

Student Support Services In IGNOU – A case study of Regional centre, Bhubaneswar

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Indira Gandhi Open University (IGNOU), the world's largest university was established by an Act of Parliament in 1985 with a view to democratizing higher education in the country. The University is mandated to widen access by offering high quality innovative and need based programmes at different levels, especially to the disadvantaged and marginalized segments of society at affordable costs by using a variety of media and technology. Though the academic journey of the University was started in 1987 by offering 2 academic programmes with student strength of 4528, today it serves the educational aspirations of over 3 million learners spread across the country with the support of twenty one Schools of studies and network of 67 Regional centers and more than 3000 study centres.

IGNOU in a relatively short time has made a significant contribution to the areas of higher education, community education, extension activities and continual professional development, as world leader in distance education, it has been conferred with the award of Excellence by the commonwealth of learning (COL), Canada. In March, 2013, it was listed 27th in the web metric ranking of Indian universities, based on the criterion of its presence on the internet. The University is committed to quality in teaching, research, training and extension activities, and acts as national resource centre for expertise and infrastructure in the ODL system.

Regional centre, Bhubaneswar was established in 1986 in the first phase of expansion of the University after its establishment by an Act of Parliament in 1985. This was the only RC established then in the Eastern Region to cater to the educational needs (especially higher education) of the people of this part of the country through distance education mode. The RC had started functioning from a rented building with a small network of 06 study centers located in 06 district headquarters colleges. It had started offering two programmes namely Diploma in Management and Diploma in Distance Education in 1987 with an enrolment of 87. As the University went on expanding its network and offering more academic programmes, the Regional centre also expanded its network by establishing more Learner Support centers (LSCs) and offered more academic programmes in the region. By the year 2000, the RC had established 22 study centers covering all the undivided districts of the state with a student enrolment of around 5000.

The year 2000 is considered to be a landmark year in the history of this regional centre as the RC was shifted to its own campus on the first day of the year that is 01.01.2000. During the first half of the first decade of the new millennium the university in this region pervaded beyond the district headquarters to sub-divisions and blocks. Reputed NGOs, established private colleges etc. were brought into IGNOU fold to serve as LSCs. Translation of study materials of BPP, CFN and some courses of BA into odia medium has really become conducive in elevating our enrolment in this region and this commendable step was in 2004-05 and now we are offering as many as 24 courses of BA in Odia medium. Translation of courses into Odia medium had brought with it a new responsibility of evaluating the TEE answer scripts which the RC had been doing till the establishment of the Regional Evaluation centre in 2017 in the RC building.

With a view to making the support service robust and enhancing the outreach in the remotest and not so developed districts (Kalahandi, Bolangir and Koraput) of the state a sub-regional centre was set up in Koraput which was later upgraded to a Regional centre. This period witnessed exemplary growth (both qualitative and quantitative) of RC in particular and the university in general in this region. RC-Bhubaneswar was awarded with the first gold medal for best support services in 2005. Then Regional centre embarked upon consolidating its activities and making its processes full proof to be a robust organization. Learner support services were opened in jails for facilitating the studies of the jail inmates. Also centers were opened in rural locations wherever we had no presence. Emphasis was laid on promoting programmers as regards the teacher education and health. Initiative is always taken to activate new academic programmers in the region whenever any new programme is launched by the university to create opportunity for the desirous learners for acquiring higher qualification and developing skills. Till date 124 academic programmers have been activated and offered to the learners in this region.

Time to time the Regional centre organizes some academic activities like Regional seminars, orientation programmers for the academic counselors, etc. it has been our continuous and constant Endeavour to provide the maximum possible support services to our learners. Our strong belief in providing prompt service and making ourselves accessible to our learners had brought us the recognition for the second time by the way of a gold in 2010. Infrastructure development was undertaken by the way of adding two more floors to the existing building making it a four storied building. Another four storied building connecting to the main building has been constructed where we have our warehouse for study materials. A Regional evaluation centre has also been established in the Regional centre building in 2017 optimally using the space available in the RC. From 87 students and LSCs in 1987 to more than 32000 enrolments and 89 LSCs (except RC, Koraput) by the end of 2018 bears the testimony of its growth in the region.

IGNOU has fulfilled its mandate reaching the un-reached. Citing the example of the state of Odisha it has shown tremendous growth in enrolment, taking into its fold the deprived, marginalized and disadvantaged section of people by providing cost effective and qualitative higher education. It has huge potentiality to educate the people like the jail inmates of jail centres where there is a scope of getting higher education and changing their future destiny. IGNOU has also provided professional and skilled development programmers to the unemployed youth and house wives through which they have become self dependent or have created employment opportunities for others. In the tribal areas of Koraput, Kalahandi and Balangir, IGNOU has done appreciable work by providing quality higher education at the door step of the learners and making them self dependent by getting a govt. or private jobs in the locality. Besides that IGNOU has offered professional programmes like BED, DLED, MAEDU, PGDET, PGDSLML, PGDEMA, PGDHE, PGDPPED, DCE, CTE, CFE, etc. for the teachers who are teaching in the colleges or Schools. Through these programmes they update their skill, techniques and art of teaching. In addition to the academic activities, IGNOU has created a platform for the weavers community and envisioning the overall development of them through free education scheme. Moreover, IGNOU has also stepped in undertaking different developmental activities in the society like swachhata Abhijan, plan for health check in the slum areas, conduction of yoga, literacy campaign, free computer literacy for the children of slum dwellers, involvement of IGNOU in adhara campaign and the concept of adopted village for its overall development. In this way IGNOU especially the Regional Bhubaneswar has created many mile stones in different areas so far as higher education is concerned.

In open and distance learning, IGNOU plays a pivotal role in disseminating knowledge in the far flung areas of India. Its main objective is to reach to the un reach or marginalized and disadvantaged section of the society including the schedule caste, schedule tribe, women particularly the housewives and working ladies, unemployed youth and differently-abled students . IGNOU as a leader in distance education in the country almost having student strength of 35 million approximately pervading quality, need based and competency enhanced programmers across the country and has created a knowledge based society. It also helps in increasing the gross enrolment ratio of the country especially in higher education. The university is the second largest university in the world in terms of measuring yardstick particularly in digital, ICT initiatives, networking and study materials. In various field of activities the university has tremendously excelled and it has been acclaimed as university of excellence by the common wealth Nations. The university has taken initiatives for innovative learning and learner support services. In addition the University has developed ICT enabled initiatives for effective and learner friendly instructional systems including e-learning, multimedia learning, mobile learning and manifold forms

of web based learning. In every respect the Head Quarter has provided and strengthened the support services to the learners, is very unique in Open and distance learning. Moreover, the Regional centre and study centers have supported and strengthened the support services to the prospective as well as the existing learners which has cemented the open and distance learning in the country.

Keywords- Regional centre, learner support centre, whatsapp, digital, swachhata abhijan, innovative, marginalized, open and distance learning, web metric, landmark, certificate in food and nutrition, Bachelor of preparatory programme, Adhara, Bachelor of education, diploma in elementary education, Master of Arts in Education, Post graduate diploma In educational technology, post graduate diploma in school leadership and management, post graduate diploma in educational management and administration, post graduate diploma in higher education, post graduate diploma in pre primary education, diploma in creative English, certificate in teaching English, certificate in functional English.

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Objectives of IGNOU

The Indira Gandhi open university was established to achieve the following objectives.

- Democratising higher education by taking it to the doorsteps of the learners
- Providing access to high quality education to all those who seek it irrespective of age, religion, region and gender.
- Offering need-based academic programmes by giving professional and vocational orientation to the courses
- Promoting and developing distance education in India

Three tier structure of IGNOU

To provide the best support services to the learners, IGNOU has been designed with a model of three tier structure like the Head quarter which is located in New Delhi and the Regional centre and learner support centre or study centre which is very close to the learner where the learner gets all kinds of support services till the completion of the programme. The three structures function smoothly with an objective to facilitate the learners at its own level so that the learners will be enabled to complete their programme within the time frame set by the university.

Schools and Divisions of IGNOU

There are 21 schools functioning at the IGNOU Head quarter. The main objectives of the schools are to design the study materials for the learners as well the supporting the students at different period of time. The faculty members work wholeheartedly for the learners and evaluate their assignments and Term end answer scripts if situation needs. Besides that they also set assignment questions for the learners and recommend for the revision of the syllabus if it is so obsolete or very outdated. Through teleconference and web conference the faculty members address the students on line and listen to the issues of the students carefully. Accordingly they explain to the students the components of the course materials where they feel their intervention. Their priority is to strengthen the support services to the students.

Student Evaluation Division

Student evaluation division is a major evaluating body in IGNOU. It co-ordinates and monitors the assessment and evaluation activities of Regional evaluation centres. It prepares question papers and answer booklet for the learners and send sms alert to the students to fill up the TEE form online and specifies the date and schedule of examination in the IGNOU website. It declares the result of the students and updates in the grade card. Besides it also sends grade card to the students after updating the practical/project/internship/field work journal/dissertation/assignment marks in the grade card received on line from the Regional centres.

Student Registration Division SRD

Student registration division is another important division functions independently and facilitate the learners in fresh admission and registration of 2nd /3rd yr/semester based courses opted by the students during the period of study. It also updates the data of the learners with regard to change of courses/medium/programmes/address/mobile number if anybody requests the Regional Centres.

Material production and distribution division

In IGNOU material production and distribution is a unit functions with the objective of facilitating the students by distributing the self instructional study materials to them as per the registration data base of the learners. It replies to the students queries and grievances posted from different corners of India. It also maintains the dispatch and delivery status of the study materials in IGNOU main web page where the students can check the status of his/her material and address to the authority as per his/her requirement.

Electronic material production centre

Electronic material production distribution centre is also major unit in IGNOU. It prepares and produces electronic materials on the course materials and uploads in the Gyandarshan Channels for telecasting the programmes for the learners of various programmes. In addition to that it also produces film on different burning issues of the society and telecast them live on different educational channels. It also prepares CDS and documentary film on the most appropriate topic relevant for the students.

Study centres

LSCs (SSC, RSC and PSC)-At the lower level learner support centres play a pivotal role in facilitating the students from pre-counseling to post counseling. There are three types of study centres operates in IGNOU namely programme study centres established for a particular Programm, Special study centre established for a different purpose and the regular study centre where a sizeable number of programmes are activated. It arranges counseling classes for the learners and addresses the issues of the learners. It also sends sms alert to the students regarding counseling, submission of assignment responses, filling up on line term end examination form and conduct the examination of the students. The LSC evaluates the assignment responses of the learners with the help of the academic counselors and gives the students grades/marks wherever it is applicable to the programme. It also prepares the award list and transmit the data on line to SED after through authentication by the Regional centre. Moreover, the LSC also conducts practical and guides the students in the projects/dissertation for the successful completion of the programme of the learners.

Regional centre

Regional centre play an important role in co-ordinating the activities between the Head Quarter and the study centre. It also authenticate data sent by the study centre and conducts practical and viva voce of MAEDU, MSCDFSM, MCA, BCA, PGDEMA, MAPC, BAPC, PGDSLM, MAAN, etc and sends sms alert to the students for attending the practical and viva voce held at the Regional centre from time to time. It prepares the practical/project/internship award list and transmit the data to the SED for updating the data in the grade card. In view of the above the Regional centre uploaded the schedule of the programme in the RC website, sending sms alert and mailing the students regarding the practical examination/project/internship viva voce, etc. it also sends sms alert to the students regarding registration, term end practical, filling up the examination form, collection of convocation degree certificates, etc. In every respect the Regional centre takes measures to sensitise the learners about their responsibilities towards their study.

Library at Head Quarter, Regional Centre and Learner support centres

There is a library at the Head quarter, at the Regional centre and at the study centre to provide supplementary study materials both print and electronic form for the ready reference of the learners. At the Head quarter the library works like depository of various kind of books from different areas in order to facilitate the learners in their studies. Similarly the Regional centre library also helps the learners to supplement their knowledge. At the study centre also the learners visit the library and collect supplementary data, records and materials by doing photo copies. In this way the all the units facilitate the learners in their study.

Technological intervention in support services

Head Quarter-In IGNOU everything becomes on line starting from admission to filling on examination form. To robust the online system, technological intervention and modification is a part and parcel. Time to time IGNOU' national innovative centre takes stock of the situation and modifies or brings changes in the online system when the system demands.

1. **On line Admission**- IGNOU's online admission team takes cares the issues and difficulties of the prospective learners. In every step the on line admission team provides assistance and support to the learners during admission. It also provides registration alert to the learners for registering the courses at the right time.
2. **Information icons at the IGNOU Portal**- IGNOU has its web page and each and every information is given there for the learners so that they will not face any difficulties in their

studies. Starting from assignment question to checking of registration status is available in the main web page of IGNOU.

3. **Downloading facility-** In the web page there is a downloading facility which helps the learners to download the required data, record, format of any kind and used them in their study for the completion of the programme.
4. **Availability of common prospectus-** In the main web page of IGNOU time to time the revised common prospectus is readily available for the prospective learners so that before taking admission into any programme they can have detailed information about the courses, fees structure, duration of the programme, objective of the programme and eligibility of the programme, etc.
5. **E-Resources/ E gyankosh/ Digital library-** E-gyankosh is a digital depository where all kinds of study materials from different disciplines are available for the learners who can download the materials from the e-gyankosh and used them for their study purpose.
6. **Assignment Questions-** Assignment is a set of questions which is set and designed by the concerned school as per the requirement of the students and upload the same in the main web page of IGNOU for the learners who can download the questions and write the answer and submit the assignment responses at the study centre.
7. **Registration status-** Registration status is a kind a information designed by the student registration division and the necessary information regarding the validity of the programme, name of the learner, student's father name, address of the learner, assignment/practical status and grade card status which can be displayed on the demand of the learner so that accordingly the he/she gets required information for the completion of the programme.
8. **Re-admission/credit transfer information-** In the main web page of IGNOU, the student registration division provides information regarding the re-admission procedure if the maximum validity period is over and the student is advised to apply for re-admission so that the grace period is extended and reflected in the re-admission status which is verified by the learner himself/herself.
9. **Self instructional study materials** –The Material production and distribution division prepares the data base of the learners regarding the dispatch and delivery status of the materials of the student and which is reflected in the web page for the information of the students so that the students can check the status and get the information.
10. **Assignment updation status-** In the registration status, one more information is given for the learner to know the assignment marks status whether it is uploaded in the grade card or it is with SED. Accordingly the learner knows the present status of assignment marks which is reflected in the grade card.
11. **Practical/Project updation status** –In the registration data, the learner is provided the information regarding the practical/project marks status accordingly the learner prepares for the next course action.
12. **Term end Examination-** Filling up the form on line is also available in the main web page. The student fills up the form and appears the term end examination. For that purpose the student has to pay requisite examination fee which is also available in the main web page.
13. **Entrance result declaration and generation of qualifying card/marks on line-** In the main web page IGNOU provides information regarding downloading of hall tickets as well as the qualifying certificates on the basis that the prospective learners take admission into MBA, BSCN, BED programmes of IGNOU.

Schools/Division

1. **Evaluation and assessment-** There are 21 schools from different disciplines. The faculty members from each school evaluate the answer scripts of the learners and give them grade or marks as

per the programme. The concerned school receives projects/field work journal from the students and evaluates them through the externals.

2. **Conducts of viva-voce-** Different Schools of the university, conducts pre course work of the students and qualify them for the Ph. D Programme. The faculty members act as guide and give the scholars proper guidance in order to complete the PH.D. Programme. Finally the concerned school organizes Ph. D viva voce of the scholars where he/she presents the summary of the Ph. D thesis. In thus way the scholars are guided by the faculty members of different departments.
3. **Preparation of ECP Schedule-** The school of Education prepares the schedule of the extended contact programme for the students of PGDHE and PGDSLM Programmes and communicates the Regional centre to organize it with the help of the local resource persons available in the locality.
4. **Preparation of assignment questions-** The 21 schools prepare assignment questions for the students and give them proper guidance for submitting the assignment responses at the study centre where the academic counselors evaluate them with proper grade and marks as deserved by the students.
5. **Evaluation of assignment responses-** sometimes due to paucity of academic counselors, the Regional centre sends the un-evaluated assignment responses for evaluation. The faculty members evaluate the assignment responses and award them with grade and marks wherever it is applicable.
6. **Project/dissertation guidance-** Schools guide the students regarding the project and dissertation through mails and manuals as a result they complete their programme within specific period.
7. **Revision of study materials-** Time to time schools take a survey and recommends for revision of the courses for the students if the circumstances demand.
8. **Orientation of Academic counselors-**Time to time schools organizes orientation programme for the newly appointed academic counselors and orient them with the ODL system and the course materials of IGNOU.
9. **Web conference/teleconference – Interaction with the learners-** For the convenience and understanding of the learners, schools arrange web conference/tele-conference and tries to explain the students on different aspects of the subjects and listen to the queries of the students and clarifies their doubts.
10. **Use of Gyanvani Radio channels/Gyandarshan/Gyanprava/Swayamprava-** Electronic material production centre prepares short film or documentary on subject specific and launches it on the different educational channels of Doordarshan and explains to the students about the subject specific questions if raised by the students in the open forum.
11. **Interface with the students-**In IGNOU there is every possibility of interaction between the students and the teachers on the subject specific issues/doubts/difficulties and explain them nicely by giving examples.
12. **Setting questions and evaluation of answer scripts-** schools as per the practice set questions for the students of different courses and evaluates them with grade or marks whatever it requires .
13. **Organization of course work for PH.D Scholar-** schools organizes Ph. D course work for the scholars and give them proper guidance for the collection of data/records/documents, etc in the context of Ph.D work.
14. **Guidance to M.Phil/Ph.D Scholars-** the faculty members of different schools guide the scholars and evaluate their performance time to time.
15. **Conduct of viva voce for PH.D/M.PHIL Scholars-**schools conduct viva voce of the Ph. D scholars and give them scope for the presentation of the summary of the thesis. In this way the scholars get their Ph. D degree under the guidance of the faculty members.

Regional Centre, Bhubaneswar

1. **RC website for information**-The Regional centre plays a pivotal role in extending the support services to the learners. In different areas the RC helps the learners starting from admission to the completion of the programme. RC, Bhubaneswar has its regional web site and in the website, important information is uploaded for the learners so that they get the information at the door step. In this way RC main objective is to redress the students' grievances and issues as result all the students get the support without visiting the Regional centre.
2. **Downloading facility in the web site**- Regional centre, Bhubaneswar uploaded counseling schedules of the study centres, practical schedules, TEE Practical schedules, assignment questions, study materials etc which could be downloaded by the students easily without any problem.
3. **Uploading of students information**- The Regional centre, Bhubaneswar has uploaded a students information in the RC website so that the students will have a look and accordingly proceed in his/her study. In the students' broucher each and every component has been written for the understanding of the learners for example regarding admission, re-registration, submission of assignment responses and filling up the examination form, etc.
4. **Sms alert to the students**- the Regional centre has taken care of sending sms alert to the students regarding re-registration, submission of assignment responses at the study centres, filling up the examination form, attending practical at the study centres, submission of dissertation, projects, internships of MAEDU, MAPC, PSCDFSM, PGDEMA, PGDLSM, MCA, BCA, etc. Accordingly the students prepares for attending the viva voce. Through technical intervention the Regional centre is extending its support services to the learners.
5. **Conduct of project/practical/dissertation/internship evaluation and viva voce**- As per the guidance of the school, the Regional centre, Bhubaneswar conducts projects, practical, dissertation, and internship viva voce of the students by inviting the externals from outside university and prepares award list and send it to SED for uploading in the grade card. Keeping in view the Regional centre used to send sms alert to the students for submitting the projects/dissertation, internships, at the Regional centre. It also conducts practical of BSC, MSCDFSM, MAPC, MCA, BCA, PGDCA, PGDST, BED, etc. at the study centres for that purpose the Regional centres sends sms to the students to be alert and get ready.
6. **Evaluation of assignment responses**- The Regional centre sends sms to the students to submit the assignment responses at the study centre and collect the evaluated assignment responses from the LSC.
7. **Conduct of term end practical at RC**- The Regional centre conducts Term ends practical for the students for that purpose it sends sms to the students and uploading the hall tickets in the regional centre website for downloading.
8. **Formation of google link**- The Regional centre prepares a google link and sends to the students through sms in order to collect the options of the students regarding the practical courses and the study centres where the practical will be conducted.
9. **Use of whatsapp**- The Regional centre also used mobile technology like whatsapp and through it the necessary information is disseminated to the students and it spreads across the student community regarding the practical, re-registration, counseling sessions, assignment , Term end Examination, etc.
10. **Grievances cell at RC**- In the Regional centre, it has its grievances cell which takes care s of the students' issues and difficulties and at the best they are redressed by the staff of the Regional centre.
11. **Counseling cell at RC**- Out of the best practices, the Regional centre has a counseling cell and all the academic staff of the Regional centre takes care of the issues and difficulties of

the students on day to day basis. A record is maintained at the Counselling cell and all the grievances of the students are registered and report to the RSD, SRD, SED, MPDD.

12. **Information centre at RC-** At the entrance of the Regional centre there is an information counter where the students get first hand information about the admission procedure, fees structure of the programme, duration and eligibility condition of the programme, term end examination, change of study centres, change of medium, course, programmes, receipt of degree at the convocation, etc.
13. **Use of quick contact link-** The Regional centre, Bhubaneswar has designed an innovative device of quick contact link through which the student sends his or her issues/difficulties and it is replied by various sections of the Regional centre within 24 hours.
14. **Information through RC mail-** Another media that is gmail through which the Regional centre replies all the queries, resolves all the issues of the students and guides the students regarding practical, counseling, dissertation, project, internship, workshop, admission, re-registration, etc.
15. **Information through project/practical/assignment sections-** Project/practical/assignment sections looks after the issues of the students pertaining to non-declaration of project marks, non-updation of practical marks in the grade card, non-reflection of dissertation marks in the grade card and non-updation of internship marks in the grade card.
16. **MPDD at RC-** The MPDD section provides study materials to the learners either by post or in person who visits the Regional centre. A big ware house is earmarked for the purpose of taking care of the students' study materials.
17. **Computer section of RC-** At Regional centre there is a computer section which takes care the issues like change of medium, course, programme, address and change or regional centre also. Besides that it stores the data of the students and extends support services to the learners whoever visits the Regional centre.
18. **Placement cell-** At Regional centre, the placement cell organizes placement rally for the pass out students and tries to place in the better position in any corporate sector or NGOs. In this connection, the Regional centre used to send sms to the IGNOU pass out students to attend the placement rally.
19. **Regional evaluation centre,** Bhubaneswar- In the same building the Regional centre having a Regional evaluation centre which is evaluating the answer scripts of other Regional centres for that purpose the Regional evaluation centre is using the sms and mail services for the learners.
20. **RC Quick contact link-** In the Regional centre web site there is quick contact link on which the student gives his/her issues/difficulties and ultimately sent to Regional centre and the same forwarded to the concerned section for the redressal of the matter at the earliest so that the student gets his/her problem resolved.

Learner support centre

The study centre of the learner is one of the important components of the open and digital learning. The students interact with the academic counselors face to face and clears their doubts and the co-ordinator of the study centre and his staff takes care the issues and difficulties of the learners and get them solved through the co-operation and support of the academic counselors. It is the most important pillar of the open and distance learning. The study centre always tries to strengthen the support services so the learners' issues get resolved at its level. In each and every respect the study centre extends necessary co-operation and support to the learners

so that their academic problem get resolved and acquire the required degree/diploma from the university at the right time.

1. **Pre-admission and post admission counseling**-The IGNOU study centre provides pre-admission and post admission counseling to the prospective as well as the existing students of the university. LSC counsels the learners regarding the future course action after the completion of the programme. It guides the learners what to do and what not to do during the course of study. In this way LSC helps the students in their studies.
2. **Holding of counseling classes**- On receipt of the students register LSC prepares counseling schedule, holds induction meeting for the newly admitted students and arranges counseling classes by the academic counselors on every Sunday. It advises the learners to prepare themselves at home going through the study materials and attend the counseling classes clearing their doubts.
3. **Guidance to the learners related to project/dissertation/BSW/MSW-Field work journal**- The LSC allots the learners a guide out of the list of academic counsellors who generally provides all support services to the learners for the completion of project/dissertation/field work journal of BSW or MSW Programmes. The guide accompanies the students and helps them gathering the required data from the field work survey. Thus the guides play an important role in open and distance learning.
4. **Guidance to the learners to write assignment responses**- The academic counselors guide the learners how to write the assignment responses and what are the rules to be followed by the learners while writing the assignment responses.
5. **Evaluation of assignment responses**- The academic counselors evaluate the assignment responses and give them grade or marks as per the requirement of the programme with proper feedback for the learners which works as two ways of communication between the counsellors and the students. Moreover feedback of the academic counsellors helps the learners in preparing for the term end examination.
6. **Preparation of award list**- The academic counselors as per the performance of the learners award them grade or marks as they deserve and prepares the award list and hand over the evaluated assignment responses to the study centre for the reference of the learners so that they can find out their own fault in writing the assignment responses.
7. **Return of evaluated assignment responses to the students with positive comments**- The academic counselors return the evaluated assignment responses to the learners with a set of positive comments which motivate the learners to excel further in the term end examination. This unique process works in positive sense in open and distance learning. At present the conventional universities are also following the similar pattern of IGNOU.
8. **Information regarding Re-registration, re-admission, credit transfer, TEE, Submission of assignment responses**- The LSC Provides all kinds of information regarding re-registration, re-admission system or grace period if someone fails to complete the programme within maximum duration, credit transfer system a unique process to transfer the marks from old enrollment No to new enrollment no, on line filling up examination form and submission of assignment responses in time at the study centre, etc.
9. **Conduct of TEE**- The LSC as it is the heart of the ODL system conducts the term end examination for the learners.
10. **Holding practical**- The LSC holds guided and unguided practical examination at the study centre and extends support and co-operation to the learners.
11. **Preparing the award list of practical**- Right after the conduct of the practical examination it prepares the award list and send s to the Regional centre for on line entry purpose and at the same time sends the hard copies of the practical award list to the Registrar, Student

Evaluation division for declaration of result and issue of grade card and provisional certificates.

12. **Allotment of teachers for field work journal-** The LSC allots academic counselors to act as guide for the learners and facilitate them in collecting the data from the field work survey.
13. **Allotment of teacher for MARD/MAPC/MAEDU- dissertation/project-** The LSC also allots academic counselors to guide the learners in the dissertation and project works of the students who generally want academic support from the guides.
14. **Allotment of teacher for MAPC internship-** The LSC allots teachers to the learners, who guide them in the activities of internship or field studies.
15. **BAPC Project-** The LSC conducts Bachelor psychology practical at the study centre with the active support of the academic counselors and facilitate the learners in their project works.
16. **Conduct of BSC/ BSCN/MAPC/MSW /MSCDFS Practical at the study centre-** The LSC conducts practical of BSC/BSW/MAPC, etc at the study centre and facilitate the learners in the completion of the programme.

ASSIGNMENT AWARDS OF THE LEARNERS RECEIVED FROM DIFFERENT STUDY CENTRE AND SENT TO STUDENT EVALUATION DIVISION FOR INCORPORATING IN THE GRADE CARD.

STUDY CENTRE	NO. OF ASSIGNMENT EVALUATED, DEC-2018	NO. ASSIGNMENT EVALUATED, JUNE-2018	NO. OF ASSIGNMENT EVALUATED, JUNE, 2019
2100- REGIONAL CENTRE, BHUBANESWAR	1340	913	1689
2101- KIIT UNIVERSITY, BHUBANESWAR	3596	3817	2430
2102- RAVENSHAW UNIVERSITY, CUTTACK	456	1090	890
2103- ROURKELA GOVT. COLLEGE	4251	4283	200
2104- KHALLIKOTE COLLEGE, BERHAMPUR	1322	1886	1210
2105- ANGUL GOVT. COLLEGE	747	1139	1230
2106- F.M. COLLEGE, BALASORE	2499	3316	3535
2108- G.M. COLLEGE, SAMBALPUR	1306	4737	4657
2109- PHULBANI COLLEGE	350	887	986
2111- BJB COLLEGE, BHUBANESWAR	4613	7917	8540
2112- D.D.	588	1297	1432

COLLEGE, KEONJHAR			
2114- BARIPADA GOVT. COLLEGE	1549	2216	2346
2118- BHADRAK COLLEGE	1770	15	890
2119- SCS COLLEGE, PURI	867	14	986
2121- SKCG COLLEGE, PARAKHEMUNDI	295	4366	4537
2134- PACHAYAT COLLEGE, BARAGARH	2730	873	2864
2135- KSUB COLLEGE, BHANJANAGAR	1182	325	1345
2137- COLLEGE OF NURSING, BERHAMPUR	67	4018	3456
2138- N.C. COLLEGE, JAIPUR	603	1384	1654
2141- KENDRAPARA COLLEGE, KENDRAPARA	1042	324	1135
2146- VISWA YUVA KENDRA, ANGUL	382	1508	1679
2147- DEPT. OF GERIATRIC MEDICINE, SCB MEDICAL COLLEGE, CUTTACK	49	2430	2567
2148- BED COLLEGE, SAMBAPUR	579	347	358
2149-BED COLLEGE, BERHAMPUR	610	243	256
2150-RADHANATH TRAINING COLLEGE, CUTRACK	601	240	356
2153- SAHAYA, GODIPADA, NAYAGARH	261	237	246
2160- NALINI DEVI WOMEN'S COLLEGE, BHUBANESWAR	958	225	568

2162- COLLEGE OF TEACHER EDUCATION, BALASORE	597	983	864
2164- COLLEGE OF TEACHER EDUCATION, ANGUL	669	225	543
2180- SANKARAKHOL COLLEGE, PHULBANI	228	717	765
2186-CITRAP, PHULBANI	595	38	568
2192-TALCHERS TRAINING COLLEGE, ANGUL	322	1671	1658
2194-ORISSA UNIVERSITY OF AGRICULTURE AND TECHNOLOGY, BHUBANESWAR	145	145	167
2195-BED COLLEGE, BHANJANAGAR	328	138	348
2196-BED COLLEGE, ROURKELA	350	231	346
2197-BED COLLEGE, FAKIRPUR, ANANDPUR, KEONJHAR	403	276	456
2198-BARIPADA BED COLLEGE, MAYURBHANJA	199	11	243
21100- CHHENDIPADA COLLEGE, ANGUL	223	217	246
21106- CHANDIKHOL COLLEGE, JAJPUR	678	529	654
21110- KALAPATHAR AND DHALAPATHAR, NAYAGARH	345	184	324
21111-BAMRA TRUST FUND COLLEGE	56	33	45
21115-PARADEEP COLLEGE,	56	04	64

JAGATSINGHPUR			
21116-DEOGARH COLLEGE, DEOGARH	220	611	578
21117-KUCHINDA COLLEGE, SAMBALPUR	154	1018	1156
21120-KHAIRA COLLEGE, BALASORE	435	02	589
21127-CENTRAL JAIL, CHOUDWAR	60	573	456
21128-BERHAMPUR JAIL	14	01	43
21131-HIGH TECH MEDICAL COLLEGE, BHUBANESWAR	08	10	45
21133-HARICHANDANPUR COLLEGE, KEONJHAR	171	501	654
21152-CHETANA COLLEGE OF HIGHER EDUCATION, BHUBANESWAR	564	08	643
21185-J.K.B.K. COLLEGE, CUTTACK	407	3710	4217
21186-NUAPATANA COLLEGE, CUTTACK	45	07	56
21189-BELPAHAR COLLEGE, BELPAHAR	4154	296	3456
21190-P.N. COLLEGE, KHORDA	193	16	456
21194-WATERSHED MANAGEMENT, BHUBANESWAR	29	24	46
21198-NAYAGARH AUTONOMOUS COLLEGE, NAYAGARH	49	143	342
21204-KADOBHAL COLLEGE, SAMBALPUR	266	143	248
21205-OLAVAR COLLEGE, KENDRAPARA	170	610	765

21206-BADASAHI COLLEGE, MAYURBHANJA	414	1396	1654
21207-DINA KRUSHNA COLLEGE, JALESWAR	557	1577	2421
21208-PARADEEP COLLEGE, JAGATSINGHPUR	978	635	1105
21209-KHAIRA COLLEGE, BALASORE	195	1500	1704
21210- RAIRANGPUR COLLEGE, MAYURBHANJA	837	170	789
21211-ORISSA UNIVERSITY OF AGRICULTURE AND TECHNOLOGY, BHUBANESWAR	117	100	231
21213- CHITALO MAHAVIDYALAYA, JAJPUR	65	87	86
21214-DISTRICT HOSPITAL, KANDHAMAL	34	52	67
21215-DISTRICT HOSPITAL, SUNDERGARH	24	32	56
21216- BHANDARIPOKHARI JUNIOR COLLEGE, BHADRAK	70	252	324
21217-BANAIGARH COLLEGE, BANAIGARH	124	165	198
21218-B.B. MAHAVIDYALAYA, CHANDIKHOL, JAJPUR	71	01	87
21219-BAMRA COLLEGE, BAMRA	467	835	987
21220-ANM CENTRE, BARIPADA	28	56	56
21221-CAPITAL HOSPITAL, BHUBANESWAR	44	60	67

PR ACTICAL AWARDS OF THE LEARNERS RECEIVED FROM THE LEARNER SUPPORT CENTRES AND SENT TO THE STUDENT EVALUATION DIVISION FOR INCORPORATING IN THE GRADE CARD.

STUDY CENTRE	PRACTICAL AWARDS OF THE LEARNERS, JUNE, 2018	PRACTICAL AWARDS OF THE LEARNERS, DEC, 2018
2100- REGIONAL CENTRE, BHUBANESWAR	357	345
2101- KIIT UNIVERSITY, BHUBANESWAR	64	56
2103-ROURKELA GOVT. COLLEGE, ROURKELA	488	29
2108- G.M. COLLEGE, SAMBALPUR	63	40
2111-B.J.B. COLLEGE, BHUBANESWAR	329	350
2116-S.C.B MEDICAL COLLEGE, CUTTACK	34	03
2121- PARLAKHEMUNDI COLLEGE, GANAM	24	25
2135-K.S.U.B COLLEGE, BHANJANAGAR	330	172
2137- S.K.C.G NURSING COLLEGE, BERHAMPUR	233	30
2141-KENDRAPARA COLLEGE, KENDRAPARA COLLEGE	468	410
2147- S.C.B MEDICAL COLLEGE, CUTTACK	28	24
2148-SAMBALPUR BED COLLEGE	343	50
2149-BERHAMPUR BED COLLEGE	580	12
2150-RADHANATH TRAINING COLLEGE, CUTTACK	372	08
2160-NALINI DEVI WOMEN'S COLLEGE, BHUBANESWAR	368	06
21131-HIGH TECH MEDICAL COLLEGE, BHUBANESWAR	01	05
21152-CHETANA COLLEGE OF HIGHER EDUCATION, BHUBANESWAR	288	303
21211-ORISSA UNIVERSITY OF AGRICULTURE AND TECHNOLOGY, BHUBANESWAR	72	04
21220-ANM CENTRE, BALASORE	30	24

21221-CAPITAL BHUBANESWAR	HOSPITAL,	28	32
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PROJECT AWARDS OF THE LEARNERS RECEIVED FROM THE LEARNER SUPPORT CENTRES AND SENT TO STUDENT EVALUATION DIVISION FOR INCORPORATING IN THE GRADE CARD.

STUDY CENTRE	PROJECT AWARDS OF THE LEARNERS, JUNE, 2018	PROJECT AWARDS OF THE LEARNERS, DEC, 2018
2100- REGIONAL CENTRE, BHUBANESWAR	80	164

Conclusion -In open and distance learning, IGNOU plays a pivotal role in disseminating knowledge in the far flung areas of India. Its main objective is to reach to the un reach or marginalized and disadvantaged section of the society including the schedule caste, schedule tribe, women particularly the housewives and working ladies, unemployed youth and differently- abled students . IGNOU as a leader in distance education in the country almost having student strength of 35 million approximately pervading quality, need based and competency enhanced programmes across the country and has created a knowledge based society. It also helps in increasing the gross enrolment ratio of the country especially in higher education. The university is the second largest university in the world in terms of measuring yardstick particularly in digital, ICT initiatives, networking and study materials. In various field of activities the university has tremendously excelled and it has been acclaimed as university of excellence by the common wealth Nations. The university has taken initiatives for innovative learning and learner support services. In addition the University has developed ICT enabled initiatives for effective and learner friendly instructional systems including e-learning, multimedia learning, mobile learning and manifold forms of web based learning. In every respect the Head Quarter has provided and strengthened the support services to the learners, is very unique in Open and distance learning. Moreover, the Regional centre and study centres have supported and strengthened the support services to the prospective as well as the existing learners which has cemented the open and distance learning in the country.

Reference

1. Data retrieved from IGNOU, Regional centre data base, Bhubaneswar, on 28.9.19
2. Data retrieved from Learner support centres, on 28.9.19
3. Data retrieved from Student Evaluation Division, IGNOU, New Delhi, on 23.9.2019
4. www.rcbhubaneswar.org.in Home page for detailed information.
5. www.ignou.ac.in Home page for detailed information.
6. ODL in IGNOU, referring to common prospectus 2018-2019, www.ignou.ac.in available in Home of IGNOU.