

**EXTERNAL DIPLOMA PROGRAMME GRADUATES'
PERCEPTION OF ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT
IN THE FACULTY OF EXTERNAL STUDIES,
UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI** /,

v 1 *

in

John Kinnjogu Kiunii

**A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE
DEGREE OF MASTER OF EDUCATION IN
EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION OF
THE UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI**

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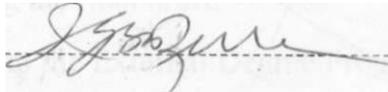
DECLARATION

This research thesis is my original work and has never been presented for any degree in any other university

B 5 E

John Kanjogu Kiumi

This thesis has been submitted for examination with our approval as I diversity Supervisors

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'George N. Reche', is written over a horizontal dashed line on a light-colored background.

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I record a deep sense of appreciation to my wife Grace for her moral support and cooperation in the course of this study.

v.

Last but not least. I express my appreciation to the Office of the President. Republic of Kenya for granting me the authority to carry out the study in ken\ a.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my wife Grace and my children. Wanjiru. Mwaniki. Wambui and Njoki.

ABSTRACT

The study focused on the External Degree Programme (EDP) of the University of Nairobi (UoN) whose history goes back to 1964. In that year, the Kenya Education Commission (Republic of Kenya, 1965) proposed the need to start off-campus based degree courses in Kenya. However, due to financial constraints, the idea was not implemented until 1986. In that year (1986), the UoN admitted 592 students for an external Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) arts degree course in the Faculty of External studies (FES) at the college of Education and External Studies (CEES). To facilitate the teaching learning process in the external B.Ed programme, a number of student support services, namely face-to-face tutorials, study materials, continuous assessment, advisory services and library facilities in the regional study centres were incorporated in the programme.

Available literature however suggests that the FES began to experience financial constraints after the programme was launched in 1986, thereby lowering the quality of services that were offered to the students. For instance there were instances when the FES was behind schedule in delivering study materials to the students due to lack of funds to repair the printing equipment. Moreover, in 1990, the FES was compelled to withdraw field tutorials in the regional centres due to shortage of funds to pay tuition fee to the part-time lecturers.

The study was therefore set to investigate how the graduates and administrators of the EDP of the UoN perceived the aforementioned components of student support system in the programme. In addition, the study investigated whether graduates perception of the support services/ system was influenced by four independent variables, namely age, sex, marital status and the subject combinations they took in the EDP. Further the study sought to investigate the problems that the graduates might have encountered in regard to the way the support system was managed by the FES. Finally, the study elicited suggestions from the respondents on how the FES could improve the support system.

The reviewed literature focused on four areas. These were; the concepts of perception and distance education, student support services in distance education and related studies on the variables that may influence distance learners' perception of support services in this mode of teaching. Data pertinent to the study was collected using two parallel questionnaires, one for the graduates and the other for the EDP administrators. In order to

establish whether the two instruments would collect the relevant data, a pilot study was carried out using 36 graduates and 4 EDP administrators. The results of the pilot study were used in making the necessary modifications to the two instruments.

The revised instrument for the graduates was mailed to 170 respondents who were randomly selected from a total population of 200 graduates. The revised questionnaire for the administration on the other hand was administered personally by the researcher to 19 administrators. The response rate was 83 percent and 68 percent from the graduates and the administrators respectively.

The raw data from the open - ended question items was analyzed by computing the frequency and percentage of respondents who supplied a given response in a given question item. On the other hand, data from the closed items in the questionnaire for the graduates was subjected to t - test and one - way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) in order to test the four hypotheses that were germane to this study. A hypothesis was either accepted or rejected at 0.05 level of significance.

From the analysed data, it emerged that the aforesaid variables, namely sex, marital status and subject combinations had no significant influence in regard to the way the graduates perceived the support system. The data further revealed that age did not significantly influence the way the graduates perceived continuous assessment and study materials. However, a significant difference was noted with regard to the way graduates in different age categories perceived residential sessions, guidance and counselling and regional centres' library facilities.

The study in addition showed that the graduates had encountered two main problems in regard to continuous assessment. These were short duration of taking timed tests and delayed delivery of marked coursework. The study further revealed that residential sessions were beneficial to the graduates for they received face -to - face tutorials besides sharing ideas amongst themselves. In addition, the study established that study guides had benefited the graduates for apart from having well summarized notes, they contained most of what was tested in the examinations. Similarly, audio - taped lectures were helpful to the graduates in that they summarized various topics in the study guides in addition to creating a real - life learning situation.

The

study further revealed that the graduates had encountered two main problems

with regard to study materials. First, some study guides were not accompanied with the relevant audio-taped lectures. Second, the materials were in some occasions delivered belatedly to the students. The study also established that only a small percentage of the graduate respondents sought for guidance and counselling from FES. Those who did so, the study revealed needed assistance mainly on how to raise tuition fees and how to improve their academic performance. The study also showed that regional centres' libraries had not been helpful to the graduates for they were located far from the areas they come from.

The study came up with the following recommendations. First, the FES should design a well managed study materials production system so as to ensure that materials reach the EDP students with minimal delay. Second, the FES should carry out an evaluation study to establish the needs of married students in the EDP. This will hopefully enable the FES to identify the appropriate changes to introduce

into the support system in order to make it more helpful to this category of students. Third, the FES should develop a flexible continuous assessment procedure that can accommodate the needs of old students in the EDP. Fourth, the FES should conduct an evaluation study to identify the needs of students in different age categories in the EDP. By doing so, the FES may come up with a guidance and counselling programme that will be capable of assisting students in different age categories in the programme. Finally, the FES should open up more regional centres' libraries in order to assist EDP students who due to personal commitments and distance constraints may not benefit much from the existing centres.

The study suggested further research in the following areas. To begin with, the study could be replicated using other instruments such as an interview schedule in order to establish whether similar results would be arrived at. In addition, a follow-up study could be carried out in order to find out whether other variables such as the regional centers that the graduates came from, their geographical distance from the centres and occupation would influence their perception of the support system. Further, a similar study needs to be carried out using drop-outs from the first lot of EDP students (1986/1993 group) in order to establish whether they withdraw prematurely due to shortcomings in the support system. Finally, the study could be replicated using the second intake group of students in the EDP (1995/1996 group) in order to find out whether the results of the two studies would be consistent.

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LIST OF DIAGRAMS

DIAGRAM NO.

1. Conceptual Framework of the Study

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

B.Ed	Bachelor of Education
CCU	Correspondence Course Unit
GEES	College of Education and External Studies
EDP	External Degree Programme
FES	Faculty of External Studies
NOU	National Open University
UoN	University of Nairobi

CHAPTER ONE

THE PROBLEM AND ITS CLARIFYING COMPONENTS

Background to the Research Problem

The history of external degree programmes in Kenya goes back to 1964. In that year, the Kenya Education Commission, popularly known as the Ominde Commission proposed that there was a need to establish off-campus based degree courses in the country (Republic of Kenya, 1965). The idea gained support in the University of Nairobi, whose Academic Board recommended the need to start external degree courses in the faculties of Arts, Science, Commerce and Architecture (Young, 1976). Nevertheless, no positive action was taken to establish the programmes at the time as had been recommended.

In 1976, a feasibility study was carried out by the Open University Team from Britain on the possibility of starting an External Degree Programme (EDP) in the University of Nairobi (Young, 1976). The Study recommended that such a programme could be established under the Institute of Adult Studies, University of Nairobi (University of Nairobi, Student's Handbook 1995). However, due to high financial implications, the recommendations were not implemented (University of Nairobi, Student's Handbook, 1987). Further interest in establishing an EDP was expressed by the Report of the National Committee on Educational Objectives and Policies (Republic of Kenya, 1976) and the Report of the Presidential Working Party (Republic of Kenya, 1981).

In 1983, the Deans Committee, University of Nairobi set up a Task Force to look into the possibility of starting an EDP (University of Nairobi, Student's Handbook,

The committee submitted its report to the University of Nairobi Senate in

August 1983 recommending the establishment of the programme in the University of Nairobi (University of Nairobi. Tutor's Handbook. 1987). The report was accepted by the Government. In 1985/86 Academic year, money was voted for the establishment of the first EDP in Kenya. In September, 1986, 592 Students were admitted into the programme for a Bachelor of Education (B. Ed) arts degree course in the Faculty of External Studies (FES) at the College of Education and External Studies (CEES). University of Nairobi (Kamau and Odumbe. 1991).

The External B.Ed degree programme was expected to achieve three major objectives. First, the programme was perceived as one of the potential ways of providing opportunities for aspiring Kenyans who had qualified for university education but could not secure admission due to limited space in the public universities (University of Nairobi. Student's Handbook 1986). Second, the programme was expected to meet the needs of secondary schools teachers (11011 - degree holders) in the country who aspired to improve their professional skills and thus gain promotion opportunities in the teaching profession (Reche. 1995). Third, since the programme was to be based on distance education mode of teaching (Kinyanjui. 1986) it was viewed as an effective way of utilizing limited educational resources (both human and material), for a small number of tutors would deliver lessons to a large group of students.

Since the external B.Ed programme students were to be taught at a distance from the University of Nairobi, a number of student support services were incorporated into the programme when it was launched in 1986. These, according to the University of Nairobi Student's Handbook (1986) were: face-to-face tutorials, continuous assessment, provision of instructional materials to the learners (study guides and audio taped lectures) advisory services, and library facilities in the regional centres. However, due to financial constraints (Kidombo. 1995), the FES began to experience problems in delivering the aforesaid support services to the students soon after the programme was launched in 1986.

Robinson (1981) has pointed out that the success of the teaching - learning

process. A distance education system depends on the quality of services provided to the learners. Consequently, if funds are scarce the teaching institution may be unable to equip the system with essential infrastructure by way of personnel and equipment. For this reason, the objectives of the teaching / learning process may not be fully realized for the institution may not offer quality services to the learners. Odumbe (1995) has noted that due to shortage of funds, the EDP lacked adequate equipment for the production of study materials and data base record keeping facilities. Therefore, there is a likelihood that the EDP administrators performed below the expectations of the graduates in respect of the services they rendered them when they were in the EDP. For instance, according to the proceedings of a meeting held by the administrators on 2nd March 1988 (Min. 218/3) the FES was behind schedule in delivering study materials to the EDP students due to inadequate funds to repair the printing equipment.

Kamau (1994) has noted that very few EDP students came from areas that were well serviced with public libraries. Therefore, there is a likelihood that delayed delivery of study materials to the students impacted negatively on their studies for they had limited access to library facilities. A similar opinion was expressed by the University of Nairobi Senate in its meeting held on 14th April 1989 (Min. 4 (ii)) following dismal performance in semester examination by the students who were taking Mathematics and History in the EDP. The opinion of those who attended the meeting was that the poor performance in the aforementioned subjects could have resulted from delayed delivery of study materials to the students who could therefore not have had adequate time to prepare for the examinations.

Financial constraints did not only impair the system of producing study materials but did also interfere with a smooth flow of face-to-face tutorials in the Regional Centres. This problem seems to have developed soon after the programme was launched in 1986. For instance, the proceedings of a meeting held by the EDP administrators on 21st October 1987 (Min. 286/1) demonstrates that some part -

time tutors in the Regional Centres had withdrawn their part time instructions to the HDP students due to delayed payment for the services they had rendered to the FES. Due to persistent constraints in reimbursing the tutors' travelling expenses and the teaching fee, field tutorials in the Regional Centres were finally discontinued in 1990 according to Karani (1994) and Kidombo (1995). What needs to be noted is that tutors play a vital role in a distance education mode of learning. This is true to the extent that, they do not only assist the learners on issues pertaining to examination and study skills, but also give them feedback on performance (Rouse, 1986). It can therefore be reasoned that, withdrawal of field tutorials in the Regional Centres denied the graduates an essential support resource in their studies.

Available literature further demonstrate that the HDP students experienced constraints in utilizing the services that were provided by the FES through the regional centres. For example, Raman (1994) has pointed out that a large number of the graduates were unable to visit the regional centres regularly for their working stations were far from the centres. Since the regional centres were essential distribution points for the study materials and assignments (University of Nairobi Student's Hand book, 1986), there is a likelihood that some students were unable to follow their studies systematically for they might have received the two belatedly. Indeed, Kidombo (1995) has pointed out that, some HDP students who were working in schools that were far from the regional centres were compelled to transfer to schools that were closer to the centres.

Since distance learners study at a distance from each other and from their tutors they need a wide range of support services in order to succeed in their studies. If poorly supported, learners are likely to be demotivated, and either perform poorly or withdraw prematurely from the studies. Guri-Rozenblit (1993) has expressed a similar opinion by stating that "student survival in terms of completion rates in open - access systems especially at the higher educational level depends greatly upon effective support mechanism" (p. 300).

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Statement of the Problem

The foregoing background to the study seems to suggest that the EDP students may have received inadequate administrative support (hereafter referred as support system/services) from the FES. For instance, the proceedings of a meeting held by the EDP administrators in July 1998 (Min 416/1) shows that, the FES was behind schedule in that year (1988) in delivering audio-taped lectures to the EDP students due to inadequate funds to repair dubbing machines. Since majority of the EDP students came from the rural areas (Kamau. 1994; kidombo. 1995) it is likely that the students encountered learning constraints for they had limited access to library facilities. Similarly, according to the proceedings of a meeting held by the EDP administrators in 1993 (min 3/8/4) the administrators were experiencing problems in dispatching marked course work to the EDP students (hereafter referred as graduates) due to the failure by some part-time lecturers to submit marked scripts to the FES for onward delivery to the graduates.

This study was therefore set to examine how the graduates and the EDP administrators perceived the support system in the programme. The study in addition sought to find out whether graduates perception of the support system was influenced by four selected independent variables, namely: sex, age, marital status and the subject combinations they took when they were in the EDP.

Purpose of the study

Specifically, the study investigated how the EDP graduates and administrators perceived the five components of the support system in the EDP. These were: continuous assessment, study materials, residential sessions, guidance and counselling services and library facilities in the Regional Centres. The study in addition examined the problems that the graduates might have encountered in regard to the way the support system was managed by the FES and how the problems could be minimised. The study also investigated whether graduates' perception of the support services



was influenced by four selected variables, namely: sex. age. marital status and the subject combinations they had taken in the EDP.

Objectives of the Study

The study aimed at achieving six specific objectives. These were:

1. To examine how the graduates and administrators perceived the five components of the administrative support system in the EDP. These were: continuous assessment, study materials, residential sessions, guidance and counselling and Regional Centre's library facilities.
2. To establish how male and female graduates perceived the student support system in the EDP.
3. To find out whether there were differences in regard to the way the graduates of different marital status perceived the student support system in the EDP.
4. To determine whether the age of the graduates influenced their perception of the student support system in the EDP.
5. To examine how graduates who took different subject combinations perceived the student support system in the EDP.
6. To find out the problems that might have been experienced by the graduates in utilizing the support services in the EDP.

Statement of the Hypotheses.

The study tested four null hypotheses. These were:

1. There is no significant difference in the way male and female graduates perceive the student support system in the EDP.

2. There is no significant difference in the way graduates of different marital status perceive the student support system in the EDP.

3. There is no significant difference in the way graduates of different ages

perceive the student support system in the EDP.

Ho₄ There is no significant difference in the way graduates who took different subject combinations perceive the student support system in the EDP.

Significance of the Study.

Findings from this study may be useful in various ways. First and foremost, the FES may identify the strengths and weaknesses of the student support system in the EDP. This may go a long way in helping the FES to come up with appropriate ways of improving the less effective aspects of the support system

The study, in addition, is likely to reveal some of the learning difficulties encountered by the EDP students. This information will hopefully help the part-time lecturers in the programme to design better ways of offering tutorial services to the EDP students in order to help them succeed in their studies. Since there is scanty research on the EDP, the study may possibly provoke some thoughts in other researchers who may in turn carry out more studies on the programme. This is likely

to yield useful information that may form a basis for further improvements on the programme.

It is equally hoped that, this study may provide valuable information to other distance teaching institutions in Kenya. For instance, such institutions may borrow ideas from some of the suggestions emanating from this study in their endeavour to improve the student support services in their programmes.

Limitations of the Study.

This study has two major limitations. First since the graduates were scattered all over the country, it was not possible for the researcher to organise an interview schedule due to time and financial constraints. Similarly, the researcher did not interview the EDP administrators for the data collection method would have been lopsided. Consequently, a mailed questionnaire was used as the sole data

collection instrument. Therefore, had it been possible to organise an interview schedule, there is a likelihood that some of the issues focused by the study would have been better clarified.

Secondly, this study was confined to the EDP of the University of Nairobi. This is a limitation in view of the fact that its findings cannot be generalized to other distance learning systems. This is true to the extent that, such systems could be offering programmes that are likely to be different from the EDP in terms of organization and subjects/courses offered to the learners. In this regard, institutions in Kenya intending to adopt some of the suggestions given in this study need to do so cautiously.

Delimitations of the Study

This study has three delimitations. To start with, it was confined to the first graduates of the EDP. The graduates were chosen in view of the fact that having covered the entire B.Ed course in the EDP, they were likely to have more information pertaining to the student support system in the EDP. In this regard, the second intake group (1995/2001 cohort) was deliberately left out for it might not have had adequate exposure to the support system.

Further, in order that the study may not be lopsided, EDP administrators were included in the study in order to elicit their views on the student support system in the programme. However, only those administrators who were directly involved in the management of support services to the EDP were included in the study. Therefore, since the EDP part-time lecturers do not fall within the confines of the administrative tasks and processes in the programme, they were excluded from the study.

Finally, the study restricted itself to the respondents' perceptions on the five components of the student support system in the EDP. These were: continuous assessment, study materials, residential sessions, guidance and counselling ser-

vices and Regional Centres' library facilities. Therefore, the respondents' views on other aspects of the programme which seemed to be beyond the limits of this study were not sought. These, to name but a few included, the system of admitting and orientating students into the programme, certification procedures and the mode of paying tuition fees.

Definition of Significant Terms.

The terms used in this study have been defined as follows:

Administrative Support: Refers to both the administrative and academic services given by the FES to the EDP students in order to facilitate their studies.

Distance Learning: Refers to the method of instruction in the EDP wherein students are taught at a distance in their places of work or homes by use of specially prepared study guides/ units, audio-taped lectures and occasional face-to-face teaching by part-time lecturers.

Graduates: Refers to the 1986/93 intake group of external B.Ed (arts) students who graduated from the EDP between 1994 and 1996.

Perception: Refers to the graduates' judgement of the extent to which the support services that were provided to them by the EES facilitated their studies.

Part-time Lecturer: Refers to a lecturer who is hired by the EES to offer face-to-face tutorial services to the EDP students during residential sessions.

Regional Centre: Refers to one of the six Extra-Mural centres of the University of Nairobi through which the EES coordinates the teaching-learning processes in the EDP.

Resident Lecturer: Refers to an academic member of staff appointed by the EES to coordinate the teaching-learning processes in the EDP in one of the Extra-Mural Centres.

Regional Centre Organizer: Refers to an administrative officer appointed by the FES to facilitate the coordination of the teaching-learning processes in the

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EDP in one of the Extra-Mural Centres.

Organization of the Rest of the Study.

The remaining part of this study comprises of four chapters, namely chapter two, three, four and five. Chapter two, which focuses on literature review is divided into five sub-sections. In sub-section one, the concept of perception has been highlighted while in sub-section two the concept of distance education has been covered. Sub-section three on the other hand focuses on student support services that have relevance to this study. Sub-section four reviews related studies on distance learners' perception of support services in distance education mode of lesson delivery. Sub-section five presents the conceptual framework of the study.

Chapter three consists of the research methodology used in this study. The research methodology is covered under eight sub-sections. These are: The design of the study, target population, sample and sampling procedure, the research instrument, validity of the research instrument, reliability of the research instrument, data collection methods and data analysis techniques. Chapter four covers data analysis and interpretation while chapter five consists of the summary of the study, research findings, conclusions and recommendations of the study.

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Introduction

This chapter reviews literature that has some relevance to this study. The chapter has been divided into five sub-sections. Sub-section one highlights the concept of perception while sub-section two focuses on the concept of distance education. Sub-section three on the other hand covers student support services in distance education mode of lesson delivery. Sub-section four reviews related studies on distance learners' perception of support services in distance education mode of teaching. Sub-section five presents the conceptual framework of the study.

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The concept of Perception

According to Webster's seventh New Collegiate dictionary (1976) the term perception can be defined as the mental image we have about our surrounding. The mental image about our surrounding according to Encyclopedia Britannica (1979) develops through sensory stimulation which is translated into organised experience. Brown and Deffenbacher (1979) shares this view by pointing out that perception is "our sensory experience of our surrounding "(p.3), which is the basis of impressions in our minds in regard to our environment.

Goldstein (1980) has however argued that perception of our surrounding is selective for two main reasons. First, our sensory and cognitive apparatus are incapable of receiving and interpreting all what there is in our surrounding. Second, the way an object is perceived depends on the importance we attach to it. Hence, on the basis of Goldstein's (1980) argument it is logical to contend that the more important an object is to an individual, the more favourable it will be inferred/judged by the individual.

The Concept of Distance Education.

The term distance education is a generic term which according to Keegan (1990) covers the range of "teaching-learning strategies referred to as correspondence education/study at higher education in the United States, 'external studies' at all levels in Australia, and 'distance teaching' or teaching at distance at the Open University of the United Kingdom" (p.29). Moore (1977) on the other hand views distance education as "all that teaching in which, because of the physical separateness of learners, the interactive as well as the pro-active phase of teaching is conducted through print, mechanical or electronic devices" (Quoted in Kolmberg, 1977, p.9). Another definition given by Kolmberg (1989) states:

The term 'distance education' covers the various forms of study at all levels which are not under the continuous immediate supervision of tutors present with their students in lecture rooms or on the same premises but which nevertheless, benefit from the planning, guidance and tuition of a tutorial organization (p.3)

From the foregoing definitions, the following may be deduced in regard to distance education. First, in this mode of teaching-learning, the teacher and the learner are separated in both time and space. Second, the distance between the learner and the teacher is bridged by use of media such as print, radio, television and telephone through which instructional message is transmitted to the learner. Third, there is room for face-to-face teaching, which according to Adekanmbi (1995) is not a necessary rule but a convenient exception to methods used

Distance education can therefore be regarded as a more flexible mode of learning since the students are not confined in a classroom situation. For this reason, it is a relatively more convenient way of acquiring knowledge by people who due to work or family commitments may not fit well in conventional learning systems (Kinyanjui, 1986). Black (1994) has however pointed out that in spite of its flexible nature, the distance learning environment may create a feeling of isolation

among the learners due to physical separation between them on the one hand and between them and their tutors. In extreme cases, this feeling of loneliness may frustrate the learners some of whom may withdraw from their studies prematurely (Guri-Rozenblit, 1903). For this reason, distance education scholars (Brindley, 1994. Bilham and Gilmour, 1994 and Akinpelu, 1995) have suggested the need to incorporate a wide range of student support services in distance education mode of teaching as a student retention strategy. A brief discussion of student support services that have some relevance to this study, and the essential administrative procedures to ensure the smooth flow of such services to the learners forms the core of the next section of this chapter.

Student Support Service in Distance Education Mode of Teaching.

On the basis of the foregoing discussion on the concept of distance education, it becomes apparent that the success of teaching-learning process in a distance education mode of lesson delivery depends much on how effective the link between the learner and the distant tutor is maintained. According to Akinpelu (1995) effective teaching-learning process can be achieved by ensuring that the right kind of study materials are delivered to the learner with minimal delay. However this may not be an easy task on the part of the distance teaching institution for it requires a lot of coordination (Mena, 1994; Reche, 1995) and hence special administrative arrangements.

The need for effective coordination in delivering instructional materials to the learners is in view of the fact that several interrelated departments may be involved in the production and distribution of study materials to the learners. These could range from, the course/script writing, editing, proofreading, designing, printing and distribution departments (Dodds, 1981). Indeed, Hanson (1979) has emphasized that interdependent departments in an organization need extensive coordination since they all contribute to the same flow of work. In this regard, it would be reasonable to suggest that one of the cardinal roles of the administrative depart-

ment in a distance teaching institution is to coordinate the personnel working in those departments that are involved in production and distribution of instructional materials. This is in order to ensure that the materials are ready by the date of dispatch to the students. If this administrative process is not carried out efficiently, there is every likelihood that the teaching institution will fall short of the course material production and distribution schedules. Consequently, the materials may be dispatched belatedly which may frustrate the learners some of whom may eventually become dropouts (Kirui, 1989)

It should however be noted that save for video conferencing and teleconferencing technologies, other categories of media such as print, radio and television are one way communication technologies (Garrison and Shale, 1987). Therefore it would be reasonable to argue that although distance learners may be supported by ensuring timely dispatch of instructional message through print, radio or television, they may still be disadvantaged for lack of opportunity to communicate back to the teacher. For this reason, distance education scholars (Sewart, 1987; Holmberg, 1989) have argued that, it would be sensible for a distance teaching institution to widen the range of student support services by organizing supplementary face-to-face contacts between the students and between them and their tutors.

The argument in favour of face-to-face contacts in a distance teaching - learning environment is based on a number of premises. First, student-teacher contact enables the learners to play a more active role in the teaching-learning process which may help to overcome the feeling of isolation among the learners (Dodds, 1981; Visser, 1994). Second, such contacts facilitate the teaching of subjects that may require physical demonstration such as Geography, Music or Fine Art (Kamau and Odumbe, 1991). Third, since these contacts detach the learners albeit temporarily from the work, family and social demands, it can be reasoned that they provide a conducive environment for the students to concentrate in their studies (Black, 1994). Fourth, through face-to-face contacts, students are likely to interact among themselves, and thus gain new ideas and experiences (Robinson, 1989; Joughin,

McGrath and Coles, 1994).

Face-to-face contacts however, require a sound organizational infrastructure in order to play their supportive role effectively. For instance, the distance teaching institution needs to recruit enough teachers in order to facilitate the smooth flow of tutorial services to the learners. Robinson (1981) has however pointed out that, the role of such tutors needs to be properly defined through specific job description so as to reduce conflicting expectations on the part of the tutors, students and course producers. Tutors, for example need to be aware of whether their role is confined to instruction only or they will combine teaching with other tasks such as counselling the students and marking coursework. It should further be realised that, teaching a distance education course requires skills that are somewhat different from those demanded in conventional courses (Bilhani and Gilmour, 1994). Consequently, effective delivery of distance education courses requires induction into distance education mode of teaching. For this reason, the distance teaching institution has to ensure that those recruited for the purpose of delivering lessons to the learners are given special training in distance education mode of lesson delivery, so that they may play their role effectively according to Baatli (1981). Friedman (1981) and Ramakrishna (1994)

Visser (1994) has further suggested that, face-to-face contacts may not fully realize their objectives if the tutors and the students do not have prior knowledge where such meetings are to take place. In this regard, it would be reasonable for the teaching institution to communicate such information early enough so that both the teachers and the learners may have reasonable time to prepare for the meetings. Dodds (1981) has in addition proposed that in order for such points of contact to be more beneficial to the learners, the teaching institution needs to fulfil the following. To begin with, the teaching institutions needs to ensure that there are spacious rooms for holding tutorials and groups discussion. In addition, such meeting points should be well equipped with learning materials that are relevant to the needs of the learners and the teachers. Further, trained personnel need to be stationed in

such centres for the purpose of supervising, and coordinating the learning activities during the teaching - learning process.

Besides face-to face teaching, correspondence tutorials through coursework has also been perceived as an essential means of facilitating communication between the learners and the teachers in distance education mode of teaching (Baath. 1981.. 1 lolmberg. 1989). This is in view of the fact that, through coursework. the teacher can appraise the effectiveness of tutorial services to the learners (Lentell. 1994). Moreover, it is through corrected coursework that the tutoi may be able to give feedback to the learners on their strong and weak areas (kit in. 1989.. Iskandar and Romiszowski. 1994).

I he supportive value of correspondence tutorial however, depends on how effective the coursework component of the teaching-learning process is managed by the teaching institution. For effective management of course-work, the teaching institution has to design an efficient system of delivering coursework materials to the learners (Friedman. 1981) so that they max have ample time to work them out. Further, the administrators of the teaching institutions should prevail upon the tutors to give clear guiding comments on the work submitted by students for marking (Rouse. 1986). The need for such comments cannot be over emphasized in the sense that it is one of the most effective ways by w Inch distance learners can realise their strong and weak areas. I lence lack of tutor comments on marked course - work or those comments not intelligible to the learner may water down the supportive value of course-work. Soc-Ching and Chi - fun (1994) shares this view by pointing out that:

Students appreciate their tutors comments in their assignments. They do not ignore a tutor's comment if the tutor can tell exactly what went wrong in their working and how the error could be corrected. Students usually get frustrated if tutors ignore their view and just concentrate in their final answer in marking their assignments (p.238).

Besides tutor comments, learners also appreciate a situation wherein the

work they submit for marking is given back to them with minimal delay. If the converse happens, learners are likely to be frustrated and may gradually lose the motivation to learn. Childs (1965) has expressed similar feelings by commenting that "nothing is more disheartening to a student than to put forth the effort necessary to prepare an assignment and then wait and wait for its return" (quoted in Kaeley, 1976, p. 170). Hence, the administrators of the teaching institutions have a cardinal role of ensuring that work submitted for marking is handed back to the learners as soon as it is marked. Further, marks/grades attained by the learners need to be well preserved for easy retrieval so that students may have an opportunity to monitor their progress. If marks are poorly kept, learners are likely to be discouraged for lack of opportunity to assess their progress. Consequently, they may lose faith in the teaching institution and the whole idea behind course-work (Kidombo, 1995).

Related Studies on Distance Learners' Perception of Support Services in Distance Education Mode of Lesson Delivery .

Heartnet, Clark, Fieldmeyer, Gieber and Soss (1974) conducted a study in the United States of America whose purpose was to explore the possibility of adopting the Open University (OU) programme from Britain by institutions of higher learning in USA. The target population for the study was all part-time students who had enrolled for OU courses in Rutgers, Houston, and Maryland universities. At the end of the 1972/73 academic year, data was collected using a mailed questionnaire and an interview schedule from the students who had enrolled in Humanities (N=241) Science (N=16) and Mathematics (N=16) courses. The data was analysed by computing the frequencies and percentages of responses on course satisfaction. The analysed data demonstrated that the courses taken by the respondents influenced their perception of the utility value of the various components of the student support system in the OU programme. For example, group discussions were perceived as being very useful by 39 percent of humanities students. The percentage of respondents in the other two courses was lower as only 25 percent

and 19 percent of the Science and Mathematics students respectively viewed group discussions as being very useful to them. The study further established that a high percentage of students who were taking Mathematics (85 percent) and Science (75 percent) regarded face-to-face contacts with tutors as being very helpful to them. Comparatively, fewer Humanity students (60 percent) reported that such contacts were useful to them.

Heitnet et al. (1974) further found that study guides were reported as being very useful by a majority of respondents who were taking Science (81 percent) and Humanities (67 percent). However, only half of those taking mathematics (50 percent) expressed the feeling that study guides were very helpful to them. It was further established that the percentage of those who indicated that tutor marked assignments were very supportive was highest among Mathematics students (69 percent) but relatively lower among students who were studying Humanities (50 percent) and Science (44 percent) courses. A similar pattern emerged with regard to the respondents' opinion about tutor comments on marked assignments. For instance, while 69 percent of the Mathematics students indicated that tutor comments on marked assignments were very useful to them, a slightly lower percentage was noted in regard to Humanities (59 percent) and Science (44 percent) students. The study further revealed that of the various components of the support system in the OU programme, television delivered lessons seemed to be the least popular among the respondents. For instance, of the total number of subjects who were involved in the study (N = 273) only 58 percent regarded television programmes to be very useful to them. When the respondents were considered on the basis of the courses they were taking, it became clear that majority of those who perceived this component as being very supportive came from Science students (39 percent) followed by Humanities students (19 percent). None of the Mathematics students reported that television instructional programmes were very useful to them.

To facilitate the teaching-learning process in the OU programme, the stuck

by Hartnet et al. (1974) recommended that it was advisable for the administrators of the teaching institutions to set up study centres as close as possible to the students. Through such centres, the study pointed out. the students were likely to meet their tutors regularly, at least ones a week without too much inconvenience. Further. the study noted that, the role of tutors in the OU courses differed from the typical higher education teaching role. For this reason the studs suggested that there was a need to select tutors carefully and subsequently give them appropriate training so that they could easily adopt themselves to the needs of the ()l courses.

Herrman. Boyd and Fox (1994) conducted a study to assess how distance education students in institutions of higher learning perceived the usefulness of selected communication technologies in improving their access to higher education in Western Australia. The students were taking five different disciplines namely: Ails/ Education and Social Sciences. Engineering/Science. Business subjects, and Mining and Agriculture. Data was collected using a mailed questionnaire whose return rate was 47pereent. The data was analysed by computing percentage of responses with respect to respondents perception ol the selected communication technologies. The analysed data yielded the follow ing major findings:

- a). Respondents who were taking mathemats related disciplines, namely:- Science / Engineering and Business courses favoured computer-delivered intruactional message. Conversely. Nursing and Social Science students tended to be in favour of face-to-face contacts with their tutors and group discussions with colleagues. for they had difficulties in using computers.
- b). Respondents who came from rural areas favoured the use of technology that was as close as possible to face-to-face classroom instruction. These were tapes, video recorders.teleconferencing and video conferencing.
- c). Younger respondents (39 years and below) were more inclined towards computer delivered lessons in comparison with older respondents (40 years and above) who were in favour of more face-to-face communication

with the tutors.

- d). Comparatively, males were more positive than females on computer mediated learning, while females tended to perceive print media as a more useful mode of instruction.
- e). Respondents who came from remote parts of the country saw print materials as the best option for receiving instructional message due to high chances of breakdown in satellite linkages for television, radio, fax and phone.

Prummer (1994) conducted a study in Fern Universitat (FEU), Germany, whose purpose was to explore communication preferences and practices of the FEU distance education students in interacting with the institution. The modes of communication that were focused by the study included, written communication, the telephone, face-to-face meeting, group discussions and e-mail. After computing the percentage of responses on communication preferences, it was established that, more women than men students preferred written correspondence, the telephone, face-to-face meeting with tutors and group discussions. The data further revealed that comparatively, e-mail was more popular among males than female students. The study concluded that on the whole, women distance education students tend to be more inclined towards social learning than technology-based delivery system.

The finding by Prummer (1994) that female students prefer social learning in a distance learning environment supports the work of Gabriel and Davey (1994) in Dalhousie University Canada entitled "Working Women and Professional Development Choices: Strategy for ensuring Women-friendly Distance Education". The purpose of the study was to find out the effective distance learning environment for women nurses. Data was collected through interviews and documentary evidence. After data analysis, it was revealed that, the respondents perceived live two-way video conferencing, group discussion and face-to-face contacts with tutors as the most useful support resource in their studies. The respondents, according to

Gabriel and Davey preferred the three teaching-learning approaches for they encouraged two-way communication. The study by Gabriel and Davey suggested that, for women students to succeed in a distance learning system there is a need for the teaching institution to design a well managed teaching-learning environment that has room for two-way dialogue between the learners and between them and their tutors.

Tsui-Chen, Chiung-Ying, Wen-Chao and Hsiung - Ai (1994) conducted a study in the National Open University (NOU), China. The purpose of the study was to investigate the viewing pattern of television (TV) instructional programmes by NOU distance education students and the factors which affected the students' learning behaviour. The target population for the study was 35,198 students who were enrolled in the second semester of the 1990 academic year of the NOU. Two variables, namely sex and subject/course were used in selecting the subjects for the study through stratified random sampling. The instrument that was used to collect the data was a mailed questionnaire. After computing the frequencies and percentages of the retrieved data, it emerged that male respondents were spending more time on TV instructional programmes than females. This suggested that, male respondents tended to perceive the TV programmes as more valuable resource in their studies than females who were possibly relying more on print media.

The study by Tsui-Chen et al. (1994) further revealed that older students (40-50 years) watched the TV instructional programme more often than the younger respondents in the age category 20-39 years. It was further established that on the whole, married respondents watched the TV instructional programmes more often than single respondents. The study by Tsui-Chen et al. (1994) further established that respondents who were studying French (II), Public Policy, and Basic Japanese had the best viewing rate of the TV instructional programmes compared with those who were taking Thoughts of Dr. Sun Yet-Sen, Instruction in Humanities, Fundamentals of Natural Science, and Regulation of Taxation.

Tredyke (1973) conducted a study in Kenya on the Correspondence Course Unit (CCU) of the University of Nairobi. The purpose of the study was to evaluate

the effectiveness of the various components of the student support system in the CCU. These were, the radio teaching programmes, written assignments, and study guides. Data was collected using a questionnaire which was mailed to all primary school student-teachers (N=2200) who were undergoing inservice training course. Data was analysed by computing the frequencies and percentages of the respondents' opinion of the usefulness of each component of the support system. After data analysis, it became clear that the subjects taken by the respondents, namely Kiswahili, History, English, Geography and Mathematics influenced their perception of the three aspects of the support system. In one of the question items for instance, the respondents were requested to state the extent to which tutors' comments on marked assignments facilitated their learning. Over 85 percent of the respondents indicated that tutor comments were very helpful with regard to Kiswahili, History, English and Geography assignments. Conversely, a slightly lower percentage (61.21 percent) regarded tutor comments on Mathematics assignments as being very supportive. The relatively lower percentage of the respondents who supported that tutor comments on Mathematics assignment were useful suggested that, comments given by tutors in this subject were not useful enough in meeting the needs of the students in the programme.

Kaeley (1976) carried out a study in Kenya on the Inservice course of In-trained Primary school Teachers. The objective of the study was to assess the effectiveness of radio programmes, study guides and residential sessions in the teaching of Mathematics. The researcher collected data using two instruments namely, a questionnaire and an interview schedule. The questionnaire was mailed to two hundred (200) student-teachers who were taking English, Mathematics and either History or Geography. Out of these, 46 (23 percent) were selected for interview. The purpose of the interview schedule was to seek the respondents' opinion on the effectiveness of residential face-to-face teaching in their studies. Thirty (65 percent) respondents expressed the feeling that they needed more residential sessions in Mathematics in order for the tutors to iron out the difficulties they were experiencing in the subject. The researcher suggested that more tutoring was needed in

the subject for the learners could make little progress if some parts of the methodology were not clear to them.

Matiru and Kamau (1985) conducted a study in Kenya whose purpose was to assess the effectiveness of the distance education components of the inservice course for untrained primary school teachers. The components that Matiru and Kamau's study focused on were, the radio teaching programmes, study guides and residential teaching. The target population for the study was untrained primary school teachers (N= 3000) who had enrolled in the inservice course between 1982 and 1985. Data was collected using a questionnaire which was mailed to two hundred (200) students who were selected for the study. Data was analysed by computing the frequencies and percentages of the responses that were given by the subjects in the questionnaire. The analysis revealed that, more female than male respondents perceived study guides as being more helpful in their studies. However, the study did not indicate the percentage of male and female respondents who viewed study guides as an essential support resource in their studies. The study further, established that radio instructional programmes were lowly rated by the two categories of respondents (males and females) in comparison with the other component of the delivery system. Nonetheless, the percentage of those who reported that the radio component was very helpful was comparatively higher with regard to the female respondents (22percent) but slightly lower in regard to the male (18percent). The study by Matiru and Kamau (1985) also revealed that nursing mothers did not regard residential face-to-face teaching as being very helpful to them. The researchers pointed out that probably, nursing mothers experienced constraints in carrying out their private studies and doing homework in the evening because they were busy nursing their babies.

Mazrui (1992) carried out a study in Kenya on the Untrained Primary School Teachers Inservice Course. The purpose of the study was to examine the achievement of the Inservice Course for the untrained primary school teachers since 1982. The target population for the study was all untrained primary school teachers (N= 6000) who had enrolled in the inservice course between 1985-1988. Data was

collected through documentary analysis and the use of a questionnaire which was mailed to the selected sample (N ~ 700) for the study. The raw data that was extracted from the questionnaires and the documents in the College of Education and External Studies (CEES) was analysed using frequencies and percentages. The analysed data showed that the female respondents were better than males in submitting written assignments to the part-time tutors in the CEES. Records at the CEES for instance showed that at the end of the course in 1988 the percentage of students who had not submitted all assignments for marking was about 48 percent. Of those who had not submitted all the assignments approximately 28 percent were males while 20 percent were females. According to Mazrui, female respondents were probably more committed in submitting assignments for they were more confined to their homes than the male respondents.

Summary of Literature Review

The foregoing literature review has been covered under three themes, namely the concept of distance education, student support services in distance education mode of teaching and related studies on distance learners' perception of support services in distance education mode of lesson delivery. Under the concept of distance education, the review has shown that:-

1. Distance education is a mode of teaching whereby the learner and the teacher are separated in both time and space.
2. The distance between the learner and the teacher in distance education is bridged by use of media such as print, radio, telephone and face-to-face teaching.

The review in regard to student support services has indicated that some of the essential support services in distance education mode of teaching includes provision of instructional materials to the learner, face-to-face contacts between the learner on the one hand and between them and their tutors and correspondence

tutorial. The review has further pointed out that since these services help to strengthen the link between the teachers and the learner, the distance teaching institution needs to ensure that:-

1. Instructional materials are delivered to the students with minimal delay.
2. Learners have an opportunity to interact with each other.
3. There is room for face-to-face meeting between the teacher and the learners.
4. Marked coursework is delivered to the learner with minimal delay.

The review on related studies has demonstrated that there are certain variables that may influence learners' perception of support services in distance education mode of teaching. These include; sex, age, marital status and the subjects/ courses being taken by the learners.

§ **Conceptual Framework of the Study.**

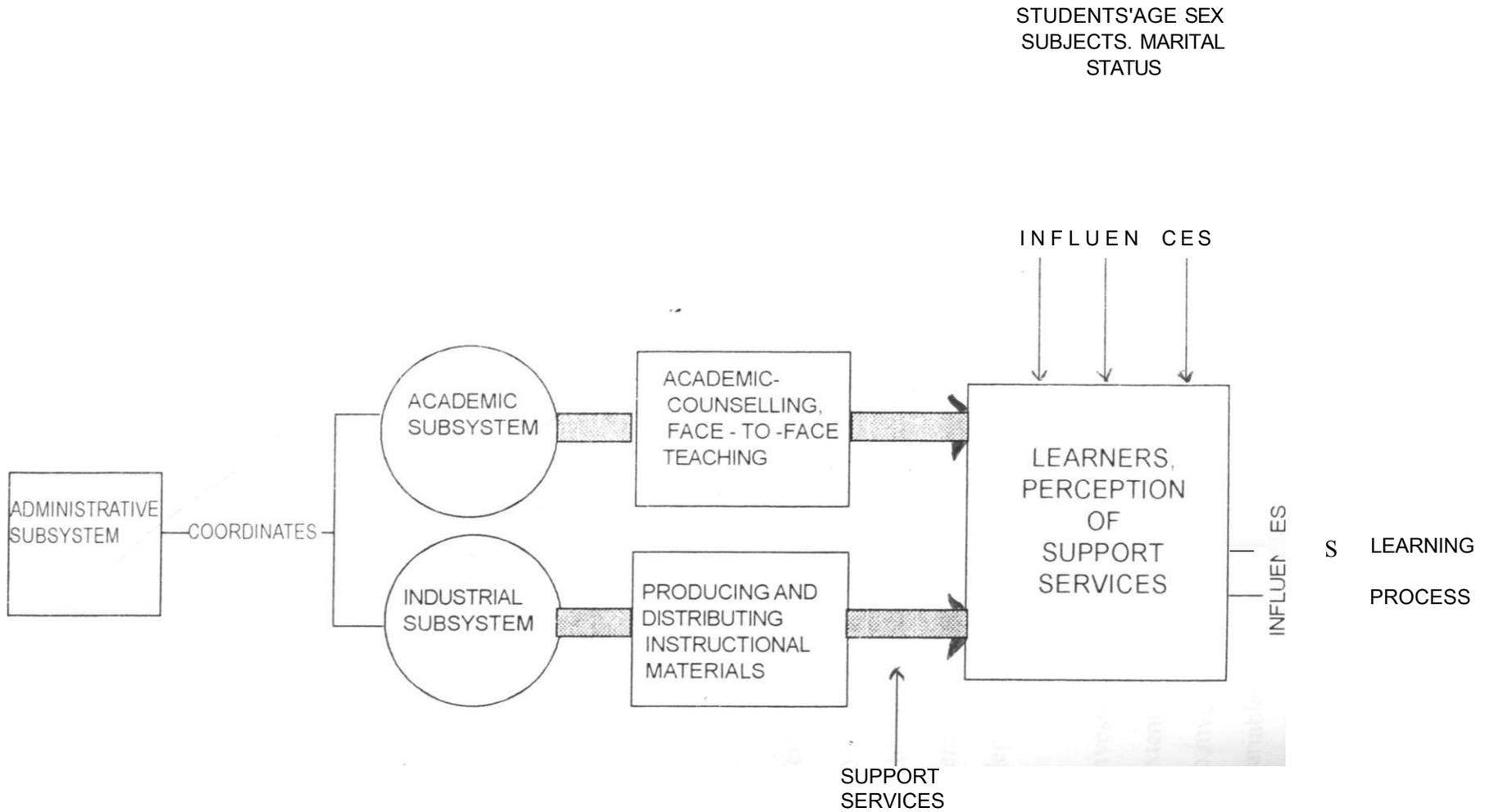
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Distance education in this study is conceptualized as a system of instruction which comprises of three interrelated subsystems. These are the academic, industrial, and administrative subsystem. A system in this context refers to an organized set of operational units while a sub-system points to one of the units.

The academic sub-system has the functional role of preparing instructional materials besides offering tutorial services to the learners. The industrial sub-system on the other hand plays the role of producing instructional materials. These could range from, print, radio and television instruction programmes to name but a few. The administrative sub-system has the role of coordinating the other two sub-systems. By doing so, the administrative sub-system ensures that the other two sub-systems (academic and industrial) play their functional roles effectively, so as to facilitate the smooth flow of support services to the learners.

The extent to which the support services in a distance education system facilitate the teaching -learning process, however, depends on how they are perceived by the students. This study holds the assumption that, learners perception of the support services may be influenced by such variables as sex, age, marital status and the subjects/courses they are taking in the system. Diagram 1 summarizes the salient ^{points} highlighted in the study.

Diagram 1
Learners' Perception of
Support Services in a Distances Education System



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CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This chapter outlines the methods used in carrying out the study. The chapter is divided into eight subsections. These are: The design of the study, the target population of the study, sample and sampling procedure, the research instrument, validity of the research instrument, reliability of the instrument, data collection methods and data analysis techniques.

Research Design

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The study was conducted as an ex post facto research. In the context of educational and social science research, the phrase ex post facto means after the fact or retrospectively (Cohen and Manion, 1989). This implies that, ex post facto is a type of research design that is used in those studies in which the independent variable or variables-cause-have already occurred. For this reason, the researcher attempts to establish retrospectively any causal link between the independent and dependent variables.

From the foregoing, it can be reasoned that, in ex-post facto research, the investigator does not manipulate the independent variable in order to establish the extent to which it influences the dependent variable. Rather, the researcher attempts to investigate any existing relationships between the independent and dependent variable retrospectively, ket linger (1973) shares this view by pointing out that ex-post facto research is "a systematic empirical inquiry in which the scientist does not have direct control of the independent variables because their manifestations have already occurred or because they are inherently not manipulate" (p. 379). Consequently, the variables are taken as they are in a natural setting and an attempt is

made by the researcher to establish the relationships and effects occurring (Abagi, 1995). Ex-post facto research design was chosen for this study in view of the fact that besides data collection, the researcher attempted to establish retrospectively any causal link between the graduates' perception of the student support system in the EDP and four independent variables. These were: sex, age, marital status and the subject combinations that were taken by the graduates when they were in the EDP.

Target Population.

The term population has been defined as a group of persons or objects about which the investigator wishes to draw conclusions (Minium, 1978). In this study, the target population comprised of all B.Ed graduates who graduated from the EDP between 1994 and 1996 and the programme administrators. According to the PES records, the graduates had graduated from the programme in three batches; 186 in 1994, 58 in 1995 and 3 in 1996. Thus, by the time the study was carried out (1997/98) 236 graduates had successfully completed their external B.Ed course. The records further show that, of the 236 graduates, 75 percent were males while 25 percent were females. The number of EDP administrators who were involved in the study was 23. The administrators comprised of the Dean, FES; the Chairman, Department of Education, FES; the Senior Administrative Assistant, FES; eight EDP Subject Coordinators, six Resident lecturers and six Extra-Mural Centre Organizers.

Sample and Sampling Procedure

In some research situations, the size of the population under focus may be so large that the researcher may be unable to deal with all its constituent subjects. For that reason the researcher selects a few subjects in order to make an estimate of the characteristic being investigated within the entire population (Koul, 1994). The selected subjects constitute the sample of the population (Mulusa, 1990) while

the method used in choosing the subjects is referred to as the sampling procedure (Kerlinger, 1973).

In order to validly generalize the findings from the sample to the defined population, the sample should be representative of the population. To achieve this, the researcher needs to use probability sampling technique (Niyagah, 1993) so as to come up with an unbiased sample. In this study, the researcher used two probability sampling techniques. These were: simple random sampling and stratified random sampling.

Before the two sampling techniques were applied, the researcher determined the required sample size from the 236 graduates who had completed their B. Ed course. Of the 236 graduates, 36 were involved in the pilot study and therefore excluded in the main study. For this reason, the sample of the study was drawn from 200 graduates. Mitchell and Jolley (1988) suggest a sample size of 169 subjects when the size of the population is 200. Therefore, the researcher selected 170 subjects from the 200 graduates. This was equivalent to 85 percent of the total (200) graduate population.

The initial step in selecting the **170** subjects was to divide the **200** graduates into sub-sets/strata on the basis of the Regional Centres they came from. After stratifying the 200 graduates, proportional stratified sampling technique was used in order to know the number of respondents that was to be drawn from each Regional Centre. This sampling technique was selected in view of the fact that it allows the researcher to draw samples that are proportional to the size of each **stratum** in the whole population (Krejcie and Morgan, 1970). Table I shows a **summary** of the total number of graduates from each Regional Centre and the sample size (85 percent of the graduate population in a given centre) that was to be **selected** from each centre.

Table 1: Sample Size of Graduates Selected from Each Regional Centre.

REGIONAL CENTRE	NUMBEROFGRADUATES	SAMPLE SIZE
Nairobi	69	59
Nakuru	34	29
Kisumu	27	23
Kakamega	26	22
Nyeri	25	21
Mombasa	19	16
TOTAL	200	170

To select the required sample size from each Regional Centre, the researcher used simple random sampling technique. This is a sampling procedure which gives every individual subject in a defined population an equal probability of being included in the sample (Borg and Gall, 1989). In order for the sampling procedure to cater for sex differences, names of all male respondents from each Regional Centre were written on small pieces of papers. The same procedure was applied for the female respondents from each centre. The papers for each category of respondents (males and females) were folded, then put in a box and the required number of subjects picked. In case a paper bearing the name of a respondent in a group was repeated, it was returned to the box and repicking done.

Through simple random sampling procedure, the researcher was able to select the required number of male and female graduates from each Regional Centre as shown in Table 2. Since the number of EDP administrators who were to take part in the study was small (23). and the fact that those who took part in the pilot study (4) were to be excluded in the main study, the researcher did not use any sampling procedure. For this reason, all the 19 administrators were involved in the main

study.

Table 2: Selected Sample Size of Male and Female Graduates from Each Regional Centre.

REGIONAL CENTRE	MALE GRADUATES		FEMALE GRADUAES	
	N	SAMPLE SIZE	N	SAMPLE SIZE
Nairobi	34	29	38	32
Nakuiu	26	22	5	4
kakamega	26	22	4	4
Kisumu	24	20		2
Nyeri	19	16		
Mombasa	14	12	5	4
Total	143	121	57	49

The Research Instrument

The researcher used a questionnaire to collect the relevant data in this study. As above mentioned, the target population for this study was the EDP graduates and administrators. For this reason, the researcher developed two parallel questionnaires, one for the graduates and the other for the administrators.

Questionnaire for the Graduates

The questionnaire for the graduates was divided into six sections, namely Section A, B.C.D.E and F. Section A comprised of five question items. These requested the respondents to indicate their sex, marital status, the subject combinations they took in the EDP and the Regional Centres they came from. The rest of the sections, namely Section B.C.D.E and F focused on the five components of the student support system in the EDP.

Section B consisted of six question items which focused on the coursework

component of the support system. In question 1 the respondents were requested to indicate by ticking (/) whether the FES gave them continuous assessment work when they were in the EDP. Question 2 inquired about the components of coursework which were used by the FES to assess their progress in the programme. Question 3 on the other hand asked the respondents to indicate by ticking () whether they experienced problems in regard to the way the FES managed continuous assessment when they were enrollees of the EDP. In that regard, question 4 requested the respondents to mention briefly the type of problems they might have experienced. Question 5 comprised of seven closed statements. Each statement was about some management aspects of coursework followed by a five point perception scale. The scale was denoted by five choices/alternatives, namely: 'Excellent'. 'Very good'. 'Good'. 'Fair', and 'Poor'. The respondents were asked to select only one alternative. Question 6 sought suggestions from the respondents on how the FES could improve the management aspects of continuous assessment in the EDP.

In section C, there were six question items which were focused on residential face-to-face teaching. Question 1 presented the respondents with a list of medium, namely post, newspapers and radio that the FES might have used to notify them of residential sessions. From this list, the respondents were asked to tick (/) against the medium which was used in informing them when to attend the sessions. In question 2. the respondents were asked to indicate by ticking (^) the medium which in their opinion was the most effective. In addition, the question (Question 2) requested the respondents to mention briefly, why the medium they had ticked had been effective. The third question item sought information from the respondents on how the residential sessions might have been beneficial to them. In question four, the respondents were presented with five closed statements on some helpful aspects of residential sessions. Each statement had five alternatives, namely: 'Strongly agree', 'Agree', 'Undecided'. 'Disagree', and 'Strongly disagree'.

The respondents were requested to choose only one alternative. Question six requested the respondents to give their own suggestions on how the FES could improve residential component of the support system.

Section D of the questionnaire was centred on study/instructional materials. The section presented the respondents with five question items. In the first question item, the respondents were asked to indicate by ticking (*j*) whether the FES gave them study guides/units and audio taped lectures, which according to the University of Nairobi Students' Handbook (1986) were the key instructional materials when they were in the EDP. In addition, the question requested the respondents to mention any other instructional materials they might have been given besides study guides and audio taped lectures. The second question item on the other hand asked the respondents to indicate by ticking (*/*) whether study guides and audio taped lectures were helpful to them. In addition, the respondents were asked to mention briefly why in their opinion, the two types of study materials had been useful to them. In the third question item, the respondents were asked to indicate by ticking (*/*) whether they encountered problems in regard to the system used by the FES to deliver study materials to them. In the same question item, the respondents were requested to explain briefly the type of problems they might have experienced. The fourth question item presented the respondents with five closed statements on some management aspects of instructional materials. Against each statement the respondents were requested to select by ticking (*s*) one of the five given alternatives, namely: 'Excellent'. 'Very good'. 'Good.' 'Fair.' and 'Poor'. Question five elicited views from the respondents on how the FES could improve the procedure of delivering learning materials to the EDP students.

Section E inquired about guidance and counselling component of the student support system in the EDP. This part of the questionnaire had four question items. Question one asked the respondents to mention whether the FES offered them guidance and counselling services when they were in the EDP. In the second

question item, the respondents were requested to indicate by ticking (<) whether they sought for guidance and counselling services from the FES. In that regard, the question item asked the respondents to mention briefly why they had sought for the aforementioned services. Question four presented the respondents with five closed statements on some qualitative aspects of guidance and counselling services in the EDP. Against each statement, there were five alternatives, namely: 'Strongly agree'. 'Agree'. 'Undecided'. 'Disagree' and 'Strongly disagree'. The respondents were requested to pick only one alternative. Question five sought suggestions from the respondents on how the FES could improve guidance and counselling services in the EDP in order to be more helpful to the students who enrol in the programme.

Section F had five question items which were focused on the Regional Centre's library facilities. Question one inquired whether these facilities were available in the Regional Centres when the respondents were in the EDP. In the second question item, the respondents were asked to indicate by ticking whether the facilities were beneficial to them. Question three elicited information from the respondents on why in their opinion these facilities had not been helpful to them. Question four comprised of five closed statements regarding some qualitative aspects of the Regional Centre's library facilities. The respondents were asked to select one of the five alternatives that were provided beside each statement. The alternatives were denoted by five different adverbs, namely: 'Strongly agree'. 'Agree'. 'Undecided'. 'Disagree' and 'Strongly disagree'. Question five sought suggestions from the respondents on how the IES could improve Regional Centre's libraries so as to be more beneficial to the EDP students.

Questionnaire for the Administrators

The questionnaire for the EDP administrators was divided into six parts. These were part A.B.C.D. E and F. In part A. the respondents were presented with six questions items. The questions elicited data pertaining to their gender, marital status, academic qualifications, the number of years they had worked in the FES and the position they held in the FES.

Section B consisted of four question items. The first question requested the respondents to indicate by ticking (>>) whether the FES gave coursework to the

first lot of EDP students (1986/93 cohort) who graduated from the programme between 1994 and 1996. In the second question item, the respondents were asked to mention the components of coursework that were used by the IT'S to assess the graduates. In the third question item, the respondents were asked to indicate by ticking (/) whether the graduates raised complaints over the way the FES managed coursework and the causes of such complaints. The fourth question item elicited suggestions from the administrators on how the FES could improve the management aspects of continuous assessment in order to be more beneficial to the EDP students.

Section C had four question items which were focused on residential sessions. The first question item presented the respondents with three mediums of communication, namely: post, newspapers and radio which might have been used by the FES to inform the graduates when to attend residential sessions. From the three mediums, the respondents were asked to indicate by ticking () those that were used to notify the graduates of the residential sessions. In the second question item, the respondents were requested to select one of the aforesaid mediums, which in their opinion was the most effective and to give reasons for their choice. The third question item on the other hand asked the respondents to briefly describe the activities which took place during the residential sessions which in their opinion were beneficial to the graduates. Question four sought suggestions from the respondents on how the FES could make residential sessions more helpful to the EDP students.

Section D consisted of three question items which were centred on instructional materials. Question one sought information from the respondents on whether the FES issued study materials to the first graduates of the EDP. The question in addition requested the respondents to indicate the type of study materials that were given to the graduates. In the second question item, the respondents were asked to

indicate by ticking (/) whether the graduates raised complaints about the system used by the FES to deliver study materials to them and the causes of such complaints. Question three requested the respondents to give their own opinion on how the FES could improve the procedure of delivering instructional materials to the students in the EDP.

Section E comprised of four question items which were focused on guidance and counselling component of the support system. The first question item requested the respondents to indicate by ticking (/) whether the FES expected them to offer advisory services to the EDP graduates. In the second question item, the respondents were asked to indicate by ticking (/) whether the graduates ever consulted them for guidance and counselling. Question three sought information from the respondents on the reasons why the graduates contacted them for advisory services. Question four on the other hand elicited suggestions from the respondents on how the FES could make guidance and counselling services more helpful to the EDP students.

Section F had four question items which were intended to elicit pertinent data on Regional Centres' library facilities. The first question item requested the respondents to indicate by ticking (✓) whether the aforementioned facilities were available in the Regional Centres. In the second question item, the respondents were asked to indicate by ticking (•) whether in their opinion the aforesaid facilities were helpful to the graduates. The third question item requested the respondents to mention briefly why in their opinion the facilities might not have been helpful to the graduates. In the fourth question item the respondents were asked to give their own comments on how the FES could improve the Regional Centres' library facilities in order to be of more assistance to the EDP enrollees.

Validity of the Instrument

Validity of a research instrument is the degree to which it measures what is intended by the researcher (Borg and Gall. 1989). In order to test the validity of

the two research instruments, the researcher earned out a pilot study using 36 graduates and 4 EDP administrators. The graduates were chosen on the basis of the recommended sample size, which according to Mulusa (1990) is 30 randomly selected cases within a defined population. However, to cater for non-respondents the researcher took a higher number (36) who were chosen randomly from the list of EDP students who graduated between 1994 and 1996. The questionnaire was subsequently mailed to the selected graduates in August 1997 using the contact address they had given to the FES.

The four EDP administrators were randomly contacted during the August 1997 residential session for the 1995/2001 cohort of EDP students. The administrators were requested to comment on the suitability of the items in the questionnaire for the graduates and administrators. On the basis of the suggestions offered by the administrators and the responses given by the graduates in the try-out instrument, the researcher was able to identify those items that were either unclear or open to misinterpretation. Such question items were rephrased in order for the two instruments to elicit the desired information during the main study. Respondents who were involved in the pilot study were excluded from the main study. This was in order to control extraneous influence on the findings due to their prior knowledge of the information being sought by the questionnaire.

Reliability of the Instrument

The term reliability refers to the level of internal consistency or stability overtime of a research instrument (Borg and Gall, 1989). This implies that, for a research instrument to be reliable, it must be capable of yielding consistent results when used more than once to collect data from two samples drawn randomly from the same population (Mulusa, 1990). There are several ways by which the reliability of a research instrument can be tested. These, according to Best (1977) include, test-retest technique, equivalent forms method and split-half technique.

In this study, the researcher utilised the split-half method to compute the

reliability of the instrument. In this technique, reliability is tested by correlating scores obtained in a test by a group of individuals on the odd numbered items against the scores on the even numbered items (Charles, 1988). This implies that, this technique is more applicable in those test situations where responses made by the subjects can be scored easily.

The items that were easy to score in the aforementioned instrument were the 27 closed statements in the questionnaire for the graduates. After the respondents in the pilot group had made their responses, the 27 statements were divided into two sets. Set one comprised of the odd numbered items while set two contained the even numbered items.

The researcher scored the responses in the two set of items on the basis of the assigned points to the five alternatives. The alternatives for the items (both odd and even) in sections B and D of the questionnaire were denoted by choice 'Excellent'. 'Very good'. 'Good'. 'Fair' and 'Poor'. These were assigned 5. 4. 3. 2 and 1 points respectively. In sections C. E and F. the Five alternatives namely choice 'Strongly agree', 'Agree', 'Undecided'. 'Disagree' and 'Strongly disagree' were assigned 5, 4, 3, 2 and 1 points respectively.

The scores obtained in the two sets of items were then correlated using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (y). The obtained value was 0.866. However, Best (1977) has pointed out that, in using the split - half technique. the size of the instrument is reduced to two sets of half the number of its constituent items. For this reason, the technique yields lower correlation. Therefore, to obtain the reliability coefficient of the whole instrument (Nachmias and Nachmias. 1976) the investigator needs to apply the Spearman - Brown Prophecy formular which is denoted by:-

$$Y_w \hat{r} = \frac{2ro}{1 + ro}$$

Where 'vxxl' is the reliability of the original instrument, while 'roe' is the reliability coefficient obtained by correlating the scores of the odd numbered items with the scores of the even numbered items in the instrument.

When the Spearman - Brown Prophecy formula was applied the results were:

$$1 = 2 \times 0.866$$

$$1 + 0.866$$

$$= 0.928.$$

Therefore the reliability coefficient of the whole instrument was found to be 0.928. Hence, the reliability coefficient of the instrument was high for it was close to 1

Data Collection Procedure

After carrying out the pilot study, the researcher made the necessary changes to the instrument. Thereafter, permission to carry out the study was sought from the Office of the President. This was granted in October 1997 (see Appendix I for a photostat copy of the research permit). Subsequently a questionnaire was mailed to the selected graduates (170) in October 1997 using the contact address they had given to the FES when they were in the EDP. The respondents were requested to mail back the questionnaire after two weeks. The use of a mailed questionnaire was found appropriate in view of the fact that, the graduates were scattered all over the country. For this reason, it would have been impossible for the researcher to contact them individually due to time and financial constraints.

Before mailing the questionnaire, the researcher numbered them. This was in order to be able to make a follow - up of those respondents who might have failed to meet the stipulated deadline of two weeks. The mailed questionnaire was accompanied by a covering letter and a photostat copy of the research permit. The former conveyed to the respondents the importance of the study besides assuring them of confidentiality in regard to the views they had expressed in the questionnaire. The latter (research permit) was a proof to the respondents that the study had received the blessings from the Office of the President. Further, each questionnaire had a self - addressed envelope with affixed postage stamp for return of the

completed questionnaire. A reminder note was sent two weeks after the deadline had expired to those respondents who had not mailed back their questionnaire.

The questionnaire for the 19 administrators was administered personally by the researcher in October 1997. This category of the respondents was given one week to respond to the questionnaire. After one week the researcher collected the filled questionnaires from the administrators.

Data Analysis Techniques

The raw data collected during the research process may have little meaning unless it is summarized into a form that can easily be used in writing the final report (Mulusa 1990). To analyse the raw data in the current study, the researcher used descriptive/summary and inferential statistics. This analysis was done by use of a computer which utilized the Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS) programme. Descriptive statistics included the percentage, the mean and standard deviation while inferential statistics comprised of the t-test for independent means and one-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA).

In analysing demographic and general information provided by the respondents, the researcher computed the percentage of respondents who have each category of data in a given question item. The result of this analysis in respect of each question item was summarized in the form of frequency tables. The same procedure was used in summarizing data from the open ended question items.

The information from the 27 closed statements in the questionnaire for the graduates was analysed through the use of Mean. The objective was to find out how the student support system in the EDP was rated by the respondents. As noted above, each statement was followed by a five - point rating scale. The scale was denoted by choice: 'Excellent', 'Very good', 'Good', 'Fair' and 'Poor' in section B and D of the questionnaire and alternative: 'Strongly agree', 'Agree', 'Undecided', 'Disagree' and 'Strongly disagree' in section C.E and I . The five choices/alternatives were assigned scores as follows:-

Alternative	Score	Alternative	Score
Excellent	5	Strongly agree	5
Very good	4	Agree	4
Good	3	Undecided	3
Fair	2	Disagree	2
Poor	1	Strongly disagree	1

On the basis of the assigned scores, the researcher computed the mean perception score of the respondents on each of the five components of the student support system. This information was used by the researcher to test the four hypotheses that were formulated in the questionnaire for the graduates. These were H_{01} , H_{02} , H_{03} , and H_{04} .

Borg and Gall (1989) have pointed out that, t-test is a suitable statistical tool for determining whether the mean scores obtained by two independent groups of subjects on a given measure are significantly different or not. Accordingly, the researcher used t-test statistic to test H_{01} , and H_{02} . This was in view of the fact that in H_{01} , the held assumption was that there was no significant difference in the way male and female graduates perceived the student support system. Hence, the objective of testing H_{01} was to determine whether the mean perception scores of the two categories of graduates (males and females) was significantly different or not in regard to the support system.

The second hypothesis (H_{02}) had postulated that there was no significant difference in the way graduates of different marital status perceived the support system. The collected data on marital status had demonstrated that there were only two categories of respondents with regard to marital status, namely married and single graduates. Therefore, in testing the second hypothesis, the researcher attempted to establish whether the mean rating of the support system was significantly different in respect of married and single graduates. In order to accept or reject either of the two hypotheses, 0.05 level of significance was used which

according to Best (1977) is a standard level of rejection in psychological and educational circles. Thus, using this level of significance (0.05) either of the two hypotheses was rejected if the computed t-value was found to be greater than the corresponding critical value in the students' t distribution table. The converse held if the calculated t value was less than the critical value.

When comparing the means of more than two groups of subjects, one-way ANOVA becomes the most suitable statistic (Minium, 1978). One-way ANOVA yields the F-statistic which helps to establish whether the means of more than two groups of subject differ in respect of the variable under investigation (Best, 1977; Borg and Gall, 1989). Hence, this statistical measure was found appropriate in testing the truth of the assumptions held by H_0 and H_{10} . The former (H_0) had for instance suggested that there was no significant difference in the way graduates of different ages perceived the support system. The assumption held by H_{10} was that there was no significant difference in the way graduates who took different subject combinations perceived the student support system.

The objective of testing the third hypothesis was therefore to establish whether the mean rating of the support system by graduates of different ages differed significantly. In the fourth hypothesis, the concern was to find out whether the mean perception scores of the graduates who took different subject combinations was significantly different or not in regard to the support system. In order to accept or reject either of the two hypotheses (H_{10} and H_{104}) the researcher used 0.05 level of significance as the standard level of rejection.

Using the 0.05 level of significance, a hypothesis was rejected if the computed F value was found to be greater than the appropriate critical value in the F-distribution table. However, if the calculated F ratio exceeded the F-critical value, the means of the groups in question were assumed to be homogeneous. For this reason, the hypothesis under investigation was accepted.

CHAPTER FOIR

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Introduction

This chapter is divided into three sub-sections. The first sub-section covers the questionnaire return rate from the respondents (graduates and administrators). The second sub-section deals with the respondents demographic data. This sub-section in addition presents the subject combinations that the graduates had taken besides education when they were in the EDP and the regional centres that they came from. The final part of this sub-section presents the academic qualifications of the EDP administrators, the number of years they have worked in the FES and their current position. The third sub-section presents the results of data analysis from the information given by the respondents in the questionnaires. This sub-section is divided into two parts. In part one, the results of testing the four hypothesis outlined in chapter one has been presented. Part two on the other hand presents a summary of information provided by the respondents in the open-ended question items.

Questionnaire Return Rate

Of the 170 questionnaires mailed to the graduates 141 were received back by the researcher. This represented 82.9 percent return rate. On the other hand, out of the 19 questionnaires that were administered to the EDP administrators. 13 were received back by the researcher which represented 68.4 percent response rate, from the questionnaires, the researcher extracted personal data of the respondents in regard to their sex, age and marital status. In addition, the researcher was able to obtain information pertaining to the subject combinations that were taken by the graduates when they were in the EDP. Data on the administrators academic qualifications, the number of years they had worked in the FES, and their current position

in the FES was also obtained.

Demographic Data and General Information of the Respondents.

Demographic information of the respondents in regard to their sex, age and marital status is presented in Tables 3, 4 and 5 respectively.

Table 3: Sex of the Graduates and the Administrators

Sex	GRADUATES		ADMINISTRATORS	
	N	PERCENT	N	PERCENT
Males	97	68.79	12	92.31
Females	44	31.21	1	7.69
Total	141	100.00	13	100.00

Table 3 shows that majority (69 per cent) of the graduate respondents were males while about 31 percent were females. This gives the impression that females were under-represented in the first intake group (1986/1993 cohort) of EDP students by ratio of 2:1. This finding is somewhat consistent with an earlier study by Kimani (1990) which established that among primary school inservice teachers in Kenya, women were under-represented by a ratio of 3:1. Table 3 further shows that an overwhelming 92 percent of the administrators were males while only 8 percent were females.

Table 4: Age group-wise Distribution of the Graduates and the Administrators

AGEGROUP	GRADUATES		ADMINISTRATORS	
	N	PERCENT	N	PERCENT
30-34	8	5.67		
35-39	43	30.50	3	23.08
40-44	63	44.68		
45-49	17	12.06	3	23.08
50-54	10	7.09	5	38.46
55-59			1	7.69
Above 60			1	7.69
Total	141	100.00	13	100.00

As Table 4 indicates, approximately 45 percent of the graduates were in the age-group 40-44 years. Table 4 also reveals that about 31 percent of the graduates were in the age group 35 - 39 years. Table 4 further shows that only 5.7 percent of the graduates were below 35 years. It is also evident from the table that majority (38 percent) of the administrators were in the age bracket 50-54 years. It is also evident from table 4 that only 3 (23 percent) of the administrators were below 40 years while about 8 percent were above 60 years.

Table 5: Marital Status of the Graduates and the Administrators

MARITAL STATUS	GRADUATES		ADMINISTRATORS	
	N	PERCENT	N	PERCENT
Married	123	87.23	13	100.00
Single	18	12.77		
Total	141	100.00	13	100.00

A look at Table 5 shows that majority (87percent) ofthe graduates were married while about 13 percent were single. Table 5 further shows that all the administrators were married. Table 6 shows the distribution of graduates according to the subject combinations they took in the EDP.

Table 6: Distribution of the Graduates By Subject Combinations.

SUBJECT COMBINATIONS	N	PERCENT
History/Religious Studies	28	19.86
Geography/Economics	23	16.31
Economics/Business Studies	22	15.60
Double Mathematics	21	14.89
Geography/History	12	8.51
Kiswahili/Literature	11	7.80
Mathematics/Economics	10	7.09
English/Literature	7	4.96
Mathematics/Business Studies	4	2.84
Mathematics/Geography		2.14
Total	141	100.00

The data displayed in Table 6 indicates that about 20 percent of the graduates who took part in the study had taken History/Religious Studies combination in the EDP. The other subject combinations that had a sizeable proportion of the graduates were Geography/Economic (16percent). Economics/Business studies (16percent) and Double Mathematics (15percent). Each of the other remaining subject combinations had less than ten percent of the graduates. Table 7 shows the distribution of male and female graduates by the regional centres they came from.

Table 7: Distribution of Male and Female Graduates by the Regional Centres they Came From.

REGIONAL CENTRES	MALE GRADUATES		FEMALE GRADUATES	
	N	PERCENT	N	PERCENT
Nairobi	25	25.80	31	70.45
Nakuru	22	22.70	4	9.09
Kisumu	20	20.60	1	2.27
Nyeri	15	15.50		4.54
Kakamega	11	11.30		6.82
Mombasa	4	4.10		6.82
Total	97	100.00	44	100.00

The data in Table 7 reveals that of the **141** graduates who took part in the study, 97 were males while **44** were females. Of the 97 male respondents, majority (26 percent) came from Nairobi regional centre. Other regional centres that had a significant proportion of male respondents were Nakuru (23 percent) and Kisumu (21 percent). Each of the other remaining regional centres had less than 20 percent of the male respondents. It can further be learnt from Table 7 that an overwhelming 70 percent of the female respondents came from Nairobi regional centre. Each of the other regional centres had less than ten percent of the total number of female respondents with Kisumu having the lowest (2 percent). Table 8 shows the distribution of administrators according to their academic qualification.

Table 8: Distribution of Administrators by Academic Qualifications

ACADEMIC QUALIFICATIONS	N	PERCENT
Doctor of Philosophy	1	7.69
Master of Education	1	7.69
Master of Science	2	15.39
Master of Arts	2	15.39
Diploma in Adult Education	7	53.84
Total	13	100.00

The data presented in Table 8 shows that the majority (54 percent) of the administrators had attained a Diploma in Adult Education. The second largest majority were those who had attained a Master of Science degree (15 percent) and Master of Arts degree (15 percent) followed by those who had a Master of Education degree (8 percent) and Doctor of Philosophy degree (8 percent). Table 9 presents information in regard to the number of years the administrators had worked in the EES.

Table: 9 Number of Years the Administrators had Worked in the FES

NUMBER OF YEARS ONE HAD WORKED	N	PERCENT
0-4	3	23.08
5-9	1	7.69
10-14	7	53.85
15-19		
20-21	1	7.69
25-29	1	7.69
Total	13	100.00

A look at Table 9 shows that a significant proportion (54 percent) of the administrators had worked in the FES for a period ranging from 10 to 14 years while approximately twenty three percent had worked for four years and below. Table 10 shows the distribution of administrators according to the position they hold in the FES.

Table 10: Position Held by the Administrators in the FES.

POSITION	N	PERCENT
Acting Dean	1	7.69
Lecturer	3	23.08
Assistant Lecturer	1	7.69
Resident Lecturer		23.08
Regional Centre Organizer	5	38.46
Total	13	100.00

The data displayed in Table 10 shows that majority (38 percent) of the administrators were Regional Centre organizers. Table 10 further reveals that the next majority of the administrators were lecturers (23 percent) and Resident lecturers (23 percent). The next section of this chapter focuses on the outcome of data analysis. The section is divided into two parts. In part one, the results of testing the hypotheses outlined in chapter one has been presented. Part two on other hand covers the results of data analysis in respect of the open-ended statements in the questionnaire for the graduates and the administrators.

Part One

Testing of Hypotheses

The researcher formulated four null hypotheses for the present study. These were H_{01} , H_{02} , H_{03} and H_{04} . The four hypotheses were based on the graduates perception of the student support system in the EDP. Each of the four hypotheses was either

accepted or rejected at 0.05 level of significance. The first hypothesis was stated as follows:

Ho₁ There is no significant difference in the way male and female graduates perceive the student support system in the EDP.

The first hypothesis (Ho₁) thus held the assumption that the mean perception scores of male and female graduates on the five components of the student support system in the FDP would not differ significantly. Since the hypothesis focused on two categories of respondents (male and female graduates), t-test analysis of two independent means was used to establish whether the assumption was tenable. The outcome of t-test analysis in respect Ho₁ is depicted in Table 11

Table 11: Summary of Analysis of Significant Difference of Mean Perception Scores between Male and Female Graduates on the Five Components of the support system.

COMPONENT	MALE GRADUATES				FEMALE GRADUATES				
	N	MEAN	SD	SE	N	MEAN	SD	SE	T-Value
Continuous Assessment	97	2.7408	0.644	0.065	44	2.7273	0.580	0.087	0.12
Residential Sessions	97	4.0371	0.604	0.061	44	3.8864	0.440	0.068	1.48
Study Materials	97	2.5814	0.728	0.074	44	2.5864	0.520	0.078	-0.04
Guidance and Counselling	97	3.0268	0.724	0.073	44	2.9773	0.767	0.116	0.37
Regional Centres' libraries	97	2.6289	1.102	0.112	44	3.2273	1.101	0.166	-2.99

DF: 139

T-critical: 1.65 Level of significance: 0.05

It can be seen from Table 11 that the computed t-value in each of the five components of the support system is less than the critical value (1.65). Therefore, H_0 is accepted since there is no sufficient evidence to suggest that the mean perception scores of the male and female graduates are significantly different. The data in Table 11 further reveals that of the five components of the support system, residential sessions were rated relatively higher by the two category of respondents with male respondents attaining a mean score of 4.0371 and females a mean score of 3.8864. The higher rating of residential sessions was probably because, being distance learners, the session might have given the graduates an opportunity to interact with their tutors who helped to clarify difficult issues they had encountered in the course of their studies. Second, during these sessions, the graduates were likely to have benefited as they shared ideas and experiences amongst themselves.

Although no significant difference was established in regard to the way male and female graduates perceived the five components of the support system, a closer observation of the data in Table II reveals that the mean scores of the male graduates were generally higher than those of the females save for study materials and library facilities. This finding is inconsistent with an earlier finding by Prummer (1994) and Gabriel and Davey (1994) in regard to residential face-to-face teaching. The likely reason for this observation is that, the female graduates might have had more family commitments in their homes than the male graduates. Consequently, they might have perceived residential sessions, continuous assessment (especially timed tests), and guidance and counseling services to have been less helpful aspects of the support system for they meant leaving their homes albeit temporarily. Indeed, Morgan (1995) has pointed out that due to family commitments, women distance education learners tend to experience learning constraints than their male counterparts for they are less free to effectively utilize the available support services.

The observation that female graduates rated study materials slightly higher (mean 2.5864) than male graduates (mean 2.5814) however tends to support an earlier study by Matiru and kamau (1985) who found that female students in the inservice course for untrained teachers in Kenya perceived study guides as being more helpful to their studies than male students. Probably, women students who study at a distance regard study materials (they could be print or non-print) to be more useful for they can progress in their studies as they play their domestic roles. The slightly higher rating of regional centre library facilities by female graduates (mean 3.2273) compared with male graduates (mean 2.6289) was probably because, as noted above (Table 7) majority of the female graduates (70 percent) who took part in the study came from Nairobi Regional centre while only 26 percent of the male graduates came from this centre. Therefore, majority of the female respondents in the study sample were likely to have had benefited more from the University of Nairobi Main Campus library facilities which are better in terms of the range of reading materials compared with other Regional Centres' library facilities.

The second hypothesis was formulated as follows:

HO₂ There is no significant difference in the way graduates of different marital status perceive the student support system in the EDP.

The assumption held by Ho, was that the mean rating of the five components of the support system by graduates of different marital status would not significantly differ. Since there were only two categories of respondents (married and single graduates) in the study sample, the hypothesis was subjected to t-test in order to establish the truth or falsity of its assumption. The outcome of t-test in regard to Mo, is displayed in Table 12.

Table 12: Summary of Analysis of Significant Difference of Mean Perception Scores between Married and Single Graduates on the Five Components of the Support System.

COMPONENT	MARRIED GRADUATES				SINGLE GRADUTES				
	N	MEAN	SD	SE	N	MEAN	SD	SE	T-VALUE
Continuous assessment	123	2.7352	0.644	0.058	18	2.7460	0.466	0.110	-0.07
Residential sessions	123	4.0163	0.558	0.050	18	3.8111	0.580	0.137	1.45
Study materials	123	2.5659	0.678	0.063	18	2.7000	0.430	0.101	-0.70
Guidance and counseling	123	3.0081	0.717	0.065	18	3.0333	0.871	0.205	-0.14
Regional centre libraries	123	2.8000	1.135	0.102	18	2.7778	1.136	0.136	-0.43

DF: 139 T-critical: 1.65 Level of significance: 0.05

A look at Table 12 clearly shows that the obtained t-values for all the five components of the support system between married and single graduates are not significant at 0.05 level. This implies that the mean perception scores of the two categories of respondents (married and single graduates) did not differ significantly. Therefore H_0 is accepted in regard to the five components of the support system. Nevertheless, the aforesaid Table 12 further shows that there was a general tendency for the single graduates to attain slightly higher mean perception scores than the married graduates, save for residential sessions. Probably, this was because, married graduates were likely to have had more family responsibilities than single graduates. Therefore, there are chances that they might have expected the support services in the FES

to be more effective in helping them to integrate studies into their family demands.

Table 12 further reveals that married graduates tended to rate residential sessions more favourably than single graduates. Although this is somewhat surprising in view of the fact that the residential sessions separated the married graduates from their families, there is a possibility that, this separation benefited them for they were likely to have had a chance to concentrate on their studies.

The third hypothesis was stated as follows:

H₀₃ There is no significant Difference in the way graduates of different ages perceive the student support system in the EDP.

The third hypothesis (H₀,) thus suggested that the mean rating of the five components of the support system by graduates of different ages would not differ significantly. Since the graduates were grouped into five age categories, the hypothesis was tested using one-way ANOVA. Table 13(a) presents the outcome of ANOVA test on continuous assessment with respect to graduates in the five age categories.

Table 13 (a): Summary of Analysis of Variance of Mean Perception Scores on Continuous Assessment for Graduates in Different Age Groups

SOURCE OF VARIATION	Degrees of Freedom (DF)	Sum of Squares (SS)	Mean Square (MS)	F- Ratio	F- Prob
Between groups	4	3.2420	0.8105	2.1573	0.0771
Within groups	136	51.0961	0.3757		
Total	140	54.3381			

F-critical: 2.37 Level of significance: 0.05

Table 13(a) shows that the obtained F-value of 2.1573 with 4 and 136 degree of freedom is less than the critical value (2.37) at 0.05 level of significance. This indicates that there is no significant difference in the mean rating of continuous assessment by graduates in the five age categories. Therefore H_0 is not rejected in regard to continuous assessment. To establish how graduates in different age categories perceived continuous assessment, their mean rating of this component were computed. The results of this computation is displayed in Table 13 (b).

Table 13 (b): Age category of the Graduates, Number of Respondents, Mean Perception Scores, Standard Deviations and Standard Errors on Continuous Assessment.

AGE GROUP (in years)	N	MEAN	STANDARD DEVIATION (SD)	STANDARD ERROR (SE)
30-34	8	3.2857	0.6389	0.2259
35-39	43	2.7010	0.5505	0.0839
40-44	63	2.6485	0.6807	0.0858
45-49	17	2.8151	0.3225	0.0782
50-54	10	2.8714	0.7543	0.2385
Total	141	2.7366	0.6230	0.0525

It can be seen from Table 13 (b) that older graduates (35 years and above) rated continuous assessment less favourably than younger graduates (34 years and below). Probably having left formal education relatively earlier, older graduates might have had experienced constraints in adjusting to the formal continuous assessment system in the EDP. It is therefore likely that they had expected a more flexible assessment procedure that would have enabled them to fit easily into the programme.

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40-44	63	2.6485	0.6807	0.0858
45-49	17	2.8151	0.3225	0.0782
50-54	10	2.8714	0.7543	0.2385
Total	141	2.7366	0.6230	0.0525

It can be seen from Table 13 (b) that older graduates (35 years and above) rated continuous assessment less favourably than younger graduates (34 years and below). Probably having left formal education relatively earlier, older graduates might have had experienced constraints in adjusting to the formal continuous assessment system in the EDP. It is therefore likely that they had expected a more flexible assessment procedure that would have enabled them to fit easily into the programme.

There to, since older graduates were likely to have had more personal commitments at the family and community levels, it is possible that they had limited time to not only prepare adequately for the timed tests, but also to complete assignments on time. For this reason, this category of graduates is likely to have perceived continuous assessment to have not been well organized for their private needs might not have been taken into account. Table 14(a) presents the ANOVA test in respect of residential sessions for graduates in different age categories.

Table 14(a): Summary of Analysis of Variance of Mean Perception Scores on Residential Sessions for Graduates in Different Age Groups.

SOURCE OF VARIATION	DF	ss	MS	F -Ratio	F- Prob.
Between groups	4	3.6356	0.9089	3.0363	0.0196
Within groups	136	40.7105	0.2993		
Total	140	44.3461			

F-Critical: 2.37 Level of significance: 0.05

The data presented in Table 14 (a) reveals that the computed F ratio of 3.0363 with 4 and 135 degrees of freedom is significant at 0.05 level. This implies that the mean perception scores of graduates in the five age categories was significantly different in regard to residential sessions. Therefore H_0 is rejected in respect of residential sessions.

To compare how graduates in the five age categories perceived residential component of the support system, the mean perception scores of those in each age group were computed. This analysis is displayed in Table 14(b)

Table 14 (b): Age Category of the Graduates, Number of Respondents, Mean Perception Scores, Standard Deviations and Standard Errors on Residential Sessions.

AGE GROUP (In years)	N	MEAN	SD	SE
' 30-34	8	4.2750	0.3991	0.1411
35-39	43	3.8698	0.5031	0.0767
40-44	63	3.9206	0.6006	0.0757
45-49	17	4.2118	0.5453	0.1323
50-54	10	4.3400	0.4526	0.1431
Total	141	3.9901	0.5628	0.0474

Table 14(b) clearly shows that the trend in the mean perception scores of the graduates in the five age categories does not depict any discernable pattern in respect of the residential component of the support system. For instance, the mean perception score of those in age category 30-34 years was higher (mean 4.2750) than what was attained by those in age categories 35 - 39 (mean 3.8698) and 40-44 (mean 3.9206) years. However, the pattern breaks with regard to graduates in subsequent age-groups, namely 45-49 years and 50-54 years whose mean ratings are 4.2118 and 4.3400 respectively

Table 14 (b) nonetheless shows that the oldest graduates (50-54 years) rated residential sessions relatively higher than those in lower age-groups. This finding is in agreement with an earlier finding by Herman. Boyd and Fox (1994). This is somewhat odd for one would have expected the reverse to occur. This is in light of the view that those in age category' 50-54 years are likely to have had more personal commitments at the family, community and work places. However, there is a possibility that since this category of graduates is likely to have left school earlier, they might have regarded residential sessions as having been more useful for they helped

them to revert to formal learning. The one-way ANOVA in regard to study materials for graduates in different age-groups is presented in Table 15(a)

Table 15 (a): Summary of Analysis of Variance of Mean Perception Scores on Study Materials for Graduates in Different Age Groups.

SOURCE OF VARIATION	DF	SS	MS	F-Ratio	F-Prob.
Between groups	4	1.6584	0.4146	0.9265	0.4506
Within groups	136	60.8607	0.4475		
Total	140	62.5191			

F-critical: 2.37 Level of significance: 0.05

It can be seen in Table 15(a) that the computed F value of 0.9265 with 4 and 136 degrees of freedom is not significant at 0.05 level of significance. It can therefore be deduced that the mean rating of study materials by graduates in the five age categories was not significantly different. For this reason, H_0 is accepted with regard to study materials. In order to find out how graduates in each of the five age categories rated the study materials, their mean perception scores were computed and subsequently displayed in Table 15 (b).

Table 15 (b): Age Category of the Graduates. Number of Respondents, Mean Perception Scores, Standard Deviations and Standard Errors on Study Materials.

AGE GROUP	N	MEAN	SD	SE
30-34	8	2.7750	0.2915	0.1031
35-39	43	2.4977	0.6300	0.0961
40-44	63	2.5429	0.6470	0.0815
45-49	17	2.8118	0.8351	0.2025
50-54'	10	2.6600	0.8488	0.2684
Total	141	2.5830	0.6683	0.0563

The data presented in Table 15 (b) shows that the mean ratings of graduates in the five age categories was almost the same in regard to study materials. Since the mean ratings do not display any discernible pattern, it would be safe to assume that no reasonable conclusions can be drawn from the data displayed in table 15 (b). Table 16(a) shows the resultant ANOVA test with regard to guidance and counselling for graduates in the five age categories.

Table 16 (a):Sunimary of Analysis of Variance of Mean Perception Scores on Guidance and Counseling for Graduates in Different Age Groups

SOURCE OF VARIATION	DF	ss	MS	F- Ratio	F- Prob.
Between groups	4	6.3226	1.5807	3.1003	0.0177
Within groups	136	69.3392	0.5998		
Total	140	75.6618			

F- Critical: 2.37 Level of siunificance:0.05

Table 16 (a) shows that the obtained F value of 3.1003 with 4 and 136 degrees of freedom is significant at 0.05 level of confidence. This shows that the mean rating on guidance and counselling by graduates in the five age categories is significantly different. Therefore, H_0 is rejected in respect of guidance and counselling. For comparison purpose, the mean ratings on guidance and counselling component for graduates in each of the five age categories were computed. The outcome of this computation was thereafter presented in Table 16 (b).

Table 16 (b): Age category of the Graduates, Number of Respondents, Mean Perception Scores, Standard Deviations and Standard Errors on Guidance and Counseling .

AGEGROUP (in Years)	N	MEAN	SD	SE
30-34	8	3.7000	0.7251	0.2563
35-39	43	2.8326	0.7733	0.1179
40-44	63	2.9746	0.6951	0.0876
45-49	17	3.0941	0.7075	0.1716
50-54	10	3.3200	0.5350	0.1692
Total	141	3.0133	0.7351	0.0619

From Table 16(b) it can be learnt that, save for younger graduates (34 years and below) there was a positive relationship between age and the mean rating of guidance and counseling services. In other words, the graduates mean perception scores tended to increase with age. It can therefore be deduced that, the younger graduates (34 years and below) and the more older graduates (45 years and above) rated guidance and counseling services more favourably than those in age groups 35-39 years and 40 - 44 years. Therefore, there is a possibility that advisory services that were given by the FES to the graduates were more effective in meeting the needs of the younger and the older graduates but less effective in helping those in the middle age-groups, namely 35 - 39 and 40 44 years. The one-way ANOVA statistical test in respect of regional centres library facilities for graduates in the five age groups is displayed in Table 17(a).

Table 17 (a): Summary of Analysis of Variance of Mean Perception Scores on Regional Centres' Libraries for Graduates in Different Age Groups.

SOURCE OF VARIATION	DF	SS	MS	F- ratio	F- prob
Between groups	4	13.4724	3.3681	2.7598	0.0303
Within groups	136	165.9733	1.2204		
Total	140	179.4457			

F critical: 2.37 Level of significance :0.05

A look at Table 17 (a) shows that the computed F- ratio of 2.7598 with 4 and 136 degrees of freedom is significant at 0.05 level. This indicates that the mean perception scores on Regional Centres' libraries was significantly different in regard to the graduates in the five age categories. Therefore H_0 is rejected in respect of Regional Centres' library facilities.

In order to compare how the graduates in the five age brackets rated the library facilities, their mean perception scores were computed and subsequently presented in Table 17(b)

Table 17 (b): Age Category of the Graduates, Number of Respondents, Mean Perception Scores, Standard Deviations and Standard Errors on Regional Centres' Libraries.

AGE GROUP (in years)	N	MEAN	SI)	SE
30-34	8	3.8000	1.0142	0.3586
35-39	43	2.9535	1.1329	0.1728
40-44	63	2.5587	1.0908	0.1374
45-49	17	3.01 18	1.1715	0.2841
50-54	10	2.7200	1.0075	0.3186
Total	141	2.8156	1.1321	0.0953

From Table 17 (b). it can be learnt that Regional Centres' libraries were rated more favourably by graduates in age category 30-34 years (mean 3.8000) followed by those in age category 45-49 years (mean 3.0118). Table 17 (b) further shows that the lowest rating of Regional Centres' libraries was by graduates in the age bracket 40-44 years (mean 2.5587). Therefore, it appears that the means do not depict any consistent pattern. For this reason, it seems rather difficult to account for the observed differences in the mean ratings of the library facilities. Nevertheless, there are two possibilities why the younger graduates (30-34 years) rated these facilities more better than those in the higher age groups. First, there is a likelihood that, they (younger graduates) had fewer responsibilities (at the family, community and places of work) compared with the more older graduates. For this reason. they might have had more time to use the Regional Centres' library facilities more regularly. Second, there are chances that the younger graduates came from areas that were closer to the regional centres. Therefore, they might have benefited more from the learning facilities in these centres compared with their colleagues who might have been living faraway from the centres.

The fourth hypothesis was formulated as follows:

HO₄ There is no significant difference in the way graduates who took different subject combinations perceive the student support system in the EDP.

The fourth hypothesis thus assumed that, the mean rating of the five components of the student support system by graduates who took different subject combinations would not differ significantly. As shown in Table 6 the graduates could be categorized into ten groups according to the subject combinations they had taken when they were in the EDP. Therefore, in order to confirm 110, one-way WOVA

test was carried out on each of the five components of the support system since the comparison in the mean ratings involved more than two groups of subjects. Table 18(a) shows the outcome of ANOVA test in respect of continuous assessment for graduates who took different subject combinations in the EDP.

Table 18(a): Summary of Analysis of Variance of Mean Perception Scores on Continuous Assessment for Graduates who took Different Subject Combinations.

SOURCE OF VARIATION	DF	SS	MS	F-Ratio	F-Prob.
Between groups	9	2.7576	0.3064	0.7782	0.6368
Within groups	131	51.5805	0.3937		
Total	140	54.3381			

F- Critical: 1.88 Level of significance: 0.05

The data exhibited in Table 18(a) shows that the obtained F- value of 0.7782 with 9 and 131 degrees of freedom is not significant at 0.05 level. Consequently, H_0 is accepted in regard to continuous assessment. This implies that graduates who had taken different subject combinations in the EDP did not significantly differ in their mean ratings on the continuous assessment component of the support system. In order to compare the mean rating of the graduates in the ten subject combinations, the mean perception scores for those in each combination were computed. The outcome of this computation is presented in Table 18(b)

Table 18(b): Subject Combinations, Number of Respondents, Mean Perception Scores, Standard Deviations and Standard Errors 011 Continuous Assessment

SUBJECT COMBINATIONS	N	MEAN	SD	SE
History/Religious Education	28	2.7041	0.5372	0.1015
Geography/Economics	23	2.7516	0.7197	0.1501
Economics/Business Studies	22	2.7338	0.5458	0.1164
Double Mathematics	21	2.9524	0.5720	0.1248
Geography/History	12	2.5714	0.6810	0.1966
Kiswahili/Literature	11	2.5974	0.6846	0.2064
Mathematics/Economics	10	2.4857	0.6396	0.2023
English/Literature	7	3.0204	0.8588	0.3246
Mathematics/Business Studies	4	2.7857	0.7423	0.3712
Mathematics/Geography	3	2.7143	0.1429	0.0825
Total	141	2.7306	0.6230	0.0525

From the data presented in Table 18(b), it appears that the mean ratings on continuous assessment by graduates who took different subject combinations were more or less the same. Therefore it seems reasonable to conclude that the subject combinations taken by the graduates had little influence in regard to the way they viewed continuous assessment to have been a helpful component when they were in the EDP. This finding tends to differ with an earlier finding by I lertnet et al. (1974) which established that students who were taking mathematics in the OU programme in U.S.A rated continuous assessment more favourably than students who were taking other subjects in the programme. Table 19(a) presents the resultant ANOVA test with regard to residential sessions for graduates in the ten subject combinations.

Table 19(a): Summary of Analysis of Variance of Mean Perception Scores on Residential Sessions for Graduates who took Different Subject Combinations.

SOURCE OF VARIATION	DF	SS	MS	F - Ratio	F-Prob.
Between groups	9	3.0603	0.3400	1.0789	0.3826
Within groups	131	41.2858	0.3152		
Total	140	44.3461			

F critical : 1.88 Level of significance: 0:05

The data presented in Table 19(a) demonstrates that the computed F ratio of 1.0789 with 9 and 131 degrees of freedom is not significant at 0.05 level. There-

*

fore, H_0 is accepted in respect of residential sessions since the available evidence is not sufficiently enough to reject it. In order to compare how graduates in the ten subject combinations rated residential sessions, their mean perception scores were computed. The calculated mean perception scores are presented in Table 19(b).

Table 19(a): Summary of Analysis of Variance of Mean Perception Scores on Residential Sessions for Graduates who took Different Subject Combinations.

SOURCE OF VARIATION	DF	ss	MS	F - Ratio	F-Prob.
Between groups	9	3.0603	0.3400	1.0789	0.3826
Within groups	131	41.2858	0.3152		
Total	140	44.3461			

F_{critical} : 1.88 Level of significance: 0.05

The data presented in Table 19(a) demonstrates that the computed F ratio of 1.0789 with 9 and 131 degrees of freedom is not significant at 0.05 level. Therefore, H₀ is accepted in respect of residential sessions since the available evidence is not sufficiently enough to reject it. In order to compare how graduates in the ten subject combinations rated residential sessions, their mean perception scores were computed. The calculated mean perception scores are presented in Table 19(b).

Table 19(h): Subject Combinations, Number of Respondents, Mean Perception Scores, Standard Deviations and Standard Errors on Residential Sessions.

SUBJECT COMBINATIONS	N	MEAN	SD	SE
History/Religious Studies	28	3.8424	0.3705	0.0100
Geography/Economics	23	3.8087	0.6014	0.1254
Economics/Business Studies	22	3.8000	0.5192	0.1107
Double Mathematics	21	4.4019	0.5592	0.1686
Geography/History	12	3.8667	0.7101	0.2050
Kiswahili/Literature	11	3.8455	0.5592	0.1686
Mathematics/Economics	10	4.0438	0.7786	0.2462
English/Literature	7	3.9309	0.5589	0.2112
Mathematics/Business Studies	4	4.2638	0.8246	0.4123
Mathematics/Geography	3	4.0971	0.1155	0.4123
Total	141	3.9901	0.5628	0.0474

The data displayed in Table 19(b) shows that the mean scores of the graduates in the ten subject combinations were almost equal with regard to residential sessions. Nevertheless, a closer examination of the data in table 19 (b) reveals that, graduates who took combinations that were mathematical in nature tended to rate residential sessions more favourably compared with those who had taken other combinations. This is reflected by the relatively higher mean scores of those who took Double Mathematics (mean 4.4019), Mathematics/Business Studies (mean 4.2638), Mathematics/Geography (mean 4.0971) and Mathematics/Economics (mean 4.0438). This finding tends to agree with an earlier study by Kaeley (1976) which revealed that primary schools inservice teachers in Kenya perceived residential sessions to be more helpful to them, for they were able to get the assistance they

they needed in mathematics from their tutors. Probably, since mathematics is a relatively more complex subject (Skemp. 1971) students may require close guidance by the teacher in order to conceptualize those aspects of methodology that may be difficult. Therefore there is a likelihood that while graduates who took other subject combinations could have relied more on study materials (study guides and audio-taped lectures) those who studied either Double Mathematics or combinations that had the elements of mathematics might have benefited more from residential sessions. The one-way ANOVA test in respect of study materials for graduates in the ten subject combinations is displayed in Table 20(a).

Table 20 (a): Summary of Analysis of Variance of Mean Perception Scores on Study Materials for Graduates who took Different Subject Combinations.

SOURCE OF VARIATION	DF	ss	MS	F-Ratio	F-Prob.
Between groups	9	6.9709	0.7745	1.8266	0.0691
Within groups	131	55.5483	0.4240		
Total	140	62.5191			

F Critical: 1.88 Level of significance :0.05

From Table 20(a) it is clear that the F- ratio of 1.8266 with 9 and 131 degrees of freedom is not significant at 0.05 level. This indicates that, statistically, the mean perception scores of graduates who took different subject combinations did not differ significantly with regard to study materials. For this reason, H_0 is accepted with respect to study materials. To compare how graduates in the ten subject combinations rated the study materials, the mean perception scores for those in each combination were computed separately and subsequently displayed in Table 20 (b).

Table 20 (o): Subject Combinations of the Graduates, Number of Respondents, Mean Perception Scores, Standard Deviations and Standard Errors on Study Materials.

SUBJECT COMBINATIONS	N	MEAN	SD	SE
History/Religious Education	28	2.6833	0.5750	0.1060
Geography/Economics	23	2.7130	0.5286	0.1102
Economics/Business Studies	22	2.5364	0.6772	0.1444
Double Mathematics	21	2.7524	0.7922	0.1729
Geography/History	12	1.9833	0.5750	0.1660
Kiswahili/Literature	11	2.3455	0.6639	0.2002
Mathematics/Economics	10	2.4400	0.6096	0.1928
English/Literature	7	2.7429	0.3952	0.1494
Mathematics/Business Studies	4	2.7000	0.8869	0.1435
Mathematics/Geography	3	2.6667	0.3055	0.1764
Total	141	2.5830	0.6683	0.0563

From the data displayed in table 20 (b) it seems that the mean rating on study material by graduates in the ten subjects combination was more or less homogeneous. On the basis of this finding, it is reasonable to conclude that the subject combinations had minimal influence on the graduates in regard to how they perceived study materials to have been a useful resource in their studies,

Table 21 (a): Summary of Analysis of Variance of Mean Perception Scores on Guidance and Counselling for Graduates who took Different Subject Combinations.

SOURCE OF VARIATION	DF	SS	MS	F-Ratio	F-Prob
Between groups	9	1.7452	0.1939	0.3437	0.9586
Within groups	131	73.9116	0.5642		
Total	140	75.6568			

F. Critical: 1.88 Level of significance: 0.05

It is evident from Table 20 (a) that the computed F value of 0.3437 with 9 and 131 degrees of freedom is not significant at 0.05 level. This implies that the mean ratings on guidance and counselling services by graduates in the ten subject combinations did not differ significantly. Therefore, H₀ is accepted with respect to guidance and counselling. In order to establish how graduates in each subject combination rated guidance and counselling services, their mean perception scores were computed and displayed in Table 21 (b).

Table 21 (b): Subject Combinations, Number of Respondents, Mean Perception Scores, Standard Deviations and Standard Errors on Guidance and Counselling.

SUBJECT COMBINATIONS	N	MEAN	SD	SE
History/ Religious Education	28	3.1000	0.7454	0.1409
Geography/ Economics	23	3.0522	0.8554	0.1784
Economics/ Business Studies	22	2.8455	0.7757	0.1654
double Mathematics	21	2.8762	0.5309	0.1159
Geography/ History	12	3.0500	0.8318	0.2401
Swahili/ Literature	11	2.9636	1.0726	0.3234
Mathematics/ Economics	10	3.1600	0.4971	0.1572
Mathematics/ Literature	7	3.1429	0.3952	0.1494
Mathematics/ Business Studies	4	3.0500	0.8544	0.4272
Mathematics/ Geography	4	3.2000	0.2000	0.1155
Total	141	3.0113	0.7351	0.0619

The data presented in Table 21 (b) shows that the mean perception scores of the graduates in the ten subject combinations was more or less the same in respect of guidance and counselling component of the support system. Therefore, it seems reasonable to conclude that the subject combinations had no discernable influence in regard to the way the graduates perceived guidance and counselling services as having been helpful to their studies when they were in the EDP. The outcome of ANOVA test in respect of regional centres' library facilities, for graduates who took different subject combinations in the EDP is shown in Table 22(a).

Table 22 (a): Summary of Analysis of Variance of Mean Perception Scores on Regional Centres' Libraries for Graduates who took Different Subject Combinations.

SOURCE OF VARIATION	DF	SS	MS	F - Ratio	F - Prob
Between groups	9	7.6933	0.8548	0.6520	0.7507
Within groups	131	171.7524	1.3111		
Total	140	179.4457			

F Critical : 1.88 Level of significance: 0.05

An examination of the data presented in Table 22(a) shows that the calculated F value of 0.6520 with 9 and 13 degrees freedom is not significant at 0.05 level. This indicates that the mean ratings on Regional Centres' library facilities by graduates in the ten subject combinations was not significantly different. Hence, H_0 is accepted in regard to Regional Centres' library facilities since there is no sufficient evidence to reject it. For the purpose of comparing how graduates in each subject

combiantion rated Regional Centres' library facilities, their mean perception scores were computed. The outcome of this computation is presented in Table 22(b)

Table 22 (b): Subject Combinations, Number of Respondents, Mean Perception Scores, Standard Deviations and Standard Errors on Regional Centre's Libraries.

SUBJECT COMBINATIONS	N	MEAN	SD	SE
History/Religious Education	28	2.6571	1.1403	0.2150
Geography/Economics	23	2.6261	1.2230	0.2550
Economics/Business studies	22	2.8636	1.1990	0.2526
Double Mathematics	21	2.9333	0.9063	0.1978
Geography/History	12	*2.5833	1.0356	0.2989
Kiswahili/Literature	11	3.2000	1.1593	0.3495
Mathematics/Economics	10	2.8000	1.2508	0.3955
English/Literature	7	3.5143	1.4088	0.5325
Mathematics/Business studies	4	2.6500	1.3796	0.6898
Mathematics/Geography	3	2.7333	0.3055	0.1764
Total	141	2.8156	1.1324	0.0953

An inspection of the data displayed in Table 22 (b) shows that the mean ratings on Regional Centres' library facilities by graduates in the ten subject combinations was somewhat homogeneous. However, on further examination of the data, it emerges that. Regional Centres' library facilities were rated more favourably by graduates who took English/Literature (mean 3.5143) and Kiswahili/Literature (mean 3.2000) combinations. There are two possibilities why English/Literature and Kiswahili/Literature graduates rated Regional Centres' libraries more favourably. First, there is a likelihood that Regional Centres' libraries were relatively better

equipped with English and Kiswahili reference materials compared with what was available in regard to other subjects that were offered to the graduates. Second, there are chances that majority of English and Kiswahili graduates came from Nairobi Regional Centre and were therefore likely to have benefited from University of Nairobi main campus library which is better equipped compared with the libraries in other Regional Centres.

Having highlighted the results of data analysis in respect of the aforementioned hypotheses, the succeeding section (part two) presents the outcome of data analysis in regard to the open - ended statements in the questionnaire for the graduates and the administrators.

Part Two

Analysis of Data from the Open-ended Question Items

Under each component of the support system, the two categories of respondents (graduates and administrators) were presented with open ended question items. Some items requested them to reply by ticking () while others asked them to provide written answers. The information provided in each question item was analysed by computing the frequency (N) and percentage of respondents who supplied a given response. To achieve this, the written responses were closed first and then coded for easier computation of the frequencies and percentages. The result of this analysis in respect of continuous assessment has been presented first followed by the analysis in regard to residential sessions, study materials, guidance and counselling and Regional Centres' library facilities.

Continuous Assessment

The first question item under this component inquired whether the EES gave continuous assessment work to the 1986/93 lot of EDP students . All the graduates (141) and the administrators (13) replied in the positive to this question item. In the second item, the respondents were presented with three components of assessment. namely assignments, timed tests and project work. The respondents were

asked to tick () against the component(s) that might have been used by the FES to assess the graduates. Table 23 presents the frequencies and percentages of respondents who ticked against each component of assessment

Table 23: Frequency and Percentage of Respondents who Ticked (/) against Each Component of Continuous Assessment.

COMPONENT	GRADUATES		ADMINISTRATORS	
	N	PERCENT	N	PERCENT
Assignments	141	100	13	100
Timed tests	141	100	13	100
Projects	52	36.8	5	38.6

Table 23 clearly shows that all the graduates and administrators indicated that assignments and timed tests were utilized by the FES in assessing the graduates. It is further evident from the table that a lower percentage of the graduates (37 percent) and administrators (39 percent) reported that project work was used by the FES in assessing the graduates. Therefore, there is a likelihood that in comparison with assignments and timed tests, project work was the least utilized tool of assessing the graduates.

The third question attempted to find out whether the graduates experienced problems in the way continuous assessment component was managed by the FES. To elicit this information, the graduates were requested to indicate by ticking () whether they experienced any problems in regard to the way the FES managed continuous assessment. In a similar question, the administrators were asked to indicate whether the graduates ever complained over the way continuous assessment was managed by the FES. After analysing the responses from the two categories of respondents, it emerged that seventy eight (53percent) graduates replied in

the positive to this question item whereas sixty three (45percent) replied in the negative. The corresponding number of administrators was nine (69 percent) and two (15percent) respectively. I however, two (15percent) administrators did not respond to this question item .

Question four inquired into the type of problems that the graduates might have experienced in respect to the way the FES managed coursework. To elicit information relevant to this question item, the graduates who might have replied in the positive to question three were asked to mention the problems they had encountered. In a similar question, the administrators who might have indicated that the graduates complained over the way continuous assessment component was managed by the FES were requested to explain briefly the causes of these complaints. The information given by the graduates in regard to this question item has been presented in Table 24 .

Table 24: Problems that the Graduates felt they Encountered in Regard to the way Continuous Assessment was Managed by the FKS.

PROBLEMS	N	PERCENT
The duration of taking timed tests was too short.	52	66.7
Marked course work took too long to be returned.	48	61.5
Work to be submitted for marking was not always delivered in time.	41	52.6
Loss of work submitted for marking	38	48.7
Failure to record course work marks	34	43.6
Delayed communication when to write timed tests	21	26.9
Inadequate guidance from the part-time tutors on how to carry out projects	20	25.6
postponing timed tests	19	24.4
Deadlines for submitting assignments were at times too short	12	15.4

From Table 24 it can be seen that of the seventy eight graduates who indicated that they experienced problems in the way continuous assessment was managed by the FES, majority of them (67 percent) felt that the duration of taking timed tests was too short. It is further evident from the table that in the opinion of forty eight (62 percent) graduates, marked coursework took too long to be delivered back to the students. Another significant percentage (53 percent) of the graduates reported that work submitted for marking was not always delivered back in time.

Other problems that were cited by a significant number of graduates were: loss of work submitted for marking (49 percent), failure to record marks/grades attained in coursework (44 percent), delayed communication when to take timed tests (27 percent), and inadequate guidance on how to carry out projects by the part-time lecturers (26 percent). None of the other problems was cited by a large proportion of the graduates. Table 25 presents the reasons given by the EDP administrators as to why the graduates complained over the way the FES managed course work component of the support system.

Table 25: Reasons why the Graduates Complained over the Way (continuous Assessment was Managed by the KKS as Reported by the Administrators.

REASON FOR COMPLAINTS FROM THE GRADUATES	N	PERCENT
Delayed delivery of marked course work.	7	77.8
Loss of work submitted for marking .	5	55.6
Short duration of taking timed tests.	4	44.4
Little relevance between what was contained in the instructional materials and some questions items in the timed tests.	3	33.3
Some part time lecturers failed to give special tests to students who had missed timed tests in the Regional Centres.		11.1
Lack of guiding comments on marked coursework'		
Lack of clear instructions on the number of questions to answer in the timed tests.	2	22.2
Lack of privacy in returning marked course work for the papers were bunched together for the students to pick their individuals scripts.	2	22.2
Postponing timed tests.	1	11.1
Inadequate guidance from part-time lecturers on how to carry out projects	1	11.1

The data presented in Table 25 shows that out of the nine administrators who reported that the graduates complained over the management aspects of continuous assessment, seven (78 percent) of them indicated that delay in returning marked course work was one of the causes of complaints from the graduates. Other complaints by the graduates that were cited by a significant proportion of the administrators were loss of course work submitted for marking (56 percent) and short

duration of taking timed tests (44 percent). The causes of complaints that were reported by the least number of administrators were postponing timed tests (11 percent) and inadequate guidance from part-time tutors on how to carry out projects (11 percent)

The last open ended question item requested the respondents to offer suggestions on how the FES could improve the management aspects of continuous assessment in the EDP. The suggestions given by the graduates on how the FES could improve the management component of continuous assessment has been presented in Table 26.

Table 26: Suggestions Made by the Graduates on how to Improve the Management Aspects of Continuous Assessment.

SUGGESTIONS	F	PERCENT
Dispatch work to be submitted for marking in time.	87	61.7
Inform students well in advance when to go for timed tests	74	52.5
Deliver marked course work in time.	71	50.4
Ensure that course work marks are well recorded.	61	43.3
Timed tests should not be postponed.	59	41.8
Spread timed tests over a number of days.	51	36.2
Ensure that there are adequate comments on marked course work.	49	34.8
Timed tests should be given during residential sessions.	40	28.3
The system of returning marked course work should be made private.	28	19.8

As it is evident from Table 26 majority of the graduates (62 percent) had the feeling that one way of improving the management aspects of continuous assessment was to ensure that work to be submitted for marking is delivered to the students in time. Another important suggestion made by about 53 percent of the gradu-

ates was that the FES should inform students well in advance when to go for timed tests. Another pertinent suggestion that was given by 50 percent of the graduates was that marked course work should be delivered to the students with minimal delay. The suggestions that were given by the least number of graduates were the need to give timed tests when students go for residential sessions (28 percent) and making the system of returning marked coursework private (20 percent). Table 27 presents the suggestions given by the administrators on how the FES could improve the management aspects of continuous assessment.

Table 27: Suggestions Made by the Administrators on how to Improve the Management Aspects of Continuous Assessment.

SUGGESTIONS	N	PERCENT
Marked coursework should be dispatched back to the students with minimal delay.	9	69.2
Open up more examination centres in order to cater for students in the remote parts of the country.	7	53.8
Purchase computers for recording marks attained by students in coursework.	6	46.2
Timed tests should not be postponed.	5	38.5
Train part-time lecturers on how to make guiding comments on marked course work.	5	38.5
Subject co-ordinators should liaise more regularly with the part-time tutors in order to minimise loss of work submitted by students for marking		23.1

As it is indicated in Table 27, the suggestion that was made by the largest percentage of the administrators (70 percent) was that marked coursework should be delivered to the students with minimal delay. Another important suggestion

given by 54 percent of the administrators was the need to open up more examination centres in order to cater for students who come from the remote parts of the country. Similarly, six (46 percent) administrators felt that the FES should purchase a computer for recording coursework marks. The suggestion that the subject coordinators need to liaise regularly with the part-time tutors in order to minimise loss of work submitted by students for marking was reported by a smaller percentage (23 percent) of the administrators.

Residential Sessions

Under residential sessions, the respondents were presented with live open ended question items. In the first item, they were presented with three mediums of communication, namely: the post, newspapers and radio. They were requested to put a check mark () against the medium which might have been used by the FES to notify the graduates about residential sessions. The responses that were obtained in this respect have been presented in Table 28

Table 28: Mediums of Communication that were Used by the KKS to Notify the Graduates of Residential Sessions as Reported by the Graduates and Administrators

MODES OF COMMUNICATION	GRADUATES		ADMINISTRATORS	
	N	PERCENT	N	PERCENT
Post	141	100	11	84.6
Newspapers	95	67.4	8	61.5
Radio	11	22.6		23.1

The information provided in table 28 indicates that all the three mediums of communication (post, newspapers and radio) were used by the FES to notify the graduates about residential session. It is further revealed from the table that the post was reported by the highest number of graduates (100 percent) and administrators (85 percent) as having been used by the FES to inform the graduates about residential sessions. The other medium of communication that was reported by a sizeable proportion of the graduates (67 percent) and administrators (62 percent) was the newspapers. The radio seems to have been the least utilized medium of communication as it was reported by a small proportion of the graduates (23 percent) and administrators (23 percent).

In the second question item, the respondents were asked to indicate the medium of communication which in their opinion was more effective in notifying the graduates of residential sessions. After analysing the responses, it became clear that 97 (69 percent) graduates and 10 (76 percent) administrators were of the opinion that the post had been the most effective medium. This tends to suggest that post office was accessible to a majority of the graduates when they were in the EDP. The other two mediums of communication (Newspapers and Radio) seems to have been less popular among the respondents. This is in view of the fact that only 34 graduates and 1 administrator reported that newspapers had been effective. The corresponding number for the radio was 10 graduates and 1 administrator. The question sought for more information from the respondents on the reasons why a given medium of communication had been effective. The elicited information from the graduates in that regard has been summarized in tables 29, 30, and 31 in regard to the post, newspapers and radio respectively. The information given by the administrators in regard to the post has been displayed in table 32.

Table 29: Reasons Why the Graduates Thought the Post had been an Effective Medium of Notifying them of Residential Sessions.

REASONS	N	Percent
The information reached me in time.	54	52.5
Newspapers were rare in my area.	32	32.5
I could miss an announcement made over the radio.	30	30.9
I had no money to buy a newspaper daily.	17	17.5
Posted letter contained more information such as the examination time table.	13	13.4
Posted letter was an authoritative document for securing leave of absence from my employer.	11	11.3

The data contained in Table 29 indicates that of the ninety seven graduates who reported that the post had been an effective medium of notifying them about residential sessions, fifty four (53 percent) of them said that they were able to get the information in time. It can further be learnt from the table that in the view of thirty two graduates (33 percent), the post was more reliable because newspapers were rare in their area. Another reason given by thirty (31 percent) graduates as to why the post was more effective was that announcements made over the radio could be missed. Each of the other reasons why the post was thought to have been more effective were cited by a smaller percentage of the graduates. These were: inability to buy a newspapers on daily basis due to shortage of funds (17 percent), posted letter had more information such as examination time table (13 percent) and posted letter was an authoritative document for seeking leave of absence from the employer (11 percent). Table 30 presents information in regard to the reasons why the graduates perceived the post as having been effective in notifying them of residential sessions.

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REASONS	N	Percent
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Newspapers were rare in my area.	32	32.5
I could miss an announcement made over the radio.	30	30.9
I had no money to buy a newspaper daily.	17	17.5
Posted letter contained more information such as the examination time table.	13	13.4
Posted letter was an authoritative document for securing leave of absence from my employer. »	11	11.3

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Table 30: Reasons Why the Graduates Perceived Newspapers to have been more Effective in Notifying them of Residential Sessions.

REASONS	N	PERCENT
The announcement would be repeated.	<i>ii</i>	64.7
Newspapers were accesible to me daily.	17	50.0
Mail could be lost in the post office.	15	44.1
Mail could delay in the post office.	13	38.2
It was a more effective medium of communicating urgent information to the students.	12	35.2
Even if I missed a newspaper announcement a friend or relative would inform me.	11	32.4

A look at Table 30 shows that of the 34 graduates who indicated that newspapers were more effective in notifying them about residential sessions, twenty two (65 percent) of them felt that this medium had been more effective in that the announcement would be repeated. Similarly, in the opinion of seventeen (50 percent) graduates, this medium was effective for they had an access to newspapers daily. It is further learnt from the table that a significant proportion of the graduates (44 percent) were of the opinion that newspapers were better for the mail could get lost in the post office. Another sizeable proportion of the graduates (38 percent) reported that newspapers had been more effective compared with the post in that mailed letter could delay in the post office. Each of the other reasons why newspapers were regarded as having been more effective were cited by a smaller percentage of the graduates (at most 35 percent). Table 3 ! gives a summary of the reasons why the radio was perceived by the graduates to have been effective in notifying them when to attend residential sessions.

Table 30: Reasons Why the Graduates Perceived Newspapers to have been more Effective in Notifying them of Residential Sessions.

REASONS	N	PERCENT
The announcement would be repeated.	22	64.7
Newspapers were accesible to me daily.	17	50.0
Mail could be lost in the post office.	15	44.1
Mail could delay in the post office.	13	38.2
It was a more effective medium of communicating urgent information to the students.	12	35.2
Even if I missed a newspaper announcement a friend or relative would inform me.	11	32.4

A look at Table 30 shows that of the 34 graduates who indicated that newspapers were more effective in notifying them about residential sessions, twenty two (65 percent) of them felt that this medium had been more effective in that the announcement would be repeated. Similarly, in the opinion of seventeen (50 percent) graduates, this medium was effective for they had an access to newspapers daily. It is further learnt from the table that a significant proportion of the graduates (44 percent) were of the opinion that newspapers were better for the mail could get lost in the post office. Another sizeable proportion of the graduates (38 percent) reported that newspapers had been more effective compared with the post in that mailed letter could delay in the post office. Each of the other reasons why newspapers were regarded as having been more effective were cited by a smaller percentage of the graduates (at most 35 percent). Table 31 gives a summary of the reasons why the radio was perceived by the graduates to have been effective in notifying them when to attend residential sessions.

Table 31: Reasons Why the Graduates Perceived Radio (o have been more Effective in Notifying them of Residential Sessions.

REASONS	N	PERCENT
Even if 1 missed the radio announcement 1 could get the message from the relatives, workmates or friends.	6	60
Newspapers were rare in my area	4	40
Post office was not reliable during school holidays.	J)	30

From Fable 3 1. it can be seen that of the ten graduates who indicated that radio had been the most effective medium of communication gave only three reasons to support their claim. One of the reasons that was cited by 60 percent of the ten graduates was that even if they missed the radio announcement they could get the information from their friends, relatives or workmates. Another 40 percent of the ten graduates reported that since newspapers were rare in their areas, the radio was the most reliable medium of notifying them about residential sessions. The third reason which was cited by 30 percent of the ten graduates was that, post office was not reliable when the schools had closed. For this reason, the radio was the most reliable medium in regard to information about residential sessions. Table 32 presents the reasons why the administrators thought the post had been effective in notifying the graduates when to attend residential sessions.

Table 32 : Reasons why the Administrators Perceived the Post to have been more Effective in Notifying the Graduates of Residential Sessions.

REASONS	N	PERCENT
Letters reached the students in time as long as they had niven the correct address.	4	40
Students had regular access to post.	>	30
Past is popular and a comparatively more cheaper Channel of communication in this country.	<i>i</i>	20
Not all students had access to radio and newspapers.	1	10

The data displayed in Table 32 shows that of the 10 administrators who thought that the post had been the most effective medium of notifying the graduates about residential sessions. 40 percent of them indicated that letters could reach the students in time as long as they had given the correct address. Another 30 percent were of the opinion that this medium was effective for the students had regular access to post. It is further revealed from the table that according to 20 percent of the respondents, the post was a more effective way of informing the graduates about residential sessions for it is a popular and more cheaper channel of communication in this country. The view that the post was more effective in that not all students had access to radio and newspapers was cited by only one (10 percent) administrator

It is noteworthy that each of the other mediums of communication, namely newspapers and radio was cited by only one administrator to have been more effective in notifying the graduates about residential sessions. Moreover only one reason was mentioned by each of

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the two administrators as to why the medium each had cited had been more effective. For instance, the one administrator who indicated that newspapers had been more effective in notifying the graduates about residential sessions was of the opinion that most of the graduates were accessible to this channel of communication. In regard to the radio, the administrator who perceived it as having been a more effective means of informing the graduates about residential sessions held the view that, radio delivered message could reach the graduates in time.

%

The third question item sought information from the graduates on whether residential sessions had been beneficial to them when they were in the F.DP. All the one hundred and forty one graduates answered in positive to this question item. Similarly, question 3 asked the graduates to explain briefly why they thought that residential sessions had been helpful to them. Table 33 presents the reasons given by the graduates in regard to the usefulness of residential sessions

The data displayed in Table 32 shows that of the 10 administrators who thought that the post had been the most effective medium of notifying the graduates about residential sessions, 40 percent of them indicated that letters could reach the students in time as long as they had given the correct address. Another 30 percent were of the opinion that this medium was effective for the students had regular access to post. It is further revealed from the table that according to 20 percent of the respondents, the post was a more effective way of informing the graduates about residential sessions for it is a popular and more cheaper channel of communication in this country. The view that the post was more effective in that not all students had access to radio and newspapers was cited by only one (10 percent) administrator.

It is noteworthy that each of the other mediums of communication, namely newspapers and radio was cited by only one administrator to have been more effective in notifying the graduates about residential sessions. Moreover only one reason was mentioned by each of the two administrators as to why the medium each had cited had been more effective. For instance, the one administrator who indicated that newspapers had been more effective in notifying the graduates about residential sessions was of the opinion that most of the graduates were accessible to this channel of communication. In regard to the radio, the administrator who perceived it as having been a more effective means of informing the graduates about residential sessions held the view that, radio delivered message could reach the graduates in time.

The third question item sought information from the graduates on whether residential sessions had been beneficial to them when they were in the EDP. All the one hundred and forty one graduates answered in positive to this question item. Similarly, question 3 asked the graduates to explain briefly why they thought that residential sessions had been helpful to them. Table 33 presents the reasons given by the graduates in regard to the usefulness of residential sessions.

Table 33: Helpful Aspects of Residential Sessions as Reported by the Graduates.

HELPFUL ASPECTS OF RESIDENTIAL SESSIONS	N	PERCENT
I was able to meet the part-time lecturers who helped to clarify difficulty issues encountered in the course of my studies.	08	69.5
The sessions gave me an opportunity to share ideas and experiences with fellow students.	70	49.6
This was an ideal time to revise for semester examinations	40	28.4
The sessions enabled me to utilize the library facilities	25	17.3
This was the time for taking timed tests and semester examinations	12	8.5
The sessions gave me an opportunity to soil out administrative issues such as payment of tuition fees	11	7.8
The sessions made me feel as if I was a university student	10	7.1

A look at Table 33 shows that a large majority of graduates (70 percent) felt that residential sessions had been helpful for they were able to meet part-time lecturers who helped to clarify difficult areas that they had encountered in the course of their studies. Another helpful aspect of residential sessions that was cited by about 50 percent of the graduates was that they were able to share ideas and experiences with their colleagues. Further, a considerable proportion of the graduates (29 percent) indicated that, the sessions gave them an opportunity to revise for semester examinations. Each of the other helpful aspects of residential sessions were reported by a smaller proportion of the graduates (at most 25). In a similar question, the administrators were asked to briefly mention the activities that took place during residential sessions which in their opinion were helpful to the graduates. Data pertinent to this question item is presented in Table 34

Table 3-4: Helpful Aspects of Residential Sessions as Reported by the Administrators.

HELPFUL ASPECTS OF RESIDENTIAL SESSIONS	N	PERCENT
Students received face-to-face teachings from the part-time lecturers	12	92.3
Students had an opportunity to take timed tests and semester examinations.	11	84.6
Students in need of guidance and counselling were able to get assistance from the administrators and part-time lecturers	6	46.2
Students had an opportunity to meet their colleagues and thus share ideas and experiences	5	38.5
This was an opportune time when the students would organize self-study	4	30.8
It was during these sessions when the students were issued with study materials by the FES	3	23.1
Students had an opportunity to register for new subjects.		15.4
Students were able to utilize the library facilities.	-	15.4
This was an opportune time for the students to sort out administrative issues such as payment of tuition fees.		15.4

Table 3-4 shows that an overwhelming majority of the administrators (92 percent) were of the opinion that residential sessions had been helpful to the graduates in that they received face-to-face tutorials. It is further revealed from the table that a very high percentage (85 percent) of the administrators felt that the sessions gave the graduates an opportunity to take timed tests and semester examinations.

Another helpful aspect of residential sessions that was cited by six (47 percent) administrators was that graduates who were in need of guidance and counselling were able to get the assistance they needed from the FES administrators and the part-time lecturers. Furthermore, in the view of five (39 percent) administrators, residential sessions gave the graduates an opportunity to interact with each other and thus share ideas and experiences. It is also evident from the table that a significant proportion of the administrators (31 percent) felt that residential

sessions were helpful to the graduates in that they were able to get instructional materials from the FES. The other helpful aspects of residential sessions were reported by an insignificant proportion of the administrators.

The last question item requested the two categories of respondents to offer suggestions on how the FES could improve residential sessions in order to make them more helpful to the EDP students. The suggestions given by the graduates have been presented in Table 35.

Table 35: Ways of Improving Residential Sessions as Suggested by the Graduates.

SUGGESTIONS	N	PERCENT
The duration of residential sessions should be increased to at least one month.	49	34.8
The FGS should supervise tutorials in order to ensure that all part-time lecturers are in attendance.	36	25.5
Tutorial timetable should not be congested.	31	22.0
Students should be informed early enough when to attend the sessions.	29	20.6
Since EDP students are adults they should not be made to reside in the same rooms with the regular students.	21	15.0
All the FES administrators should be in attendance in order to sort out administrative issues that may be raised by the students.	19	13.5
The sessions should be organized at the start of the month when students have money to finance for their travelling and accommodation expenses.	15	10.6
Tutorial time table should provide for adequate time for students to move from one lecture hall to another.	9	6.4

From the data presented in Table 35, it can be learnt that about 35 percent of the graduates were of the opinion that the duration of residential sessions needs to be increased to one month in order for the sessions to be more beneficial to the EDP students. Another sizeable proportion of the graduates (26 percent) suggested that the FES should supersede tutorials in order to ensure that students are attended to by the part-time tutors. Another suggestion made by 22 percent of the graduates was that tutorial time table should not be congested. Furthermore, twenty nine (21 percent) graduates felt that for residential sessions to be more helpful to the EDP students, the FES should notify them early enough when to attend the sessions. Table 36 gives a summary of suggestions given by the administrators on how the FES could improve residential sessions.

Table 36: Ways of Improving Residential Sessions as Suggested by the Administrators.

SUGGESTIONS	N	PERCENT
The FES should prevail upon the part-time tutors to attend all their lessons during the sessions	7	53.8
Study materials should be delivered in time so that students may have ample time to go through in order to benefit from face-to-face tutorials	6	46.2
Tutorial time table should be less congested	5	38.5
Face-to-face tutorials in the Regional Centres should be revived	5	38.5
Accommodation charges for the EDP students should be in parity with those of the regular students	4	30.8
Part-time tutors should be present when their courses are being examined so as to sort out issues that may be raised by the students.	4	30.8
The FES should design a more efficient way of issuing study materials to the students during residential sessions so that they may have time to attend tutorials.	3	23.1
All administrative staff in the FES should be made to attend the sessions in order to sort out issues that may be raised by the students.	2	15.4
Residential sessions should be increased.	1	7.7

A look at Table 36 clearly shows that, in the view of a majority of the administrators (54 percent), residential sessions can be more helpful if all the part-time tutors attended their lessons during a given session. Another pertinent suggestion that was put forth by about 46 percent of the administrators was that study materials should be delivered to the students early enough so that they may have reasonable time to go through them in order to gain from face-to-face tutorials. Other suggestions that were endorsed by a significant proportion of the administrators were that: tutorial time table should be less congested (39 percent), accommodation charges for the EDP students should be in parity with those of the regular students (31 percent), and the need for the part-time tutors to be in attendance when their courses are being examined so as to sort out issues that may be raised by the students (31 percent).

Study Materials

According to the University of Nairobi Student's Handbook (1986) study guides/units and audio taped lectures formed the core of the instructional materials that were to be given to the graduates when they joined the EDP. Therefore, the first question item under this component of the support system was to establish whether the materials (study guides and audio taped lectures) were issued to the graduates. To elicit data relevant to this question item, the graduates were requested to indicate by ticking () whether they received the two types of study materials when they were in the EDP. In a similar question item, the administrators were asked to mention by ticking () whether the FES issued the two types of instructional materials to the graduates when they (graduates) were in the EDP. In addition, the two categories of respondents were asked to mention any other instructional materials that might have been given to the graduates besides study guides

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and audio taped lectures. The responses collected in this respect are summarized in Table 37.

**Table 37-: Types of Study Materials that were Issued to the Graduates
by the FES as Reported by the two Categories of Respondents.**

STUDY MATERIALS	GRADUATES		ADMINISTRATORS	
	N	PERCENT	N	PERCENT
Study guides/Units	141	100.0	13	100.0
Audio taped lectures	141	100.0	13	100.0
Text books	45	39.9	5	
Handouts	8	5.7		

Table 37 shows that all the respondents (141 graduates and 13 administrators) indicated that the FES supplied study guides and audio taped lectures to the graduates when they were in the EDP. It is also revealed from the table that about 40 percent of the graduates mentioned that they were given text books when they were in the programme. Similarly, 33 percent of the administrators reported that the graduates were issued with text books when they were in the EDP.

The data displayed in Table 37 further shows that of the two categories of respondents, only the graduates reported that handouts were -part of the instructional materials when they were in the EDP. Moreover, only a small percentage (6 percent) of the graduates indicated that they received handouts when they were in the programme. This may suggest that handouts were not part of the officially designated instructional materials but could have been issued through informal arrangements between the part-time tutors and the graduates.

In the second question item, the graduates were asked to indicate by ticking () whether the study guides and audio-taped lectures were beneficial to them when they were in the EDP. All the 141 graduates responded in the positive to this question item. The question probed further into the reasons why the graduates per-

ceived the two types of study materials to have been helpful to them. The responses obtained in regard to this question item have been presented in Table 38 with respect to study guides.

Table 38: Helpful Aspects of Study Guides as Reported by the Graduates.

HELPFUL ASPECTS OF STUDY GUIDES	N	PERCENT
They had well summarized notes which were easy to follow	59	41.8
They contained most of what was tested in the timed tests and examinations	47	33.2
Gave reference to many other sources of information	44	31.2
Since libraries were rare in the rural areas, they formed the basic sources of knowledge	40	28.4
They had self-test questions for individual practice	37	26.2
They contained knowledge that was at times rare to find in textbooks	22	15.6
Lecturer were given in a logical series that provided continuity of content	19	13.5

It is revealed from Table 38 that a majority of the graduates (42 percent) were of the opinion that study guides had been helpful for they had well summarized notes that were easy to follow. Another sizeable proportion of the graduates (33 percent) indicated that most of what was set in the examination came from the study guides. Further more, 31 percent of the graduates stated that study guides enabled them to identify other relevant reading materials in the course of their studies. Each of the other helpful aspects of study guides was reported by a small proportion of the graduates (at most 28.4 percent). Table 39 presents the information given by the graduates in regard to the helpful aspects of audio-taped lectures.

Table 39: Helpful Aspects of Audio-taped Lectures as Reported by the Graduates.

HELPFUL ASPECTS	N	PERCENT
They summarized various topics in the study guides which facilitated quick revision	57	40.4
The voice of the tutor brought real-life learning situation	44	31.2
They helped to expound the difficulty areas in the study guides	39	27.9
Some had knowledge that was rare to find in textbooks	23	16.3
They helped one to spend leisure time more profitably	19	13.5
One could rewind the tape several times for a clear understanding of the issues under discussion	15	10.6
They supplemented face-to-face tutorials	14	9.9
Some had provoking questions that stimulated the listener to do further reading	11	7.8

A look at Table 39 shows that 40 percent of the graduates were of the opinion that audio-taped lectures had been helpful in the sense that they summarized topics in the study units for quick revision. Another helpful aspect of audio-taped lectures that was reported by about 31 percent of the graduates was that the voice of the tutor brought real life learning situation. Further, in the opinion of about 23 percent of the graduates, some audio-taped lectures had been helpful, for they contained information that was rare to find in textbooks. The observation that audio-taped lectures helped one to spend leisure time more profitably was another helpful aspect that was supported by almost 16 percent of the graduates. None of the helpful aspects of audio-taped lectures was reported by more than 14 percent of the graduates.

The third question item inquired whether the system that was used by the

FES to deliver study materials might have presented any problems to the graduates. In this regard, the graduates were asked to mention any problem they might have experienced. In a similar question, the administrators were requested to indicate whether the graduates ever complained over the way the FES delivered study materials to them. Information provided by the two categories of respondents revealed that seventy three (52 percent) graduates had experienced problems in regard to the way study materials were delivered to them by the FES. Similarly, nine (69 percent) administrators had reported that the graduates had raised complaints over the way the FES delivered study materials to them.

The question investigated further into the nature of problems that the graduates might have experienced. To elicit information pertinent to this part of the question, the graduates were asked to mention briefly the problems they might have experienced in regard to the way study materials were delivered to them by the FES. On the other hand, the administrators were requested to explain briefly the reasons why the graduates had raised complaints. The information provided by the graduates in regard to this part of the question item is presented in Table 40.

Table 40: Problems that the Graduates felt they Encountered in Regard to the way Study Materials were Delivered to Them by the I ES.

PROBLEMS CONNECTED WITH DELIVERY OF STUDY MATERIALS	N	PERCENT
Some study guides were not accompanied by the relevant audio-taped lectures	43	58.9
In the early stages of the EDP, study materials were delivered late	34	46.6
Information when to collect study materials in the Regional Centres was in some occasions delayed	23	31.5
One could not be issued with study materials if tuition fees for a given part of the course was not cleared	18	24.6
The procedure of issuing study materials during residential sessions was very slow thus forcing one to forego face- to face tutorials	14	19.2

A look at Table 40 shows that out of seventy three graduates who reported that they had encountered problems in regard to the way they were issued with study materials, forty three (59 percent) of them indicated that in some occasions the study guides were not accompanied by the relevant audio-taped lectures. Another problem that was cited by about 47 percent of the graduates was that study materials were at times not delivered to them in time. Other problems that seem to have been encountered by a significant proportion of the graduates were delayed communication when to collect study materials from the Regional Centres and inability to get study materials for not having paid the required tuition fee in a given part of the course. The problem that appears to have been encountered by the least number of graduates was that the system of issuing study materials during residential sessions

sions was slow Table 41 gives a summary of the complaints raised by the graduates as reported by the administrators over the issuing of study materials.

Table 41: Complaints Raised by the Graduates on Issuing of Study Materials as Reported by the Administrators.

COMPLAINTS ASSOCIATED WITH ISSUING OF STUDY MATERIALS	N	PERCENT
Delay in delivery of study materials to the graduates.	9	90
Some instructional materials mainly audio-taped lectures were never delivered.	4	40
Unexplained causes of delay in dispatching study materials.	2	20
Failure to get study materials for not having paid all the required tuition fees.	2	20
Some study guides did not have all the pages.	1	10

The data displayed in Table 41 indicates that of the ten administrators who said that the graduates complained over the way study materials were delivered to them, an overwhelming 90 percent of them reported that the complaints were centred on delayed delivery of instructional materials. Another cause of complaint that was mentioned by 40 percent of the ten administrators was that some materials, namely audio-tape lectures were never delivered to the graduates. Each of the other causes of complaints by the graduates were cited by a smaller proportion of the administrators thus suggesting that they might not have been major sources of dissatisfaction among the graduates as far as the system of delivering study materials was concerned.

The last question item under study materials requested the respondents to

offer suggestions on how the FES could improve the system of delivering instructional materials to the EDP students. Responses provided by the graduates in regard to this question item are presented in Table 42

Table 42: Suggestions Made by the Graduates on how to Improve Delivery of Study Materials to the EDP Students.

SUGGESTIONS	N	PERCENT
All study materials should be delivered through the Regional Centres.	49	34.8
Study materials not issued through the Regional Centres need to be dispatched during residential sessions.	48	34.0
Study materials should be delivered in time in order for students to prepare adequately for examinations.	22	22.7
Students should be informed early enough when to collect study materials.	21	14.9
Deliver the study material directly to the students through the post.	17	12.1
Study materials should be issued through the Regional Centres and when the students go for residential sessions.	9	6.4
The FES should have an efficient system of replacing audio taped lectures that are not well dubbed and study guides with missing pages.	7	5.0
Issuing of study materials should not be subject to full payment of tuition fees.	7	5.0

A look at Table 42 clearly shows that in the opinion of majority of the graduates (35 percent) one way by which the KES could improve the system of

delivering study materials to the EDP students is to issue them through the Regional Centres. However, another sizeable proportion of the graduates (34 percent) felt that the FES should deliver study materials during residential sessions. The suggestions that were mentioned by the least number of graduates were that the FES should design a more efficient system of replacing poorly dubbed audio-taped lectures and study units that may have typographical errors, and that issuing of study materials should not be subject to full payment of fees. Table 43 gives a summary of suggestions given by the administrators on how the FES could improve the system of delivering study materials to the EDP students.

Table 43: Suggestions Made by the Administrators on how to Improve Delivery of Study Materials to the F.DP Students.

SUGGESTIONS	N	PERCENT
Use regional centers as the study materials distribution points.	9	69.2
Study materials should be prepared early enough in order to dispatch them in time to the students .	5	38.5
Dispense all the instructional materials during residential sessions.	4	30.5
Arrange study materials in packages in order to ensure that students get all the materials they require in a given part of the course.	1	7.7

The information provided in Table 43 indicates that a large majority of the administrators (69 percent) felt that one way of improving the distribution of instructional materials to the EDP students is to deliver them through the regional centers. Another suggestion made by about 39 percent of the administrators was that the FES should prepare instructional materials early enough in order to dis-

pense them in time to the students. Another significant proportion of the administrators (31 percent) suggested that study materials should be issued to the students during residential sessions. The suggestion that study materials should be arranged in packages for individual students before they are dispensed was mentioned by only one (8 percent) administrator.

Guidance and Counselling Services.

In the questionnaire for the graduates, the first question item under this component of the support system asked the respondents to indicate by ticking () whether the FES gave them guidance and counselling services when they were in the EDP. In a similar question item the administrators were requested to mention by ticking (y) whether the FES expected them to offer guidance and counselling to the graduates when they were in the EDP. Data pertaining to this question item revealed that all the graduates (141) had indicated that the FES gave them guidance and counselling services when they were in the EDP. Similarly, all the administrators (13) had reported that the FES expected them to offer guidance and counselling services to the graduates when they were in EDP.

In the second question item the graduates were asked to indicate by ticking (-J) whether they sought guidance and counselling services from the FES when they were in the EDP. In a similar question, the administrators were asked to indicate by ticking (<) whether the graduates consulted them for guidance and counselling. The information provided by the two categories of respondents showed that thirty one (22 percent) of graduates had sought for guidance and counselling services from the FES while twelve (92percent) administrators had been contacted by the graduates for guidance and counselling.

The third question item asked the graduates to mention briefly the reasons why they had sought for guidance and counselling from the FES. In a similar question item, the administrators were asked to mention the problems that might have

made the graduates to consult them for guidance and counseling. Responses provided by the graduates in regard to this question item have been summarized in Table 44.

Table 44: Reasons Given by the Graduates for Seeking Guidance and Counselling Services from the FES.

REASONS FOR SEEKING GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING	N	PERCENT
I sought guidance on how to raise tuition fees	15	48.4
I needed advice on how to improve my academic performance	14	45.2
I sought guidance on how best to integrate studies into my work, family, and social commitments.	10	32.3
I needed guidance on how to choose the elective subjects in the second year.	9	29.0
I needed some assistance on how to regain the motivation to learn after the death of my relative.	5	16.1
I sought advice on whether to sit for my semester examination after falling sick prior to the examinations	4	12.9
I sought assistance on how to secure a job for I had none		9.7
I needed assistance on how to carry on with the B.Ed course for my employer was frustrating my efforts to complete the course	2	6.5
I sought guidance on how to carry out my teaching practice since I was not a teacher	2	6.5
I sought advice on how to carry out my studies after failing to get study materials in time	1	3.2
I sought for information on existing career prospects after completing the B.Ed course	1	3.2
On several occasions. I sought for assistance on how best to utilize residential sessions for I was physically disabled.	1	3.2

A look at Table 44 shows that of the thirty one graduates who reported that they had contacted the FES for guidance and counselling services, a large majority

of them (48 percent) sought for advisory assistance on how to raise tuition fees. It is also evident from the table that a significant proportion of the graduates (45 percent) did contact the FES to get guidance on how to improve their academic performance. Another problem that made a sizable proportion of the graduates (32 percent) to seek for guidance and counselling was the need to be advised on how to integrate studies with personal commitments. The three reasons given by the graduates for seeking guidance and counselling tends to concur with an earlier observation by Idrus and Matzin (1993) in regard to distance education students in University Sains, Malaysia. Idrus and Matzin (1993) for instance observed that the most cited reasons for seeking guidance and counselling by the students in the institution were financial, finding time to study and on how to improve their academic performance.

Table 44 further shows that each of the other reasons for seeking guidance and counselling services were mentioned by a small proportion of the graduates. These were the need to be advised on; how to carry out studies after failing to get study materials in time, the existing career prospects after completing the B. Ed course and how to utilize residential sessions which was mentioned by one disabled student. Table 45 presents information given by the administrators on the reasons why the graduates sought for guidance and counselling from the FES.

Table 45: Reasons why the Graduates Sought for Guidance and Counselling Services as Reported by the Administrators.

REASONS FOR SEEKING GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING	N	PERCENT
Social problems such as family conflicts.	9	75
How to raise tuition fees.	7	58.3
Some graduates sought assistance on how to carry out their studies after failing to get study material in time.	6	50
Some graduates needed advice on how to carry on with their studies due to perpetual frustrations by their headteachers.	4	
Some graduates needed advice after failing to secure reference material from the local libraries.	4	33.3
How to write term papers/assignments.		25.0
Some graduates sought assistance on what to do after failing to get tutorials by some part-time lecturers during residential sessions.	2	16.7
Some students needed information regarding examination format.	1	1.83
In some occasions, some graduates were psychologically unprepared for semester examinations hence they sought for advice on whether to write them or not.	1	1.83
Some students needed information on how best to combine work with studies.	1	1.83

The data presented in Table 45 shows that of the twelve administrators who indicated that they were consulted by the graduates for guidance and counselling, 75 percent of them reported that the graduates did so due to social problems such as family conflicts. It is also evident from the table that according to 58 percent of the administrators the graduates who contacted them needed advice on how to raise tuition fees.

Another reason why the graduates sought for guidance and counselling which was reported by 50 percent of the administrators was the need to be advised on how to carry out studies after failing to get study materials in time. Other reasons for seeking guidance and counselling that were reported by a sizeable proportion of the administrators were perpetual frustration by the employer (33 percent), failure to get reference materials from the local libraries (33 percent) and how to write

term papers/assignments (25 percent). None of the other reasons for seeking guidance and counselling by the graduates were mentioned by more than two administrators.

The last question item sought for suggestion from the two categories of respondents on how the FES could improve guidance and counselling component of the support system. Responses given by the graduates in regard to this question item are presented in Table 46.

Table 46: Suggestions Made by the Graduates on how to Improve Guidance and Counselling Services to the EDP Students.

SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVING GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING	N	PERCENT
Besides informal guidance and counselling, the FES should set up a Guidance and Counselling Department which can offer quality services to the EDP students.	74	52.5
There is need to set specific counselling sessions during residential sessions when students can get the assistance they require	21	14.9
Employ a full time resident counsellor in all Regional Centres	17	12.1
Appoint specialist subject coordinators who can assist students on matters related to the subjects they are taking in the programme.	12	8.5

It is revealed from Table 46 that the graduates offered four pertinent suggestions on how the FES could improve guidance and counselling services to the EDP students. One of the suggestions that was reported by about 53 percent of the graduates was that the FES should establish a Guidance and Counselling Department capable of offering quality advisory services to the EDP students. Each of the other remaining suggestions was mentioned by not more than 15 percent of the respondents. Table 47 gives a summary of suggestions offered by the administra-

tors on how the FES could improve guidance and counselling services in the EDP.

Table 47: Suggestions Made by the Administrators on how to Improve Guidance and Counselling Services to the EDP Students.

SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVING GUIDANCE AND COUNCELLING	N	PERCENT
The FES should establish a Guidance and Counselling Department capable of offering effective services to the EDP students.	7	53.8
The FES should appoint a guidance and counselling expert in the Regional Centres for assisting students who may encounter problems in the course of their studies.	6	46.2
Guidance and counselling services to the EDP students should be offered more regularly.	4	30.8
The FES should train Resident lecturers in guidance and counselling techniques in order to be more helpful to the EDP students.	4	30.8
Administrative staff in the FES should be more accessible to the students in need of advisory services either physically, by post or telephone.		23.1
The FES should organize workshops regularly in order for the administrators to come up with better ways of assisting EDP students who could be in need of advisory services.	2	15.4

Table 47 shows that in the opinion of about 54 percent of the administrators, the FES should give top priority on establishing a Guidance and Counselling Department which can assist students in need of guidance and counselling services. Another significant percentage of the administrators (46 percent) felt that the FES should ensure that every regional centre has a guidance and counselling expert capable of assisting students who could be in problems. Another suggestion given by almost 31 percent of the admin-

istrators was that guidance and counselling services to the EDP students should be offered more regularly . Further . 31 percent of the administrators expressed the view that the FES should train Resident lecturers in guidance and counselling techniques so that they can be more helpful to the EDP students. The rest of the suggestions were mentioned by a smaller percentage of the administrators.

Regional Centres' Library Facilities.

The first question item under this component of the support system requested the two categories of respondents to indicate by ticking () whether there were libraries in the regional centres between 1986 and 1993. The information provided by the respondents in regard to this question item showed that all the 141 graduates and 10 administrators responded in the positive to this question item. The second question enquired whether these facilities were helpful to the graduates when they were in the EDP. After analyzing the information that was provided by the respondents in regard to this question item, it emerged that in the view of about 75 percent of the graduates the facilities were not helpful to them when they were in the EDP. Similarly 69 percent of the administrators expressed the feeling that regional centres' libraries were not beneficial to the graduates . In the third question item, the respondents were asked to mention briefly why in their opinion the facilities had not been helpful. The responses obtained from the graduates in respect of this question item have been summarized in Table 48

Table 48: Reasons why the Graduates thought the Regional Centres' Libraries were not Helpful to them.

REASONS WHY REGIONAL CENTRES' LIBRARIES WERE NOT HELPFUL	N	PERCENT
Regional Centres were very far from my place of residence.	41	42.9
Most of the learning materials in the Regional Centres were out of date and hence not relevant to my B.Ed course.	34	32.4
I was unable to visit the Regional Centres regularly due to personal commitments.	32	30.5
I was not allowed to borrow reading materials from the libraries but only to read indoors.	30	28.6
The libraries were not accessible during weekends.	15	14.1
The libraries had inadequate reading space.	11	10.5

The data presented in Table 48 shows that of the 105 graduates who mentioned that the regional centres' libraries had not been helpful, majority of them (43 percent) indicated that the facilities were very far from their place of residence. It is further evident from the table that in the opinion of thirty four (32 percent) graduates, regional centres' libraries were not helpful for the learning materials therein were out of date and hence not relevant to the B.Ed course. Similarly, a significant proportion of the 105 graduates (31 percent) mentioned that they could not visit the regional centres regularly due to personal commitments. Each of the other reasons why the regional centres' libraries were perceived as having not been helpful were reported by less than 30 percent of the graduates. In response to similar question item, the administrators who said that regional centres' Libraries had not been helpful to the graduates gave two reasons to support their claim. One of the reasons given by about 67 percent of the administrators was that most of the reading materials in the regional centres were outdated. Similarly, according to 22 percent of the administrators, regional centres' libraries were in-

adequately stocked.

The last question item asked the respondents to offer suggestions on how the FES could make the regional centres' libraries more helpful to the EDP students. Table 49 provides the suggestions given by the graduates on how to improve the regional centres' libraries.

Table 49: Suggestions Made by the Graduates on how to Improve Regional Centres' Libraries.

SUGGESTIONS BY GRADUATES FOR IMPROVING REGIONAL CENTRES' LIBRARIES	N	PERCENT
Stock the Regional Centres' libraries with materials relevant to the needs of the EDP students.	71	50.4
The libraries should loan reference materials to the EDP students for at least one month.	58	41.1
Enlarge the reading space in the Regional Centres.	46	32.6
Employ a qualified librarian in all Regional Centres.	34	24.1
Set up sub-regional centres' libraries that are easily accessible to the EDP students.	27	19.1
Inform the EDP students regularly on any newly stocked reference materials in the Regional Centres.	23	16.3
Regional Centres' libraries should be accessible throughout the week.	19	13.5
Establish a mobile library that can deliver books close to where the EDP students are located.	13	9.2
EDP students need to be given letters of introduction which can enable them to borrow reference materials from universities close to their homes or working places.	11	7.8

As it is evident from Table 49, a significant majority of the graduates (50 per cent) were of the opinion that regional centres' libraries should be well stocked with materials that are relevant to the needs of EDP students. Another sizable proportion of

the graduates (41 percent) felt that the libraries should loan books to the EDP students for at least one month. The table further reveals that in the opinion of about 33 percent of the graduates, the reading space in the regional centres should be enlarged. The suggestions that were made by the lowest number of respondents were the need to establish a mobile library and to give letters of introduction to the EDP students which can assist them to borrow reference materials from universities close to their homes or working places. Table 50 gives a summary of suggestions made by the administrators on how the FES could improve regional centres' library facilities.

Table 50: Suggestions Made by the Administrators for Improving Regional Centres' Libraries

SUGGESTIONS BY THE ADMINISTRATORS FOR IMPROVING REGIONAL CENTRES' LIBRARIES	N	PERCENT
Stock the libraries with reading materials that are relevant to the needs of EDP students	11	84.6
EDP students should be allowed to borrow books freely from the Regional Centre	4	30.8
Employ a qualified librarian in every Regional Centre	3	23.1
Establish a mobile library for easy delivery of reference materials to the EDP students	2	15.4
Enlarge the reading space in the Regional Centres	1	7.7
Stock the Regional Centre libraries with relevant journals and periodicals.	1	7.7

Table 50 shows that in the opinion of about 85 percent of the administrators regional centres' libraries should be stocked with reading materials that are relevant to the needs of EDP students. Another sizeable proportion of the administrators (31 percent) mentioned that the libraries should loan books to the EDP students for at least one month. Another pertinent suggestion put forth by about 23 percent of the administrators was that the FES should employ a qualified librarian in every regional centre. Each of the other suggestions was reported by less than 20 percent of the administrators.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF THE STUDY, RESEARCH FINDINGS,

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary of the Study

The study focused on the EDP programme of the UoN. The history of the programme goes back to 1964 when the Kenya Education Commission (Republic of Kenya, 1965) proposed the need to start externally organised degree courses in Kenya. Although the idea gained support at the University College, Nairobi it was not implemented at the time due to financial limitations. However, the need to start off-campus based degree courses in the country was expressed by subsequent education commissions, namely the National Committee on Education Objectives and Policies (Republic of Kenya, 1976) and the Report of the Presidential Working Party (Republic of Kenya, 1981). Nonetheless, it was not until 1986 when the idea was implemented. In that year (1986), 592 students were admitted for an external B.Ed degree course in the FES, of the UoN.

Since the external B.Ed, students were to be taught at a distance from the UoN, the FES incorporated a number of student support services in the programme. These were; continuous assessment, provision of study materials to the students, face-to-face tutorials, guidance and counselling services and library services in the regional study centres. Reviewed literature however tends to suggest that the FES began to experience financial constraints in delivering the aforesaid support services to the external B.Ed students soon after programme was started in 1986.

Due to shortage of funds for instance, the FES was unable to equip the EDP with modern data base record keeping facilities. Similarly, there were occasions when the FES was behind schedule in delivering instructional materials to the external B.Ed, degree students due to lack of adequate funds to repair study materials

production equipment. Moreover, in 1990, the FES withdrew field tutorials in the regional centres due to shortage of funds to pay teaching fee to the part-time lecturers.

This study therefore aimed at investigating how the EDP graduates and administrators perceived the aforementioned components of the student support system in the EDP. In addition, the study sought to establish whether graduates perception of the five components of the support system was influenced by four selected independent variables namely; sex, age, marital status, and the subject combinations they had taken in the EDP. Finally, the study aimed at eliciting suggestions from the respondents (graduates and administrators) how the FES could improve the five components of the support system so as to make them more helpful to the EDP students.

The reviewed literature covered four areas. These were the concepts of perception and distance education, student support services in distance education and related studies on the variables that are likely to influence learners perception of support services in distance education mode of teaching. In order to achieve the intended purpose of the study, the pertinent data was collected using two parallel questionnaires, one for the graduates and the other for the EDP administrators. The two questionnaires were developed after reviewing the aforementioned literature. The review was crucial for it made it possible to identify the key areas where the question items were to be focussed on.

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Each of the two parallel questionnaires had six parts, namely part A, B, C, D, E and F. Part A elicited demographic and general information of the respondents. Part B, C, D, E and F on the other hand sought the needed data from the respondents in regard to continuous assessment, residential sessions, study materials, guidance and counselling services and library facilities in the Regional Centres respectively. Before the questionnaires were administered to the respondents, a pilot study was carried out in order to establish whether the instruments would gather the relevant

data. After the trial study, items that were unclear to the respondents were rephrased while those that appeared to be irrelevant to the study were discarded.

The revised questionnaire for the graduates was subsequently mailed to 170 respondents who were selected randomly from a total population of 200 graduates. The questionnaire for the EDP was administered personally by the researcher to 19 respondents who were directly involved in the administration of the programme. A total of 141 duly filled questionnaires were received back from the graduate respondents. This represented 82.9 percent return rate. Of the 19 questionnaires administered to the administrators, 13 were received back, which represented 68.4 percent return rate.

The raw data from the open-ended questions in the questionnaires was subsequently analysed by computing the frequency (N) and percentage of respondents who supplied a given response in a given question item. On the other hand, information from the 27 closed statements in the questionnaire for the graduates was subjected to t-test and one way ANOVA in order to test the four null hypotheses that were germane to this study. The hypotheses were stated as follows:-

Ho, - There is no significant difference in the way male and female graduates perceive the student support system in the EDP.

Ho: - There is no significant difference in the way graduates of different marital status perceive the student support system in the EDP.

Ho. - There is no significant difference in the way graduates of different ages perceive the student support system in the EDP

Ho, - There is no significant difference in the way graduates who took different subject combinations perceive the student support system in the EDP.

In hypotheses one and two, the objective was to compare the mean rating of the student support system by two categories of respondents. These were male and female graduates with regard to Ho, and married and single graduates in respect of Ho[^]. For this reason the two hypotheses were subjected to t-test. However, Ho.

and H_{04} were tested using one-way ANOVA for the comparison involved more than two groups of graduate respondents. The standard level of either rejecting or accepting any of the four hypotheses was 0.05.

Research Findings

The findings of this study were presented in two parts. Part one presented the results of testing the aforementioned hypotheses in regard to the responses given by the graduates in the 27 closed statements. Part two on the other hand presented the outcome of the data analysis in respect of responses given by the graduates and the administrators in the open-ended question items.

Part One

Results of Testing the Four Null Hypotheses

The first null hypotheses held the assumption that there would be no significant difference in the way male and female graduates would perceive the student support system in the EDP. After subjecting this hypothesis to t-test, the results showed that:-

1. There was no significant difference between male and female graduates in regard to the way they perceived the five components of the student support system in the EDP.
2. Of the five components of the support system, residential sessions were rated more favourably by the two categories of respondents (males and females).
3. Although no significant difference was established between male and female respondents, male graduates tended to rate the support system more favourably than females, save for study materials and Regional Centres' library facilities.

The second null hypotheses had postulated that there would be no signifi-

cant difference in the way graduates of different marital status (demographic data showed that there were only married and single graduates) would perceive the student support system in the EDP.

The result of t-test in regard to this hypothesis established that married and single graduates did not significantly differ in the way they perceived the five components of the student support system in the EDP

The third hypothesis had suggested that there would be no significant difference in the way graduates of different ages would perceive the student support system in the EDP. The hypothesis was subjected to one-way ANOVA test whose outcome showed that:-

1. Graduate respondents in different age categories did not differ significantly in the way they perceived continuous assessment component of the support system. However, younger respondents (34 years and below) rated this component more favourably than those in other age categories (35 years and above).
2. There was a significant difference in the way graduates in different age categories perceived residential sessions. For instance, while this component was rated more favourably by those in age categories 50-54 years (mean 4.3400) and 30-34 years (mean 4.2750). it was rated less favourably by those in age brackets 40-44 years (mean 3.9206) and 35-39 years (mean 3.8698).
3. There was no significant difference in the way graduates in different age categories perceived the study materials.
4. There was a significant difference in the way graduates in different age categories perceived guidance and counselling components of the support system. The computed mean perception scores for instance established that this component was rated more favourably by graduates in age categories 30-34 years (mean 3.7000), 50-54 years (mean 3.3200) and 45-49 years (mean 3.0941). The mean rating of this component tended to be lower in respect of

those in age-brackets 40-44 years (mean 2.9746) and 35-39 years (mean 2.8326)

5. There was a significant difference in the way graduates in different age categories perceived regional centres' library facilities. For example, while this component was rated more favourably by graduates in age-brackets 30-34 years (mean 3.8000) and 45-49 years (mean 3.0118), it was rated less favourably by those in age categories 35-39 (mean 2.9535), 50-54 years (mean 2.7200) and 40-44 years (mean 2.5587).

The fourth hypothesis held the assumption that there would be no significant difference in the way graduates who took different subject combinations in the EDP would perceive the five components of the student support system. After carrying out the one-way ANOVA, the resultant F-statistic in regard to this hypothesis revealed that:-

- 1." There was no significant difference in the way graduates who took different subject combinations perceived continuous assessment component of the support system.
2. Graduates who had taken different subject combinations did not differ significantly in the way they perceived residential sessions. However, those who had taken mathematics alone or in combination with other subjects tended to rate residential sessions more favourably than those who had taken other combinations.
3. There was no significant difference in the way graduates who took different subject combinations perceived study materials component of the support system.
4. There was no significant difference in the way graduates who took different subject combinations perceived guidance and counselling component of the support system.
5. There was no significant difference in the way graduates who took different

subject combinations perceived regional centres' library facilities. Nonetheless, graduates who took English/Literature and Kiswahili/Literature combinations, rated this component more favourably compared with those who had chosen other subject combinations.

Part Two

Outcome of Data Analysis From The Open-ended Question Items

In analysing data from the open-ended question items, responses were closed and subsequently coded. Thereafter, the frequency (N) and percentage of respondents who supplied a given response were computed. Responses in regard to continuous assessment were the first to be analysed followed by those pertaining to residential sessions, study materials, guidance and counselling services and finally regional centres' library facilities.

Continuous Assessment

Analysing of information provided by the two categories of respondents (graduates and administrators) showed that, the FES gave continuous assessment work to the graduates when they were in the EDP. The analysis further revealed that the FES used three tools of assessment to evaluate the graduates. These were assignments, timed tests and projects. However, the data seemed to suggest that of the three tools of assessment, project work was less utilized in assessing the graduates.

The data further seemed to indicate that the graduates encountered four main problems in regard to the way continuous assessment work was managed by the FES. These were:

1. Short duration of taking timed tests
2. Delayed delivery of marked course work
3. Delayed delivery of work to be submitted for marking and

4. Loss of work submitted for marking.

To improve the supportive role of continuous assessment, the two categories of respondents suggested that the FES should:-

1. Dispatch work to be submitted for marking to the EDP students with minimal delay.
2. Inform EDP students well in advance when to go for timed tests.
3. Dispatch marked course work to the students with minimal delay.
4. Open up more examination centres in order for students in the remote parts of the country not to be inconvenienced when going for timed tests.

Residential Sessions

The result of data analysis in respect of this component of the support system revealed that the FES used three mediums of communication to notify the graduates about residential sessions. These were; post, newspapers and radio. The analysed data however gave the impression that the radio was the least utilized medium of informing the graduates when to attend residential sessions. From the analysed data, it appeared that in the opinion of the two categories of respondents, the post had been the most effective channel of notifying the graduates about residential sessions. The post according to the respondents was effective mainly because:-

1. The information reached the graduates in time.
2. Newspapers could not be relied upon for they were rare in some parts of the country.
3. The graduates had regular access to post.

The analysed data further showed that residential sessions were perceived as having been helpful to the graduates due to three main reasons. These were:-

1. The graduates were able to meet part-time tutors who helped to clarify difficult issues encountered in the course of their studies.

2. The sessions gave the graduates an opportunity to share useful ideas and experiences amongst themselves.
3. During these sessions, the graduates were able to take timed tests and semester examinations.

In response to a question on how the FES could improve the residential component of the support system, the two categories of respondents suggested that>

1. The duration of residential sessions should be increased to at least one month.
2. The FES should supervise face-to-face tutorials in order to ensure that students are attended to by the part-time tutors.
3. The FES should deliver study materials in time so that students may have adequate time to go through them and thus benefit from face-face tutorials.
4. Tutorial timetable should not be congested.

Study Materials

From the information provided by the respondents (graduates and administrators) it was established that the FES gave three types of study materials to the graduates when they were in the EDP. These were; study guides/units, audio-taped lectures and textbooks. The graduates, however, reported that apart from the three types of study materials, they were issued with handouts. On further analysis of the data, it appeared that both text books and handouts formed an insignificant component of instructional materials when the graduates were in the EDP.

The data in addition revealed that in the opinion of the graduates, study guides had been helpful to them because they:-

1. "Had well summarized notes that were easy to follow.
2. Contained most of what was tested in the timed tests and semester

examinations.

3. Gave reference to many other sources of information.

Further, the analysed data established that from the point of view of the graduates, audio-taped lectures were useful to them in three main ways:-

1. They summarized various topics in the study guides thus facilitating quick revision.
2. The voice of the tutor brought real-life learning situation.
3. They helped to expound the difficult areas in the study guides.

The information provided by the two categories of respondents further revealed that the graduates encountered three main problems in regard to the way study materials were delivered to them by the FES. These were:

1. Some study guides were not accompanied by the relevant audio-taped lectures.
2. Study materials were delivered late especially in the early stages of the EDP.
3. Some textbooks recommended in the study guides were rare to find.

In order to rectify these problems, the respondents suggested that the FES should:

1. Deliver study materials through the Regional Centres.
2. Ensure that instructional materials not delivered through the Regional Centres are issued when the students come for residential sessions.
3. See to it that there is minimal delay in the delivery of study materials to the students.

Guidance and Counselling

Data pertaining to guidance and counselling showed that although the FES offered these services to the graduates only a few respondents (22percent) in the study sample indicated that they had personally sought for these services from the administrators. The data further revealed that those who sought for these services

did so mainly because they needed assistance on how to>

1. Raise tuition fees
2. Improve their academic performance
3. Combine studies with work, family and social commitments.

The data further indicated that in the opinion of the graduates and the administrators, the FES could improve guidance and counselling services to the EDP students by:-

1. Establishing a Guidance and Counselling Departments that will deliver quality services to the students.
2. Ensuring that every Regional Centre has a guidance and counselling expert whose duty will be to attend those students who may encounter problems in the course of their studies.
3. Setting up specific guidance and counselling sessions during residential teaching when students in problems can get the assistance they need.

Regional Centres' Library Facilities

On the basis of the information provided by the respondents, it emerged that although libraries existed in the regional centres they were not of much assistance to the graduates. This, according to a large majority of the graduates (75percent) and administrators (69percent) was mainly because:-

1. The facilities were located far from the areas the graduates came from.
2. Most of the materials available in the regional centres were outdated and therefore irrelevant to the external B.Ed course.
3. Some graduates were unable to visit the libraries regularly due to personal commitments.

In response to a question on how the Regional Centres' libraries could be made more helpful to the EDP students, the respondents reported that the FES

should:-

1. Stock the libraries with enough reading materials that are relevant to the external B.Ed course.
2. Ensure that students are allowed to stay with reading materials borrowed from the libraries for at least one month.
3. Enlarge the reading space in the Regional Centres.
4. Employ a qualified librarian in all Regional Centers who can assist students to locate the materials they require.

Conclusions of the Study.

On the basis of the findings of this study, the following conclusions were arrived at. To begin with, the study established that sex had no significant influence ,
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in the way the graduates perceived the five components of the student support system in the EDP. However, the data seemed to suggest that female graduates perceived study materials and Regional Centres' libraries more favourably than male graduates. On the other hand, male graduates tended to rate continuous assessment, residential sessions and guidance and counselling services more favourably than female graduates.

The study further revealed that in general, the two categories of respondents (male and female graduates) rated residential sessions more favourably compared with other components of the support system. This was probably because, being distance learners, the sessions might have been beneficial to the graduates for they
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were able to meet their tutors and thus iron out the difficulties they had encountered in the course of their studies.

Findings from the study also indicated that study materials were the lowest rated component of the support system by the two categories of respondents. It is possible that since study materials were a vital learning resource in the EDP. the graduates might have expected the FES to manage them in a more effective way in

order to be able to follow their external B. Ed course systematically.

Findings from the study further revealed that marital status did not significantly influence the way the graduates perceived the five components of the support system. Nonetheless, save for residential sessions, single graduates tended to rate the support system more favourably than married graduates. Hence, there is a possibility that since married graduates were likely to have more family commitments than single graduates, they might have expected better services than what was provided by the FES in order to be able to integrate studies in their family commitments. Further, the higher rating of residential sessions by the married graduates was probably because the session set them free albeit temporarily from their domestic chores. For this reason, they might have perceived the sessions as an opportune time to not only concentrate in their studies but also to sort out administrative issues with the FES.

From the study, it was also established that age had no significant influence in regard to the way the graduates perceived continuous assessment component of the support system. However, the computed mean perception scores seemed to indicate that continuous assessment was rated more favourably by younger graduates (34 years and below) but less favourably by older graduates (35 years and above). Probably, having left school relatively, older graduates might have been less confident in their ability to tackle continuous assessment work. Perhaps, due to this feeling of inadequacy, they (older graduates) may have perceived continuous assessment work as not having been well managed by the FES. There is also a possibility that since older graduates might have had more personal commitments (at the family and community levels), they might have expected the FES to have designed an assessment procedure that was flexible enough to accommodate their private responsibilities.

Findings from the study further revealed that graduates in different age categories did not show any discernable pattern in their mean rating of residential

sessions. In spite of this observation, this component was rated more favourably by graduates in age-group 50 - 54 years. As noted above, this category of graduates might have left formal schooling relatively earlier than those in the lower age-groups. Consequently, they were likely to have been less confident in their ability to pursue their external B. Ed course successively. Therefore, there are chances that they rated this component more favourably for they were able to receive face-to-face tutorials which may have made them to be more confident in their studies.

Another finding from the study was that graduates in different age-groups did not differ significantly in their perception of the way the FES managed study materials. However, a significant difference was established in regard to the way graduates in different age-categories perceived guidance and counselling component of the support system. For example, while these services were rated more favourably by graduates in age-categories 30 - 34 years, 45 - 49 years, and 50- 54 years, they were rated less favourably by those in age brackets 35 - 39 years and 40 - 44 years. Hence, it is likely that advisory services that were given by the FES to the EDP graduates were relatively more effective in meeting the needs of those in age-categories 30 - 34 years, 45 - 49 years and 50 - 54 years but less effective in assisting those in age-groups 35 - 39 years and 40 - 44 years.

Findings from the study also indicated that there was a significant difference in regard to the way graduates in different age-brackets perceived regional centres library facilities. For instance, these facilities were rated more favourably by the younger graduates (34 years and below) but less favourably by older graduates. The higher rating of regional centres' libraries by the younger graduates was probably because they might have had fewer personal commitments than the older graduates. For this reason, they were likely to have been more free to visit the regional centres more regularly.

The study further established that subject combinations did not significantly influence the perceptions of graduates on the five components of the support sys-

tem. However, although the graduates' mean perception scores appeared to be more or less the same, there was a notable difference with regard to residential sessions and regional centres' library facilities. For example, those who took subject combinations that were mathematical in nature tended to rate residential sessions more favourably. Perhaps, this category of graduates might have benefited more from face to face contacts with their tutors during these sessions compared with those who had chosen other combinations. Those who took English/Literature and Kiswahili/Literature on the other hand, rated regional centres' libraries more favourably than graduates who had chosen other combinations. Therefore, there is possibility that there were more English and Kiswahili reading materials in the regional centres compared with what was available in regard to other subjects that were offered to the graduates by the FES.

From what was reported by the graduates and the EDP administrators, it appeared that the graduates had encountered four major problems in regard to the way the FES managed continuous assessment component of the support system. These were: short duration of taking timed tests, delayed delivery of marked coursework, late delivery of work to be submitted for marking and loss of assignment submitted to the FES for marking. The suggestions given by the two categories of respondents (graduates administrators) seemed to indicate that the FES could improve continuous assessment component by; ensuring that work to be submitted for marking reaches the students in time, returning marked coursework to the students with minimal delay, informing students well in advance when to go for timed tests, and opening up more examination centres in order for students in the remote parts of the country not to be inconvenienced when timed tests are being taken in the regional centres.

The study also revealed that the FES used three channels of communication to notify the graduates about residential sessions. These were; post, the radio, and newspapers. However, the information provided by the respondents gave the im-

pression that the post had been the most effective channel of informing the graduates when to attend residential sessions. Further, from the point of view of the two categories of respondents, it seemed that residential sessions had been helpful to the graduates in three main ways. First, the sessions gave the graduates an opportunity to meet their tutors who helped them to iron out difficulties they might have encountered in the course of their studies. Second, the sessions gave them (graduates) an opportunity to share ideas and experiences amongst themselves. Third, it was during these sessions that the graduates took timed tests and examinations. However, though residential sessions were perceived as having been helpful to the graduates, the respondents felt that the FES could make further improvements in the following areas. To start with, the duration of residential sessions should be increased. In addition, face-to-face tutorials need to be supervised in order to ensure that students are attended to by the part-time tutors. Further, study materials should be delivered early enough so that students may have adequate time to go through them. This, the respondents felt would enable the students to easily follow the face-to-face tutorials

The data provided by the graduates and the administrators further suggested that study guides / units and audio-taped lectures were the core instructional materials that were supplied to the graduates when they were in the EDP. The data also seemed to indicate that study guides had been helpful to the graduates for they; had well summarized notes that were easy to follow, contained most of what was tested in the timed tests and semester examinations, and gave reference to many other sources of information. Further, from what was reported by the graduates, it appeared that audio-taped lectures had been helpful to them in that they; summarized various topics in the study guides for quick revision, created real-life learning situations. and expounded difficulty areas in the study guides.

The study, in addition, suggested that the graduates had experienced three major problems in regard to the way study materials were managed by the FES.

First, some study guides were not accompanied by the relevant audio-taped lectures. Second, study guides were delivered late especially in the early stages of the EDP. Third, some audio-taped lectures were never delivered. From the point of view of both the graduates and the administrators, it seemed that the FES could improve the supportive role of study materials by; delivering them through the Regional Centres, dispatching them in time, and issuing those that may not have been dispensed through the Regional Centres during residential sessions.

Data pertaining to guidance and counselling services tended to indicate that although these services were available in the EDP, only a few graduates who participated in the study contacted the administrators for advisory assistance. From what was reported by those who sought for these services and the EDP administrators, it appeared that the graduates encountered three main problems that compelled them to seek for this kind of assistance. These included; inability to raise tuition fees, failure to progress successfully in the external B.Ed course, inability to combine studies with personal commitments, and family conflicts. The suggestions given by the graduates and the administrators gave the impression that to improve guidance and counselling services in the EDP, the FES should; set up a Guidance and Counselling Department capable of offering quality services to the EDP students, appoint qualified counsellors to be attending students in their respective Regional Centres, and organize specific periods during residential sessions when students in need of guidance and counselling services can get the assistance they require.

In regard to the regional centres' libraries, it emerged that although these facilities were in existence, they were perceived as having been helpful to the graduates by a very small proportion of the respondents (graduates and administrators). Information provided by those respondents who indicated that these facilities were not helpful gave the impression that the libraries were of little assistance for; they were located far from the graduates, most of the materials in the libraries were out of date and hence not relevant to the external B.Ed course, and that the libraries

were inadequately stocked. From the suggestions given by the respondents, it seemed that the FES could improve the supportive role of regional centres' libraries by; stocking them adequately with materials relevant to the external B.Ed course, allowing students to stay with materials borrowed from the libraries for at least one month, and employing a qualified librarian in every regional centre whose role would be to assist the EDP students to easily locate the materials they require in the libraries.

Recommendations of the Study.

The following recommendations are made on the basis of the findings of this study.

1. The FES should design a well-managed study material production system in order to ensure that production schedules are adhered to. This, it is hoped, may enable the FES to deliver study materials in time to the students.
2. Further, in order for the EDP students not to be inconvenienced when getting the study materials, it is recommended that the FES should deliver study materials through the regional centres so that students do not have to wait until they get them during residential sessions.
3. The FES should try to establish the needs of married students in the EDP. By doing so, the FES may be in a better position to identify the appropriate changes to introduce in to the support system in order to make it more helpful to this category of students.
4. The FES should come up with an assessment procedure that is flexible enough to accommodate the needs of older students in the programme. The study offers two suggestions on how this could be achieved. First, the FES should deliver assignments early enough so that older students may have reasonable time to complete

them before deadline for handing them back for marking is over. Second, students should be informed well in advance when to go for timed tests in the Regional Centres. This may go along way towards helping the older graduates to prepare adequately for the timed tests.

5. The FES should in addition carry out an evaluation study in order to identify the needs of students in different age-categories in the EDP. Such an evaluation, it is hoped, may enable the FES to design a guidance and counselling programme that is capable of assisting students in all age categories in the EDP.

6. The FES should open-up more regional centres' libraries in order to assist EDP students who due to personal commitments may be unable to benefit from the existing library facilities in the regional centres.

7. It is also recommended that the FES should equip regional centres' libraries with a wide range of reading materials relevant to the needs of students taking different subject combinations in the EDP.

Suggestion for Further Studies.

The study offers further research in the following areas:

1. A replication of the current study needs to be carried out using an interview schedule in order to establish whether similar results would be arrived at.
2. A follow-up study should be conducted in order to find out the extent to which other variables such as geographical distance from the regional centres, and occupation of the graduates might influence their perception of the student support system in the EDP.
3. A similar study should be carried out using students who dropped out of the EDP. Such a study may help to establish whether there were shortcomings in

the student support system that might have made them to withdraw from the programme prematurely.

Since the study focused on the pioneer group of the EDP (1986/93 cohort) it could be replicated using the second intake group of students (1995/2001 cohort) in order to establish whether the results of the two studies would be consistent.

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OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

PROVINCIAL ADMINISTRATION AND INTERNAL SECURITY

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P.O. Box 305
NAIROBI

14th October. . Iv.....?.7.

John Kiumi Kanjogu
Faculty of Education
Nairobi University
P. O. Box 30197
NAIROBI

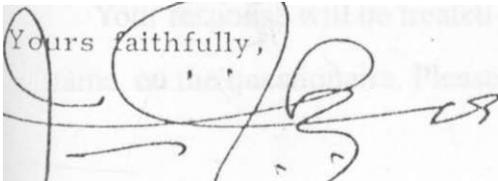
Dear Sir,

RESEARCH -AUTHORIZATION

Please refer to your application for authority to conduct research on "Graduate perception of Administrative support in the External Bachelor of Education, Degree Programme University of Nairobi. I am pleased to let you know that your application has been considered and approved.

You are therefore authorised to conduct research in all provinces in Kenya as from October 1997 to January, 1998. You are advised to pay a courtesy call to the Provincial Administrators of the respective Provinces of your research before embarking on your research study,

You are further advised to avail two copies of your final research report to this office upon completion of your research project.

Yours faithfully,


E. EKIRAKA
Permanent Secretary/
PROVINCIAL ADMINISTRATION

cc.

All Provincial Commissioners

The Chairman
Faculty of Education
Educational Administration and Planning
Nairobi University
P. O. Box 30197
N a i r o b i

APPENDIX 2

**John kanjogu kiunii,
Oraimutia School,
P.O Box 344,
Ol Joro Oi ok.**

Dear Sir/ Madam,

REF; A QUESTIONNAIRE ON PERCEPTIONS OF ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT IN THE EXTERNAL. BACHELOR OF EDUCATION DECREE PROGRAMME OF THE UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI.

I am a post graduate student in the University of Nairobi pursuing a Master of Education degree course. Currently I am carrying out a research entitled "Graduates perceptions of administrative support in the External Bachelor of Education degree programme of the University of Nairobi". Your assistance in responding to all the items in the questionnaire is likely to generate data that may help to improve the programme.

Your response will be treated as confidential. Therefore, DO NOT write your name on the questionnaire. Please complete all the items in the questionnaire.

Yours faithfully

John Kanjogu Kiumi.

APPENDIX 3

**QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE FIRST GRADUATES OF EXTERNAL BACH-
ELOR OF EDUCATION DECREE PROGRAMME OF THE UNIVERSITY
OF NAIROBI.**

SECTION A

Please, answer the following question items. Put a tick (/) or write in the space provided.

1. What is your Sex?

Male	<input type="checkbox"/>
Female	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. What is your age in years?.....!
3. What is your marital status?

Married	<input type="checkbox"/>
Single	<input type="checkbox"/>
Divorced	<input type="checkbox"/>
Separated	<input type="checkbox"/>
Windowed	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Apart from taking Education, what were your two other subjects in the External Bachelor of Education Degree Programme?.....and
5. Indicate with a tick (J) your Regional Centre.

Nairobi Regional Centre	<input type="checkbox"/>
Nakuru Regional Centre	<input type="checkbox"/>
Nyeri Regional Centre	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mombasa Regional Centre	<input type="checkbox"/>
Kakamega Regional Centre	<input type="checkbox"/>
Kisumu Regional Centre	<input type="checkbox"/>

ASPECTS		Excellent	Very Good	Good	fair	Poor
0)	Procedure of delivering assignments to the students was.					
(ii)	Procedure of submitting assignments by students for marking was.					
(iii)	Tutor comments on marked coursework were.					
(iv)	System of recording coursework marks was.					
(v)	System of recording work submitted by students for marking was.					
(vi)	The system of administering timed tests to the students was.					
(vii)	Procedure of informing students when to go for timed tests was.					

5. In the space given below, please give suggestions on how the Faculty of External Studies could improve the management aspects of continuous assessment in the External Degree Programme

SECTION C

1. Which of the following procedures did the Faculty of External Studies use to notify External Bachelor of Education degree students about residential sessions'>

Post () Radio () Newspaper () Others (specify)

- 2 (a) Which of the procedure given in Q (1) did you find to be the most effective? Tick One only

Post () Radio () Newspaper ()

(b) In your own opinion why was the procedure you chose in Q (2a) effective?

- 3 (a) Were the residential sessions helpful to you?

Yes ()

No ()

6

(b) If yes to Q (3a) briefly explain how you benefited from the residential sessions

(c) If No to Q (3a) please explain why residential sessions were not helpful to you

4. The following statement concern residential sessions in the External Bachelor of Education Degree Programme. Put a tick (S) under the appropriate column against each statement according to your own honest feelings.

	STATEMENTS ON RESIDENTIAL SESSIONS	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
(i)	Procedure of notifying students when to attend residential sessions was very effective.					
(ii)	Residential sessions were well organized.					
(iii)	Information given to the students by the Faculty of External Studies during plenary sessions was very effective.		%			
(iv)	The Faculty of External studies responded to student queries very effectively during residential sessions.					
(v)	Few part - time tutors if any failed to attend their lessons during residential sessions.					

5. Using the space given below, briefly explain how the Faculty of External Studies could improve residential sessions in order to make them more helpful to the External Degree Programme students.

SECTION I

1 (a) Did the Faculty of External Studies issue study materials to the External Bachelor of Education degree students ?

Yes ()

No ()

(b) If yes to Q (1 a) what type of study material were given to the students?

Study Units / Guides ()

Audio-taped lectures ()

Others (specify)

2 (a) Were the study units/ guides useful to you?

Yes ()

No ()

(b) If Yes to Q (2a) how were the study units / guides helpful to you?

(c) Were the audio - taped lectures helpful to you? \

Yes ()

No ()

(d) If yes to Q (2c) briefly explain how the audio-taped lectures were helpful to you

3 (a) Did you encounter problems in regard to the way study materials were delivered to you by the Faculty of External Studies?

Yes()

No()

(b) If Yes to Q(3a), please explain the type of problems you encountered

4. Using the scale given below, evaluate the given statements which relate to the various aspects of study materials in the External Bachelor of Education degree Programme. Put a tick () under the appropriate column against each statement according to your own honest feelings.

	STATEMENTS ON STUDY MATERIALS	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor
(i)	The system of delivering study units / guides to the students was					
(ii)	Procedure of issuing audio-taped lectures was					
(iii)	The system of informing students when to collect study material was					
(iv)	The system of replacing study units that had typographical errors was					
(v)	Procedure of replacing audio-taped lectures that were not well dubbed was.					

5. Using the space provided below, give suggestions on how the Faculty of " External studies could improve the procedure of delivering study materials to the External Degree Programme students.

STATEMENTS ON GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING		Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
(i)	Guidance and counselling services were readily offered to the External Bachelor of Education degree students by the Faculty of External Studies.					
(ii)	The Faculty of External Studies gave useful advice to the External Bachelor of Education degree students on how to improve their academic performance.					
(iii)	The Faculty of External Studies gave helpful advice to the External Bachelor of Education Students on where to secure supplementary reading materials.	%				
(iv)	Students were given adequate advice by the Faculty of External Studies on how to raise tuition fees.					
(v)	The Faculty of External Studies subject coordinations gave adequate assistance to the External Bachelor of Education degree students on the choice of elective courses.					

5. In the space provided below give suggestions on how the Faculty of External Studies could make guidance and counselling services more helpful to the External Degree Programme students

SECTION V

1. Did the Faculty of External Studies offer library facilities to the External Bachelor of Education students in the Regional Centres ?
- Yes ()
- No ()
2. If Yes to Q(1) were the libraries helpful to you?
- Yes ()
- No ()
3. If NO to Q (2) explain briefly why the libraries were not helpful to you.....>
4. Please respond to the following statements which relate to the library
- facilities in the Regional Centres. Put a tick () against each statement under the appropriate column according to your own honest feelings

STATEMENTS ON LIBRARY FACILITIES IN THE REGIONAL CENTRES		strongly Agree	^grcc	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
(i)	The libraries offered a wide range of learning materials to the External Bachelor of Education degree students.					
(ii)	Learning resources in the libraries were relevant to the needs of External Bachelor of Education degree students.					
(iii)	i The system of borrowing reading materials from the libraries was efficient.		i			
(iv)	The libraries were accessible to the External Bachelor of Education degree students for most of the time.					
(v)	The libraries had adequate reading space.				.	

5. In the space provided below give suggestions on how the Faculty of External Studies could improve the library facilities in the Regional Centres

Thank you very much for your assistance
and cooperation.

programme? Yes ()

No ()

2. If Yes to Q(I) tick () against the component(s) of continuous assessment that the Faculty of External Studies gave to the graduates.

Assignments ()

Timed tests ()

Projects ()

- 3 (a) Did the graduates ever complain in regard to the way continuous assessment work was managed by the Faculty of External Studies?.

Yes ()

No()

(b) If Yes to Q (3a), why did the graduates complain?

4. In your own opinion, how can the Faculty of External Studies improve the management aspects of continuous assessment work in the External Degree Programme?

SECTION C

- I. What procedures did the Faculty of External Studies use to notify the graduates of residential sessions?

Post() Radio() Newspapers() Others (specify)

- 2 (a) In your own opinion which of the procedures indicated in Q(1) was the most effective?. Tick ONE only
- Post () Radio () Newspapers()
- b. Why was the procedure you selected in Q(2a) the most effective?.
3. In the spaces provided below, describe briefly the activities that took place during residential sessions which in your opinion were beneficial to the graduates
4. Using the space provided below, give suggestions on how the Faculty of External Studies could improve the organization aspects of residential sessions in order to make them more beneficial to the External Degree Programme students.

SECTION D

- 1 (a) Did the Faculty of External Studies give study materials to the first graduates of External Degree Programme?
- Yes ()
- No ()
- (b) If yes to Q(1a) tick against the type(s) of study materials that the graduates received when they were in the External Bachelor of

Education Degree Programme

Study guides/units ()

Audio-taped lectures ()

Any other (specify)

- 2 (a) Did the graduates raise complaints in regard to the way study materials were delivered to them by the Faculty of External Studies?

Yes ()

No ()

- (b) If yes Q(2a), what were the causes of complaints by the graduates?

v

3. In the space given below, give suggestions on how the Faculty of External Studies could improve the system of issuing study materials to the External Degree Programme students.

SECTION E

1. Did the Faculty of External Studies expect you to give guidance and counselling services to the graduates when they were in the External Degree Programme?

Yes()

No()

2. If yes to Q(1) were you ever consulted by the graduates for guidance and counselling?

Yes()

No()

3. If yes to 0(2) why were you consulted by the graduates?-

4. In the space given below give suggestions on how the Faculty of External Studies could improve guidance and counselling services to the External Degree Programme students — —

sec n o N i

1. Did the Faculty of External Studies offer library facilities in the Regional Centres when the graduates were in the External Bachelor of Education Degree Programme?

Yes()

No()

2. In your own opinion were the library facilities helpful to the graduates if your answer to Q (1) is Yes ?

Yes()

No()

3. If your answer to Q(2) is No why do you think the libraries were not helpful to the graduates?

In the space provided below, give suggestions on how the Faculty of External Studies could make Regional Centres' libraries more helpful to the External Degree Programme Students.

Thank you very much for your assistance and cooperation.