme for popularising the initiative of Government in ICT developments.

The third paper titled “*Strategies of ICDE and ICT in NE Region*” authored and presented by Pulak Chandra Devnath. The main concern of this paper is to discuss the strategies of ICDE and the status of ICT in NE region in context of ODL. The paper suggests that all the educational institutions and departments should be linked through Local Area Network (LAN), Wide Area

Network (WAN), Information and Library Network (INFLIBNET) which will lead increase academic activities and research

The fourth paper titled “*Empowering Women through Distance Education in North East India*” authored by Moromi Buragohain, Dharitri Bordoloi and Nagen Bordoloi was presented by Moromi Buragohain.

This paper stresses on the role of distance learning among women learners, technologies for improving distance learning and limitations of distance education technologies in North East India as an avenue to attain knowledge and education that would put women in a better stead toward achieving their aims and aspirations.

The fifth paper of the session titled “*Use of Open and Distance learning in the Skill Development of English Learners in North East India*” authored and presented by Tridhara Bardoloi. This paper attempts to share IGNOU’s experience in the North East India and assess the potential of ODL system in skill development related activities. The paper recommended that if North Eastern states of India wants to emulate countries where the education system has succeeded, sweeping reforms are needed. This will require significant commitment on the part of policymakers. It pointed out some reforms like:

- Strengthening the general education component of these programs for providing basic knowledge in humanities and translation studies, preparing students to work in various occupations by making them aware of these programmes and motivating them, teaching them to solve problems and encouraging them to continue learning.
- Moving from a system which is exclusively financed by the government to a system which is increasingly financed by the private sector and by students paying user fees. The private sector would be willing to contribute only if they see that the system is producing relevant graduates. Students are likely to participate if they see market benefits from education.
- Allow well performing students in the sphere of skill development to proceed onto higher education will ensure that open and distance learning is not seen as an option of last resort by prospective students.

Parallel Session II: Date- 8th July, 2017

Theme- Open & Distance Learning in North East Region (NER)

The second session was chaired by Dr. A.S Guha and Ms. Rupasree Dutta acted as the rapporteur.

The first paper of the session titled “*Application prospects of ODL in the field of the Agricultural Education System*” authored by N. Bordoloi, S Borua, P Bora and D Bordoloi was presented by Nagen Bordoloi. The paper attempted to explore and share few of the areas of the Agricultural Education System where ODL can be fruitfully utilized to harness its potential to bring benefits to the farming community, as targeted groups, to allure them to earn through sustainable use of our bountiful natural resources in North East India and enhance the national economy. The paper highlighted some indicative list of technologies which may be disseminated through ODL like Bio-fertilizer production methods/steps, Vermicompost preparation, Mushroom production, Improved plant varieties for various situation specific needs (crop-wise), Food processing techniques (Pickles, Jelly, Sauce preparation), Duck rearing, Pisciculture techniques, Cattle rearing practices, Floriculture techniques, Nursery raising techniques.

The second paper of the session titled “*Expectations of Open and Distance Learning (ODL) Students from Higher Education*” authored and presented by N. Samungou Singh. It is found that inability to obtain employment with their previous educational qualification, better employment opportunities with a higher degree and updation of their professional knowledge are reasons cited by the students for pursuing higher education through ODL. The findings of the study show that people became aware about the benefits of ODL offered by IGNOU and students have certain expectations from the higher education offering by this system of education.

The third paper titled “*ODL in North-East India: Catalyst for Development*” authored and presented by Rishi Chakravarty. The paper concludes that efficient utilisation of ODL can place a region on a pedestal for economic growth, development and prosperity, as well as social cohesion. It is imperative to accurately identify the community economic needs and then develop matching curricula so that various educational players such as polytechnic colleges, vocational colleges, conventional universities and ODL institutions can participate in addressing the identified community needs. Moreover, the rapid expansion of distance education is providing learners with more options. The increase in the number of distance education programmes has prompted researchers to investigate the effectiveness of such programmes.

The fourth paper titled “*Challenges faced by Distance Education learners of KKHSOU: Implications for Strategic Planning*” authored by Indrani Kalita, Pranab Saikia and Binod Deka was presented by Indrani Kalita. The study reveals that there are several challenges faced by the learners of KKHSOU and the researchers put forward the following suggestions:

- University should ensure about production and delivery of SLM.
- Proper technical assistance should be provided to learner when required.
- University is offering various Student Support Services but the ground reality is that learners are not aware about those services. So, proper awareness programmed should be organized by the authority so that learners can have access to it.
- Moreover the learners should also be equipped with proper special counseling both pre and post counseling regarding the various courses offered by the university.
- Learners are also in need of additional study materials besides SLM. The University provides books for different subjects to the library of study centers. So, proper notifications should also be provided to the learners about the use of study centers library to avail the facility provided by the learners.
- Counselors should be trained to provide adequate feedback and instruction to learners when required.
- Learners should also be equipped on how to work with ICT so that they can avail any information from the university website besides depending on the members of study centers.
- Administrative and counseling services at the regional centres need improvement to ensure that students with various problems access these services easily.

The fifth paper titled “*Role of Distance Education in Teacher Training Programme with special reference to Diploma in Elementary Education’ (D.El.Ed.) in Assam*” authored and presented by Manjuri Gogoi. This paper highlights the challenges and opportunities of D.El.Ed. programme in the context of the country’s needs for teachers.

It was reported that a substantial section of teachers in Assam in Elementary Schools are untrained. The Govt. of Assam decided that the untrained teachers should be trained through Distance Mode of Education. The 'Diploma in Elementary Education' (D.El.Ed.) programme through the distance mode offered by Krishna kanta Handique State Open University (KKHSOU) is the first of its kind at the Elementary education level in Assam. The paper discusses role of ODL in teacher training programmes.

The sixth paper of the session titled "*Unemployment Vs Unemployability: Searching an answer for learners of ODL mode*" authored by Sanjib Kataky & Biswajit Bhowmik was presented by Sanjib Kataky. The paper suggests that the introduction of CBCS has provided an opportunity to the ODL mode to impart skill oriented/skill enhancing programmes/courses.

The seventh paper titled "*Mapping the Presence of IGNOU in the North East Region: A Case Study*" authored and presented by Hema Pant. The paper seeks to assess the efforts of IGNOU to extend its outreach in the NER, beginning with the North East Project to the current activities through the dedicated unit (EDNERU) under Regional Services Division (RSD). A review of the University's initiatives is presented, based on the following indicators:

1. Increase in accessibility of IGNOU programmes to various target groups of learners.
2. District wise presence of IGNOU LSCs and districts not covered thus far.
3. Skill and vocational development initiatives undertaken, based on GOI schemes (Village adoption, Unnat Bharat Abhiyan, Weaver Community Scheme) launched by the University.
4. Policy measures adopted and implemented to further strengthen the efforts for expansion of higher education as per mandate of IGNOU and GOI.

Parallel Session III: Date-8th July, 2017

Theme- Skill Development for North East Region (NER)

The third session was chaired by Dr. Nirmala Sarma and Dr. Neeta Lagachu Taye acted as the rapporteur.

The first paper of the session titled "*Role of Distance Education in Higher Education and Skill Development*" authored by Bhanu Pratap Singh and Amit Kumar Srivastava was presented by Dr. Bhanu Pratap Singh. The paper mentioned the slogan for the Open and Distance System: Har Ghar IGNOU, Ghar Ghar IGNOU: *Education at your doorsteps* for the inclusive knowledge development of all the section. This paper assess the role of ODL system specially Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) in Higher Education and skill Development through its familiarity and adoption of emerging technological format such as MOOC's, Personal Learning Environments, and Educational Apps etc in contributing knowledge delivery society by 2025.

The second paper of the session titled "*Capacity Building through Vocational Education: A Case Study on Role of ODL and Public Libraries in Assam*" authored and presented by Sanjoy Kr. Hazarika. The following suggestions/ recommendations have been made for the better functioning of Vocational education in general and AHSEC's Vocational Stream in particular for Capacity Building of the Community.

- Integration of vocational education at the school level
- Need for creation of large scale skill development opportunities and infrastructure

- Skill Mapping
- Flexibility
- Reservation of seats in Polytechnics
- Private Sector Participation (PPP model)
- Informal training for short duration at affordable fees structure
- Funding and Bank Loans
- Special Strategy to be planned for remote areas
- Course and Curriculum development:
- More and more market oriented popular Trades
- Optimum utilization of available resources
- Certification and Standard:
- Faculty Training with Industry Participation
- Development of Training materials
- Creating Awareness
- Re-branding Vocational Education and Training:
- Autonomy

The third paper titled *“Developing Skills through Open and Distance Learning for Sustainable Economic Development”* authored and presented by Anil K Dimri and Anil Kumar Misra. In the paper an attempt was made to assess the situation of skill development in the country and how the intervention of open and Distance Learning (ODL) can play important role in addressing the need of skilling India.

The fourth paper titled *“Introduction of Skill Development Programmes on Data Science, Data Analytics and Big Data in ODL mode”* authored by Jiten Hazarika and Ujjal Saikia was presented by Jiten Hazarika. The paper proposes the introduction of skill based programme like Data Science and Data Analytics which will definitely help the society in terms of skill development and as a result it will enhance employability of the youths.

Parallel Session IV: 8th July, 2017

Theme: Emerging Trends & Strategies for Educational Development in NER, Inclusive education & Higher Education in NER.

The fourth session was chaired by Dr. Jibon Ch. Sarma Katakya and Dr. N.S Singh acted as the rapporteur.

The first paper titled *“A Study on the Perception of IGNOU Students towards Adoption of Emerging Technologies in Open and Distance Learning”* authored by Amit Kumar Srivastava & Bhanu Pratap Singh was presented by Amit Kumar Srivastava. This paper assess the perception of students of IGNOU about their familiarity and adoption of emerging technological format such as MOOC’s, Personal Learning Environments, and Educational Apps etc in their programme of study, towards contributing knowledge delivery society by 2025.

The second paper of the session titled *“Emerging Technologies and Open and Distance Learning”* authored by Swargam Medhi and Sujata Chaudhari was presented by Sujata Chaudhari. The paper attempts to study ODL and emerging technologies in the field of higher education. The paper suggests that coordination among the different departments/institutes of distance and open education institutions/universities in such areas as preparation of instructional materials, radio and T.V. broadcasting, conduct of contact programmes and establishment of study centers.

The third paper titled *“E-Learning for Agriculture Education in North East India”* authored by J.K. Dutta, P. Das, N. Bordoloi and D. Bordoloi was presented by P.Das. The paper attempts to study that E-learning is a modern way of learning now a days. The authors proposes introduction of e-learning packages for farmers to learn the new techniques of increasing crop yields and methods of agriculture productivity in a very short time by internet.

The fourth paper titled *“Development of Higher Educational Institution in Arunachal Pradesh: An Overview & Challenges”* authored and presented by Dani Kacha. The objectives of this study are to analyse the development of higher and technical educational institutions and challenges they faced with the help of secondary data and field observations of the state of Arunachal Pradesh.

The fifth paper titled *“Present status of Higher Education in Rural Areas of Assam: A Case Study on four Rural Colleges of Nagaon & Morigaon District, Assam”* authored by Parag Das and Manash Jyoti Patar was presented by Parag Das. This paper is an attempt to highlight the key issues and obstacles that rural populations are suffering in regard to higher education.

The sixth paper of the session titled *“Teacher Education Programmes with special reference to D.El.Ed Programme through Distance Mode: Opportunities and Challenges”* authored by Narji Baruah and Debasish Mohapatra was presented by Narji Baruah. This paper attempts to find out the effectiveness of the D.El.Ed program through distance mode for developing teaching skills and to find out the areas where there is scope for improvement and suggest certain recommendations in the program implementation.

Parallel Session-V: 9th July, 2017

Theme: Higher Education in North East Region (NER)

The fifth session was chaired by Dr. Nagen Bordoloi and Dr. Ataur Rahman acted as the rapporteur.

The first paper titled *“Role of Open and Distance Learning in Promoting Higher Education with special reference to Directorate of Open and Distance Learning (DODL), Dibrugarh University”* authored and presented by Purabi Borah. The paper discusses the importance of open and distance learning in higher education and the role of Directorate of Open and Distance Learning (DODL), Dibrugarh University for promoting Higher Education in Upper Assam.

The second paper of this session titled *“A Study on the role of Distance Education in the expansion of Higher Education in Assam with special reference to Nagaon district”* authored and presented by Loni Boruah. This paper attempts to study the programs offered in study Centres of IDOL and IGNOU in Nagaon District, to find out the enrolment and success rates of the study Centre's of IDOL and IGNOU in the Nagaon District. The paper also discusses the role of IDOL and IGNOU in expansion of higher education in Nagaon district.

The third paper of the session titled *“Importance of ODL system in Higher Education in India”* authored and presented by Kamleswar Kalita. The paper highlighted the glimpse of the ODL system and its importance in higher education in India and also underscores the major opportunities and challenges of the system.

The fourth paper titled *“Role of Distance Education in Higher Education and Skill Development Programme in Assam”* authored and presented by Leena Dutta. In this paper, the role of higher education and distance education on development of skill development programme was focused upon, for a future prospective of creating a business and market friendly environment in Assam with regard to development of certain new curriculum and courses.

The fifth paper titled *“Leveraging technology in Distance Education for development: The case of North East India”* authored and presented by Malik Rashid Faisal. This paper discusses effectiveness of the new technology to deliver distance education in the NER.

The sixth paper titled *“Juvenile Delinquency: A Study on the problems of juveniles in conflict with law in the State of Assam with special reference to Upper Assam”* authored and presented by Sabita Thakur. The paper investigates the leading causative factors of juvenile delinquency among the boy juveniles of Upper Assam who are in conflict with law and to study the possibility of rehabilitation through skill development.

The seventh paper of the session titled *“Development and present status of Higher Education of NER with special reference to Assam”* authored by Malaya Chakraborty and Chikmik Saikia was presented by both the authors. The paper highlighted the growth and development and studies the present status of higher education in Assam.

The eighth paper titled *“Primary English language teachers’ professional development: A route towards quality Higher Education”* authored and presented by Monidita Borah. This paper focused on the use of information and communication technology in the form of a private professional developmental programme for the skill development of the in-service English teachers in the Government schools of Assam.

The last paper of the session titled *“Envisaging a catalyst role of ODL option in ecotourism development of North- East India”* authored by Devajeet Goswami and Nripendra Narayan Sarma was presented by Devajeet Goswami. The paper envisages a catalyst role for the ODL mode in promoting ecotourism development in the region.

Parallel Session VI: 9th July, 2017

Theme: Inclusive education.

The sixth session was chaired by Dr. Binita Dutta and Dr. Ajit Kr. Borah acted as the rapporteur.

The first paper of this session titled *“Higher Education for inclusive development in the North East Region”* authored and presented by Ngaibiakching. This paper attempted to highlight the scenario of higher education and how it is a key to the inclusive development of the region.

The second paper of this session titled *“Socio-Economic development of the North East—the need of ODL programme as an alternative strategy”* authored and presented by Azibur Rahman. This paper aimed to study the Status of open and distance education in North East, to introduce the enrolment and drop out issues of education, to analyse access and equity issues of education, to locate parallel but alternative programmes under ODL in the north-east and to suggest measures to remove barriers of Open and distance learning is a new and innovative idea to meet the changing needs of people.

The third paper titled *“Conspiracy to exclude reserved classes from Higher Education”* authored and presented by Kamleesh Meena. The paper discusses different issues related to reservation policies in Higher Education and implementation of the same in colleges and universities.

The fourth paper of the session titled *“Judicial approach to reservation in Higher Education in India: A Paradigm Shift”* authored and presented by Geetanjali Debi. The paper attempts to study judicial approach to reservation in Higher Education. The paper proposes that the reservations in higher education, especially at the *University level* should be abolished, *merit* should be the only parameter to secure admissions at the University level, the *creamy layer test* should be made applicable to the SCs and STs at the graduation level of education, *caste* as a factor for identifying backwardness should be eradicated.

The fifth paper titled *“Opportunities of Higher Education to the women and weaker sections (SC/ST) through Open and Distance Learning”* authored by Sher Singh was presented by him. The objective of this paper is to explore Open and Distance Learning with the relationship between distance education learning and educational opportunities to the Women and Weaker Sections (SC/ST) of the society & sustainable development of a knowledge society in general and conceptual context in particular. The paper suggests the futuristic model(s) of distance education as transformed forms of capacity-building.

The sixth paper titled *“Role of IGNOU in enhancing Higher Education for Women in Sikkim”* authored by Karma Samten Bhutia and Genevive Syangbo was presented by both the authors. The paper is an attempt to understand higher education system in Sikkim and the contributions made by IGNOU in promoting higher education for women.

The seventh paper of the session titled *“Role of Open and Distance Education (ODL) in Empowering SC women under Margherita developmental block of Tinsukia district”* authored and presented by Pratity Borpujari. The paper attempts to identify the educational profile of SC women of 3nos. of villages of Margherita Developmental Block pursuing higher education under ODL. The reasons behind pursuing higher education under ODL by these groups of women have also been examined in the present study.

Parallel Session-VII: Date-9th July, 2017

Theme: Higher Education in North East Region (NER)

The seventh session was chaired by Dr. Anil Kr. Dimri and Dr. Bhanu Pratap Singh acted as the rapporteur.

The first paper of the session titled *“Role of ICTs in Agriculture for ODL”* authored by D. Bordoloi, Sajib Borua, N. Bordoloi, J.K Dutta, P. Das, Hejbina Hussain and Dipanjali Saikia was presented by D. Bordoloi. This paper attempts to explore role of ICTs in agriculture for distance education learning and suggestions there on.

The second paper of the session titled *“Open and Distance Learning education in Assam: Some opportunities and challenges”* authored and presented by Deepak Kumar Baruah. The paper examined various aspects of the status and development of open and distance education in Assam.

This paper recommended that, the distance learning universities/ institutions should empower the learners with ICT skills with the help of government under “Digital India” programme.

The third paper of this session titled “*Community based education*” authored and presented by A.S. Guha. This paper attempted to discuss that in a region like North East India, education in its various facets must seriously focus on 'community-based education'. Connecting North East India through Open and Distance Learning will be connecting an ethos, which has similarities in geography, history and culture, despite odds and diversities. But education will be the great connect.

The fourth paper of the session titled “*Women’s participation in Open Distance Learning: A situational analysis*” authored and presented by Swastika Dutta. Main objectives of this paper is to highlight a situational analysis of women's participation in distance learning, issues, causes, their barriers, perspectives towards distance learning, how they get benefits, and along with its positive and negative impact in their life.

Parallel Session-VIII: Date-9th July, 2017

Theme: Inclusive Education

The eight session was chaired by Dr. Hema Pant and Dr. Ajit Kr. Borah acted as the rapporteur.

The first paper of the session titled “*Performance Analysis of first level In-Service professional development programme At HRDC-GU*” authored and presented by Shyamanta Chakraborty. The paper highlights the graphical distribution of teacher-participants attending the course and their feed-back followed by analysis.

The second paper titled “*Challenges of Distance Education for learners with disabilities in Assam*” authored and presented by Kishor Mohan Bhattacharyya. This paper attempts to study the challenges that the learners with disabilities are facing in Assam. The mass media and components of a sociology are responsible for respective position of distant education in modern times. In Assam rate of literacy amongst the people with disabilities may be increased through distance education. IGNOU is the pioneer in this respect and infrastructure and course designing along with teachers training may be materialized under its supervision.

The third paper of the session titled “*Women in Higher Education of India-different facet*” authored and presented by Dipanjali Haloi. This paper examines necessity of higher education for women and trend of women participation in higher education in India.

The fourth paper of the session titled “*Inclusive and sustainable higher education 2025: Making higher education and lifelong learning equitable and affordable amongst the Tea Garden Community of Assam through voluntary traditional BICHAR*” authored and presented by Partha Pratim Sharma. This paper examines the various reasons for the recent spur in demand for education amongst the tea garden community. The paper recommends formation of a consultative forum for education and lifelong learning through the ‘Bichar’.

The fifth paper titled *“Privatization of Higher Education in India: It’s feasibility through PPP MODE”* authored by Bhagirath Handique and Hiranya Saikia was presented by Bhagirath Handique. This paper tries to highlight the major causes of privatization of higher education in India, its advantages and disadvantages, and its feasibility of implementation through PPP mode.

The sixth paper titled *“Vision of privatization of Higher Education – A Legal Analysis”* authored and presented by Kongkona Priya Baruah. This paper presents the view regarding the policy of privatization of higher education in India.

Parallel Session-IX: Date-9th July, 2017

Theme: Higher education in North East Region (NER)

The ninth session was chaired by Dr. Shyamanta Chakraborty and Dr. Ataur Rahman acted as the rapporteur.

The first paper of the session titled *“Privatization of Higher Education and its effect on Socio - Economic situation in India”* authored and presented by Tridisha Bayan. This paper highlights the problem related with privatized higher education and possibilities of solving those problems are the key issues included in this paper.

The second paper titled *“Impact of Distance Education on Higher Education scenario of Golaghat region with special reference to IGNOU AND KKHSOU Study Centre of D.R. College”* authored by Suvangshu Dutta and Bijit Saikia was presented by Suvangshu Dutta. The main objective of this paper to highlight the impact of the establishment of study centres established by IGNOU and KKHSOU on the education profile of the Golaghat region as well as on the degree of development of human resources during the last five years.

The third paper titled *“Problems and Prospects of Higher Education in Assam”* authored and presented by Bhanu Hazarika. The paper covers the problems faced by the institutions of Assam and also aims to highlight the perceptible challenges of higher education in Assam in the way of human resource development in the state.

The fourth paper titled *“Development of Higher Education in North-East India: An assessment of status and relevance”* authored and presented by Debasish Paul. The paper attempts to discuss the relevance of the present higher education scenario in north-east India and examine the need based curriculum for higher education and finally its implementation for removing the horizontal and vertical barriers and to improve the quality higher education in India in general and north east India in particular.

The fifth paper titled *“Prospects of training the In-Service teachers through the ODL Mode in the state of Meghalaya”* authored and presented by Joseph Somi. The paper attempts to highlight the problem of huge number of untrained school teachers teaching in the state of Meghalaya and analyse the problem faced by the State Government in imparting training to the in-service teachers through the face to face mode. The paper also examines the hindrances and obstacles encountered by IGNOU in imparting training to the in-service teachers through the ODL mode, with the new regulations and norms of the NCTE.

The last paper of the session titled “*Role of KKHSOU and IDOL in women vocational education: A Case Study in Sonitpur district*” authored by Pradip Mochahary and Nabanita Sarmah was presented by Pradip Mochahary. The paper is an attempt to study different professional courses offered by KKHSOU and IDOL in Sonitpur district of Assam. Distance learning system of education is being more popular around the world and in India day by day

Parallel Session-X: Date-9th July, 2017

Theme: Inclusive Education

The tenth session i.e. the last session was chaired by Dr. Archana Bhattacharya and Ms. Kongkona Priya Baruah acted as the rapporteur.

The first paper of the session titled “*Evaluating the impact of technologies in Open Distance Learning*” authored by Menonjyoti Kalita and Rupanjali Nath was presented by Menonjyoti Kalita. This paper provides vital information for education planners and institutions wanting to implement technology in education system. In this paper the author evaluated the impact of use of Technology by students pursuing education through open distance learning mode in North East India.

The second paper of the session titled “*An evaluative study of trend of student enrollment in secondary level teacher training programme of IGNOU and Gauhati University*” authored and presented by Rajiv Kumar Jha. The paper intends to analyze the prevailing scenario of trend of enrollment of students in pre-service secondary level teacher-education program in Assam.

The last paper of the session titled “*Vocational Education needs to come back in North-East India*” authored and presented by S. C. Subudhi. The paper attempts to discuss the needs of Vocational Education in North East India. Taking into consideration the current scenario as regard to vocational education India has one of the largest technical manpower in the world.

Recommendations:

The deliberations in the Conference yield the following recommendations-

1. Skill Development Programmes should be connected to the nature, technology and culture of the region.
2. Government and Non-Government organizations are to be requested to treat ODL learners as equivalent to conventional learners in case of appointment.
3. ICT facility should be made available in LSCs so that learners can avail the advantages of ICT. There should be programmes for popularizing the initiative of governments in ICT developments.
4. More publicity of ODL among women, SC & ST, minority and tea garden communities are required.
5. The youth of NE need soft skills and communication skills for better employment.
6. Short term programmes on agriculture through ODL should be given priority by Open Educational Institutions.
7. CBCS can be used as an opportunity for ODL mode to impart Skill Oriented Programmes.
8. All the educational institutions and departments in NE should be linked through ICT for more academic activities and research.
9. Programmes on new technologies like Data Science and Data Analytics should be offered.
10. Special educational programmes to rehabilitate the youths should be offered to reduce juvenile delinquency.
11. ODL programmes in NE must seriously focus on community based education.
12. Special programmes through ODL should be introduced for learners with disabilities.

Some glimpses of the National Conference



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