

**AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE PROCESS AND MANAGEMENT OF  
DISTANCE EDUCATION IN KENYA: A CASE STUDY OF THE  
FACULTY OF EXTERNAL STUDIES, UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI.**

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## DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my Mother Clara Awour Aseey and My Late brother Joseph O. Onyango, the two persons whose love and support touches my heart.

## ABSTRACT

This study set out to investigate the process and management of Distance Education programmes of the University of Nairobi. The study also set out to look into problems, which are experienced in running distance education programmes. The variables included age, sex, academic qualifications, professional grade, work/teaching experience, and course module choices.

Pertinent data was gathered using a questionnaire. The research design was ex-post factors. The target population consists of 2474 diploma undergraduate students and postgraduate students. Random sampling was used to select respondents from a population of total of 2474 students and the target population was reduced to 50 students and 10 Course Administrators and 10 lectures involved in the programme.

The target population was selected from the eight provinces in Kenya to give the research work a national outlook.

The following were the findings of the study:-

1. There was gender disparity among students and the course administrators.
2. Majority of the people pursuing higher education through distance studies are over the age of 30 years.
3. Students support services are not so well managed.
4. Communication breakdown between the students and the lecturers, and the office was also realized.
5. Students were facing major challenges like non-syllabus rooms, lack of reference materials and constant closure of the University.

The following recommendation were made:-

1. More female students should be encouraged to register for distance studies programmes and to be employed in Administration.
2. Modern technology should be used for easier access to distance students.
3. Management of the course should improve to ensure students cover the syllabus, during closure they are not affected and reference material should be made available.
4. Ways and means of financing the distance studies programmes should be enhanced.

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

B.ED	-	Bachelor of Education
B.SC	-	Bachelor of Science
D.E	-	Distance Education
C.A.T	-	Continuous Assessment Tests
C.E.E.S	-	College of Education and External Studies
C.M.L	-	Computer Management Learning
E-LEARNING	-	Electronic Learning
F.E.S	-	Faculty of External Studies
H.E.L.B	-	Higher Education Loans Board
K.C.E	-	Kenya Certificate of Education
M.A	-	Master of Arts
M.ED	-	Master of Education
M.SC	-	Master of Science
P.G.D.E	-	Post Graduate Diploma in Education
S.P.S.S	-	Statistical Package for Social Science

# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.0 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Education has contributed a great deal to the natural development of both less and more industrialized countries for centuries. In underscoring the contribution of Education to National development the Government of Kenya (GoK) has been reviewing her education and training systems with a view to making them more practical oriented and relevant to the needs of the Kenyan society. In an effort to achieve this, the GoK replaced the 7-4-2-3 system of Education in January 1985. The concept of the latter scheme is aimed at responding to the challenges of national development and participation of the youth in development (GoK 1976, 1981, 1984, 1988, 1997).

The previous system was not toiling the students for the world of work. The Kenya Government, therefore, decided to revamp her Education system. The aim of the government was to ensure even educational development of the country and to reduce wastage through dropouts while at the same time offering opportunities to improve on the advances made in Education.

Any educational system owes its success to the level of financial investment, which determines its quality and quantity. The rate of increase of expenditure on education in Kenya is higher than the rate of growth of Gross National Product (GNP) ( GoK 1997 ).

Investment in Education represents more than 30% of Kenya's budget and continues to rise annually. This scenario is confirmed by GoK Expenditure on education which rose from 1003.53 in 1994 to 1321.57 in 1995 to 1480.94 in 1996 and to 1655.986 in 1997 million Kenya pounds (GoK 1994, 1995, 1996, 1997). This trend is likely to continue given on the provision of quantity and quality education to her citizens. Again the expenditure is bound to rise due to increase in the number of educational Institutions by about 4.2% from 39,207 in 1995 to 40,846 in 1996. This quantitative expansion of

Educational Institutions implies increased opportunities for learning and this calls for additional investment.

At the moment, universities Worldwide are undergoing a major transformation following the turbulent socio-economic changes taking place. The Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPS) and globalization, have placed great challenges to Universities which must explore strategies and use available resources to effectively respond to the challenges.

It is in this context that Distance Education which has been in existence for over 100 years has been found to be very useful due to it's ability to service large numbers of student at an affordable cost without constraints of space and time. Distance studies primarily serves those who cannot or do not want to make use of classroom teaching and above all adults with social professional and family commitments.

The last decade of the twentieth century has witnessed the introduction and encouragement of distance learning programmes by the Kenyan Universities as a way of providing opportunities for life long learning and access into higher education for mature studies. It also plays an important part in the local community, as it provides a focus for the University's presence in the regions the students came from.

Foreign universities are also given Kenyan Universities a run for their money as they have also introduced courses by affiliating with other colleges or having their own campuses in Kenya for example university of South Africa, University of London and many others.

The involvement of all these institutions of higher learning in offering distance learning programmes which has imposed a lot of treats to make others survive in the market.

The University of Nairobi distance learning programmes are currently undergoing a series of remarkable challenges that should be addressed

amicably hence the study focuses on the process and Management of distance Education programmes offered by the Faculty of External Studies.

The views and recommendations of this study undertaken would ultimately lead to productivity and performance of distance programmes as the managers will make more efficient utilization of available resources.

The (Koech report, 2002) further suggest that the programme needs to be expanded to reach many deserving and qualified Kenyans. It advises that the government should choose to invest further in the University of Nairobi College Education and External Studies that is already offering the programme or they should encourage the introduction of similar programmes in other public universities.

These includes the undertaking of concrete measures for sustainable funds mobilization and allocation ifor re-launching the educational broadcasting services with outreach to all areas of the country (recommendations 11.15)

The (Koech, report 2002) further recommends that the external degree programmes to be expanded to offer a wider range of courses and reach more people throughout the country. He recommended that alternative and continuing delivery methods at the university level should include parallel and external degree programs, which should accelerate progression where specially gifted students are allowed to take a shorter period through the summer schools where students may choose top continue with their programmes during the long vacation (Koech. Recommendation 11; 17,8.3)

Koech's report further recommended that parallel degree programmes should be encouraged and bridging courses be introduced in all post secondary institutions to enable more learners to qualify for higher education which in turn will be healthier for Kenyans human resource development for industrialization by the year 2020 (recommendation 11:19&11:20).

Despite all these initiatives, the Kenyan public universities distance and open universities planners and administrators need to know about the challenges that face the operation of such programmes at a university level. The subject of which is the topic covered in this study.

## 1.1 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Open and distance learning programmes which have been practiced for over 100 years has expanded dramatically as they are being recognized as an important vehicle to improve access to quality education unlike, in the past when distance education was seen as a peripheral mode of delivery of education at national and university level.

Unlike in the past when higher education was not so valued as a gateway to a better job, the scenario in Kenya has changed and the more educated you are the more chances you have of getting a better paying job. This has brought the demand for higher education so high that universities cannot have all the students who want higher education through the regular programme. Therefore distance and open learning which initially was a domain of Nairobi University has now expanded to other universities like Kenyatta, Moi University, Egerton and even private ones like Daystar are gearing to offer distance learning courses top competency among themselves and foreign Universities.

Though the distance and open learning programmes are gaining a lot of fame in Kenyan Universities, there are issues which need to be addressed to enable the programmes run smoothly especially at the University of Nairobi which attracts a larger number of students. The issues to be addressed are marginalisation since these are often seen as side business of the main agenda of the institution, they face under resourcing, no staff training and development plans, efficacy of staff as academicians double as administrators, as information providers and even cashiers in some cases, there is also lack of autonomy in decision making, administration of distance learning programs, fee collection.

This study was to investigate the process and management of distance Education programmes and how the issues can be harnessed to ensure, equity, quality and access to higher education to a big group of Kenyans who are need to make up missed or failed courses, special groups such as teachers, bankers needing upgrading and even (persons in special circumstances, such as prisons staff who want to benefit from the distant learning programme. In addition the study tried to investigate the various problems that are facing the distance studies programmes at the University of Nairobi.

## **1.2 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

Distance Education which is an alternative way of accessing higher education in both developed and developing countries has been considered as a peripheral mode of delivery of Education of national and University level in Kenya. No study has specifically targeted the process and Management of distance programmes in Kenya.

The purpose of this study was to investigate the process and Management of distance Education in Kenya with special reference to Faculty of External Studies at the University of Nairobi. More so, the study seek to provide information on how this programmes can be used to reach all students who are interested in studying at a specific time and place.

### **1.2.0 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

- a) The main objective of the study is to investigate the process and Management of Distance Education in Kenya, Faculty of External Studies of the University of Nairobi.
- b) To look into the problems, which are experienced in running Distance Education programmes of the faculty of External studies

### **1.2.1 SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES**

- a) To explore and establish how prerequisite information, can be used to help aspiring students make better career choices.

- b) To evaluate and appraise whether learning resources and communication services are easily available to the learners.
- c) To explore and determine whether the learners support system are effectively managed.
- d) To explore and determine whether Distance Education programmes are effectively managed at all levels.

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### 1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The research investigation was guided by the following research questions.

- a) How are the students guided to choose a particular subject and course in distance studies programmes?
- b) What measures are there to ensure learners that learning resources and linkages between them and the lecturers are available?
- c) How efficient is the learner support system in the Distance Education programmes?
- d) What are some of the constraints facing the management of distance Education programmes?
- e) How effective is monitoring and evaluation as a tool put in place for improving the quality of the Education offered?

### 1.4 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The result of this study will help evaluate and unearth what is happening in the Faculty of External Studies and to see the way forward in management of distance Education Programmes.

The results will also be used to expand distance learning programmes to include other areas like law, commerce, science and other courses which are currently not being offered, through distance Education.

The results of this study will be particularly of significance to the University of Nairobi as a whole, which is currently planning to have an open learning Center or College.

This study will help strengthen distance-learning programmes, which has been in operation in the world for over 100 years, and especially the University of Nairobi can use the results to improve on their mode of delivery to strengthen their stand against other public and private universities who are now giving them a stiff competition

Lastly this study will help improve Distance Study in Kenya since no scholar has done a study on management of distance Education in Kenya.

## **1.5 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

The limitations in this study are discussed as follows:-

First the time for administering research was minimal because it coincided with the researchers working hours.

Secondly there was no enough finances to go to all the eight provinces in Kenya where the distance learning centres and students are scattered.

Availability of relevant literature was also be a limitation as not much has been written on distance and open learning programmes in Kenya.

Another experience, was the administrators who were not readily available in their offices to answer questions or give information because of the nature of the work which involved a lot of traveling to other sub-centres and places.

Lastly the poor attitude, which people have towards distance studies, impacted negatively on the research because majority were not willing to give information or they didn't know what to say.

The researcher did not use triangulation in data collection technique where the researcher employs various data collection methods such as questionnaire interview, schedule, observation and document analysis (Murai, 1985).

There was a limitation in data collection since a questionnaire was used as the sole instrument.

## 1.6 DELIMITATIONS

The study was delimited to the faculty of External Studies, University of Nairobi which is only a small portion offering distance studies in Kenya hence the finding cannot be generalized for the rest of the country.

Secondly, some respondents were far and wide and took long before the questionnaires could reach them and returned back.

Third, a small percentage of the courses at the University of Nairobi were tackled as distance education is still limited to certain courses. This does not actually give a clear picture of the course at the University of Nairobi.

## 1.7 DEFINITION OF SIGNIFICANT TERMS

In this research the terms will be defined as follows:-

**Distance learning**:- is defined as the form of study not led by teachers present in classrooms but supported by tutors and an organization at a distance from the student.

**Distance education**:- is instructional delivery that does not constrain the student to be physically present in the same location as the instructor.

**Dual Mode:-** Is a case whereby an institution provides both Conventional Education and Open Learning at the same time.

**Evaluation:-** Means to assess the impact of an action in something, to be a project

**E- Learning –** Learning using the electronic media.

**External Studies:** - Refer to teaching off- campus students in courses leading to a formal qualification at the tertiary level..

**Learner's support systems:** These are the systems meant to help learners use institutional resources effectively.

**Management:** - Is a process aimed at the effective utilization of human and material resources to achieve institutions objectives.

**Monitoring:** Refers to watching the progress of an implemented or executed activity

**Open learning:-** is a term used in philosophized context to describe, for colleges with "open administration policies and offer face-face tuition or teach at a distance.

**Parallel programmes:-** programmes for self sponsored students running alongside regular programmes.

**Teleconferencing** - a communication device like a telephone connected to all the extra mural centers.

**Tutor support systems- collaboration:-**Information, which tutors need at different levels of involvement.

## **1.8 ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY**

The proposed study is presented under the following chapters; chapter one includes introduction to the study, statement of the problem, purpose, objectives and research questions, significant terms, abbreviations and organization of the study.

Chapter two consists of review of related literature, which revolves around development of distance education, the world perspective and the Kenya conceptual, and conceptual framework of the study.

Chapter three highlights the methodology adapted in the study, research design, sampling procedures, design of the study, instruments used, data collection and analysis procedures. Chapter four presents analysis of data collected and chapter five presents findings of the study, discussions, conclusions, recommendations and suggestions for further research.

## CHAPTER TWO

### REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

#### 2.1 INTERNATIONAL SCENE

Education strengthens levels of interaction and individual development that has significant benefits on innovativeness and creativity of a society. Experiences in the developed nations indicate that higher levels of Educational attainment tend to encourage adaptability and willingness to innovate which increases the chances of social, political and economic development. This supports the argument of Colclough (1980: ) that consumption and investment aspects of Educational expenditures have been familiar since the time of Adam Smith. Investment in Education has been necessitated by the desire to make people more productive by raising the quality of life. In addition to acquisition of knowledge and skills, education increases chances of success through proper management of time, upholding of societal norms and values. Commitment to duty, adaptability to change, creativity and innovativeness (Armitage et al, 1986): Colclough, Heyneman, 1984, Inkeles,1974). Also increased educational level in a society tends to reduce the number of children per household, raises life expectancy and lowers individual and regional disparities.

*Teaching and learning by correspondence is the origin of what is today called distance education. Correspondence education has been known for several generations, mainly as part of adult education, reference to what was probably correspondence education occur as early as the 1720's and to what was indisputably correspondence education in the 1830's (Battenberg 1971:44; Bratt 1977:161; Holmberg 1986: 6-7).*

As for both of these elements, media other than the written word became common and grew in importance, the term correspondence education was felt by many to be too narrow. In North America, independent study and home study have been used as competing terms. The same applies to external study of Australia and New Zealand, hence the name of the Australian and South Pacific External studies Association.

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 teaching of a supporting organization.

It is in this context that we say, the scope of distance education has developed enormously over the last decade. It has become an intrinsic part of many national education systems in both the developed and developing countries and an academic discipline in it's own right. It is seen as away of raising the quality of life of those who are already working, those who were not able to get education earlier on and others in special circumstances like the police, the army, in prison and others.

David Steward (1988) tells us that distance education, for long the Cinderella of the education spectrum, emerged in the 1970's and early 1980's as a valued competent of many natural educational systems in both developed and developing countries. The foundation of open universities, technology and in audio, video and use of computer based learning at a distance, have all contributed to the availability and quality of distance education programmes.

In anyway the success story begins with the foundation of the University of London in 1836. At first the University's functions were limited to the conduct of examinations and the conferring of degrees. Responsibility for teaching was vested in approved colleges or institutions and students who wished to sit for an examination had to follow a course of instructions in one of this. In 1958, however, this restriction was removed and anyone could be admitted for degrees studies provided they have passed the Matriculation Examination and paid the entrance fee.

The success story of United Kingdom open University which had an intake of 25,000 could only accommodate about half the students wanting to enter in 1971 and this had an immediate worldwide impact on educationalists and educational policy makers:

“A revolution in Education was proclaimed with appropriate hyperbole, buses were rented to cope with the international Jetset of Academic Pilgrims descending on Milton Keynes to watch the open University (OU) campus rising from the muds and governments of May political hues, noting an open University to be the educational equivalent to an airline to be the educational equivalent to an airline in terms of International status, sponsored similar projects for the people (Daniel and Shroud, 1981:147)”

In the International circles, it is believed that the Distance Education Units (DTUs ) have a permanent place as future providers of University level education. We do not believe that they are Universal panaceas for the problems of higher education, although we think that they can be successful. A product of adult demand for access to university-level education, they are well suited, to their purpose, providing adults with materials of excellent standard which can be studied flexible and if necessary, independently at the higher education level. Most of them have gone even further. Given the potential of their teaching systems, they have embraced the concept of community service to provide materials at various educational levels. In so doing, they are recognising not least the potential of their systems of vehicles for educational provision, but the diverse needs of their adult clientele. David & Shroud (1981)

Keith (1999) says the Extramural and correspondence education developed after a time lag once railways were in place more lecturers could move about courtesy of cheaper means of transport.

Distance education since then, grew linking broadcast, and correspondence grew, after another time lag with the coming of educational television.

Distance education originally was a tool for helping Universities reach beyond campus. However, newer technology has made distance education an important tool for bringing learning resources onto campus and for sharing resources among campuses. Government has invested in open and distance learning for a mixture of reasons, including educational access, equity and responding to the demands of the labour

market or their expectations about economic competitiveness. The emphasis of the last decade has not so much been on the establishment of new institutions, though Bangladesh and Tanzania are important exceptions, but upon quality, upon new tasks for higher education, and up costs and funding. Keith (1999)

At present, the Distance Teaching Units are largely print-based, although they are exploiting other media. As new technologies like satellite broadcasting cable television, cassettes, and interactive computer terminals are developed and introduced at reasonable price levels, so the Distance Teaching Units will, we believe, take advantage of them. They will do so because they are already pre-disposed to do so. In the long run, we see them utilising electronic means of communication to provide individualized educational systems capable of giving rapid feedback to persons, who are a part of dispersed, heterogeneous student populations. Reville and Keith (1982).

To some extent, this is already happening, but we believe the next one or two decades will see technological advances which will enable the Distance teaching Units to develop the full potential of their systems. In the foreseeable responsive to the needs of adults facing the problems of a lifeline of rapid technological and social change in the twenty first Century as the Universities of the nineteenth century were in educating young adults to meet the challenges of industrial society. Greville and Keith Harry (1982).

Systems of distance education. Whereas the former develop courses for hundreds and thousands of students, the smaller-scale approach implies causing teachers to develop courses exclusively for their own student , so that the course author is identified with the tutor.

Holmberg (1990) says that despite the fact that sophisticated schools of the air and television series combined with classes are quite common in discussion of adult education in developing countries, distance education functions well in developing countries among both students who are strongly motivated and dedicated and those of more average educational indications who offer sufficient support services.

## 2.2 KENYAN PERSPECTIVE

Education arouses curiosity and provokes questioning – the challenging of old assumptions and established practices. An educated Ujamaa village, for example, will neither allow nor tolerate dishonesty among its accountants or authoritarianism among its leaders. An educated population will challenge the actions of its elected representatives including its president. Maybe this is why adult education is generally the Epitome of government departments, or why the functions are captured by newspaper, cinema and television owners and editors with a personal axe to grind. Nyerere (1976).

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The role of distance Education within the organizations that offer it and the ways in which it is provided and supported also vary. Two opposite general approaches should be mentioned as typical of well –known distance teaching organizations. That is large scale and small-scale organization systems of Distance Education.

Over the past two decades, universities in the Eastern and Southern African sub-region have faced numerous and profound problems which in turn have hampered the efficient delivery of quality education. Universities have found themselves struggling to keep a float in an environment where public and donors funding have been on the decline against the backdrop of increased student enrollment. This has put increasing pressure on universities to optimize the use of available resources and to mobilize additional resources. It is in this context that policy makers have lauded the introduction of self-sponsored and parallel students.

Distance studies or education which fails among the self sponsor students is seen as an alternative way of accessing higher education programmes which are being designed to be market driven. It also ensures that Kenyans get access to higher Education through a convenient way that is now easier to do with modern technology. Professor Saitoti had this to say,

“...the universities have responded to the growing demand for higher education through more efficient utilization of available resources and introduction of self-

sponsored / parallel programmes. However, it should be noted that, following the introduction of free primary education, the demand for university education will be even much greater in the near future...”

With these advantages, many universities in Kenya have started distance studies programmes and are offering as many courses as possible and with a good student enrolment. Coupled with foreign Universities offering distance studies, the student population is soon overtaking the regular ones, courtesy to the University of Nairobi who pioneered in offering distance studies.

The University of Nairobi distance learning which is the oldest of all in Kenya in offering distance studies traces its history to the first department of Extra Mural Studies founded in 1953. Under this department, the first resident tutor for Kenya was appointed in 1963 and given responsibility of organizing the Extra Mural department of the then University college, Nairobi. In the same year, the college of social studies, Kikuyu, which had run an independent centre for residential adult education since 1961, was absorbed into the University College, Nairobi.

In 1967 correspondence course was founded to offer Radio correspondence and Certificate in Adult Education then later Diploma was established. The three departments of the Institute were officially referred to as the Extra-Mural Division, the Adult Studies Centre and the correspondence course unit.

The Faculty of external studies has a long history dating back to the Kenya Commission of 1965 when the need for a degree course by distance teaching was first expressed. Any working parties have over the years made contributions to the possible structure and operation of the programme was a service department within the University of Nairobi. A feasibility study was carried out in 1976 with the assistance of Overseas Development Association (ODA) under the chairmanship of Dr. Lindsay Young who submitted a recommendation, which suggested that even a programme could be established under the Institute of Adult Studies, now College of Education and External Studies. However, due to financial constraints the report was shelved.

In 1983, the Institute of Adult Studies was accorded college status and become the college of adult and distance education following the recommendations of the inspection and visitation committee, which established six colleges of the University of Nairobi.

In September 1985 the government accepted the recommendations of the University council, which elevated the three divisions of the college into institute of Extra-Mural Studies. A new facility of External Studies was established.

In 1988, the college was re-organized, re-structured and renamed College of Education and External Studies (CEES). It has three faculties; The faculty of Education, faculty of social sciences and faculty of External Studies.

The faculty of External Studies houses the former Institute of Extra-Mural Studies, School of Distance studies and Institute of Adult Studies.

The first major advantage which applies to many Institutions, University of Nairobi inclusive is the fact that distance education, has provided away of recruiting more students and of shifting the balance of expenditure in education away from the state and towards the learner. For example the total University students population by the end of the academic year 2002/2003 is estimated at 80,141; of this total 55,200 have been in regular fulltime study while 24,941 were in the parallel or module two programmes. Sources from Higher Education Loans Board which is the main financier or regular students tells us that as a result of the poor performing economy, students loan allocations have had to be increased from 42,000 to 52,000. Compared to parallel or distance students who pay their own fee at a higher rate, distance education is still an investment to the university and a saving to the government coffers funding higher Education.

It is seen as a way of increasing access to education which is a necessary part in national regeneration, national development and economic recovery as Macharia (2001) puts it that distance education can come to the rescue and offer quality education at costs the nations and the learners can afford. From the statistics of Joint Admissions Board (JAB) 2001, 2002, 2003, only 11,147, 10966 and 10,947 were admitted in public universities. This forms about 6% of all Kenya Certificate Secondary Education (KCSE) students who attained university entry requirements. Therefore the remaining percentage has to look for alternatives and distance education programmes turns out to be one of the alternatives.

Teaching at a distance liberates the students/teacher inter-face from the straitjacket of the lecture hall or tutorial room. The student may learn when he wants, whatever the hour of the day or night, he may learn when he wants, he may learn at his own pace. Because of this 'freedom' allowed to the student learning at a distance, we might consider that teaching at a distance is inherently a mere individualized system than the conventional face-to-face method as far as the student is concerned, Stewart, 1988.

Macharia (2000) says that distance education has more flexible entry requirement as it includes bridging courses and accreditation of prior learning in universities that do so. Distance Education Institutions have flexible entry requirements. These include bridging courses and accreditation of prior learning in a more liberal manner than is currently available even in those conventional universities. Further, it enables a university to respond to the demands of the market in a manner not possible in a conventional university.

Distance education also increases access to higher education as it has the ability to handle much larger numbers of learners. Even smaller distance education programmes can still handle a larger student population than the conventional mode.

Distance education which allows affordable combinations of media like print, audio, television, online when properly organized gives the learner even more support than is

normally available to our on campus students who have to contend with large classes, ill-motivated lecturers, and shortage of library space and materials.

With a lot of technology being inserted in distance open learning, there is little in the way of consumer protection for the virtual student and there is a danger of an educational Gresham's law operating, enrolling on an electronic course available from foreign source, has little way of knowing whether the provider is legitimate or bogus or of assessing the quality of what is on offer.

Distance education can reduce the problem of dropout to acceptable levels, provided they establish a cohesive system. The characteristics of this cohesiveness are the correct pedagogical structuring of learning materials combined with extensive provision of student support services. There may also be a correlation between rather rigidly paced systems and unusually low dropout rates (Daniel and Stroud, 1981:157).

Keith. (1999) Says that there is a warning on the issue of culture as well as regulation materials and courses, offered through the new technologies are culture-Laden, they can threaten the indigenous Institutions of higher education which have grown in strength, stature, and service to their lost communities over the last quarter century.

The concern for quality is doubled edged, open Universities and dual mode Institutions offering flexible learning courses are concerned with purity of esteem between the distance and conventional mode whereby others believe conventional or regular is the best.

The distance Education programmes of the University of Nairobi is faced with a problem of drop out rates. Students drop out due to various reasons for example family chores, sudden deaths of spouse or anybody who is paying fee to the student or not ready to work hard academically.

The other challenge in University of Nairobi is the effectiveness of teaching and learning activities. More often than not learners do not get the printed units or cassettes on time.

Access to library is also a big problem as in most the distance students came from very far places some from remote areas where library (libraries) are not available hence they cannot do their assignment well or get books for reference.

Tutor counselors whose prime is to offer face to face support of a strictly academic and of an advisory/supportive nature really exists as the resident lecturers are usually too busy to counsel the students challenges continual.

Most of the staff either academic or administrative staff lacks skills and knowledge in the area of distance studies hence students problems are not handled properly. Again at the University of Nairobi, the staff employed to handle distance studies programmes are few hence delay in various areas of the programme. Like in printing reading materials, production of cassettes, sorting out students addresses and giving out students assignments.

HIV/Aids scourge is a major challenge to distance studies programme as some students die in the process or loose their spouses or friends and at times the school fee provider. This can lead to drop out.

The cost of distance learning is also escalating hence many (especially the target groups) are not able to afford and reduces the number of those who can afford the course. For example at the university of Nairobi, a post graduate Diploma in Education costs Kshs. 100,000 as compared to their counterparts Kenyatta University who are offering it at a cost of 79,000. This puts the Nairobi University programme at risk of loosing students.

The issue of accommodation is also a problem at Nairobi University as in most cases the students are moved from one institution to another during residential sessions.

Rooms is also a problem in the case of classes as the lecturers are conducted in crowded rooms and at times students do their work, while standing.

Macharia (2000) tells us that distance studies should be encouraged at all levels at the University. He says that Vice Chancellors must rise above the expected opposition at senates and other high levels at the university. He says that Vice Chancellors must arise above the expected opposition at senates and other high level decision making bodies to enable distance studies to thrive and blossom.

Kamau J.W, (2003) says that distance and open learning programmes need monitoring and evaluation to ensure quality of support offered to learner. Seeing from the trend of education at the moment distance education is seen as taking route in most institutions of higher learning and if well monitored can offer quality Education to Kenyans.

With the economy biting much on people, majority are likely to resort to other means of getting education, so distance has a bright future since most people are working and would not want to have their working atmosphere interfered with.

Kenyans have a lot of responsibilities so distance education which is slightly cheaper than the conventional mode can cater for a big household as they will be learning and doing other things at the same time.

Distance studies as research has revealed can provide a complete educational programme for both children and adults quite independent of other systems. It has its own didactical structure and it's own quasi-industrial administrative procedures needed for national educational systems.(Keith 1999).

## 2.3 SYSTEMS THEORY

Systems theory arose in the nineteen fifties as critique of classical theories which ignored the relationship between organizations and its environment. Efforts of understanding organization systems gave birth to system theory. It takes a holistic view of the centers organizational system and stresses process.

Bateman and Zerithal (1993) defined a system as a set of 'interdependent parts that process inputs'. The system theory recognizes that organizations do not operate in a vacuum. Factors in the environment come to play to affect their day to day running.

The theory states, a system is composed of parts (sub-systems) all of which are interdependent. Together these parts make the whole. Anything affecting one sub-system affects the others. The factors affecting the system came from within a sub-system or the external environment. The system receives inputs which it processes into and output and back to the environment. The system receives feedback from the environment and alters or makes change.

Owen (1987) in analysis of a systems approach states that one must change the whole systems and not parts. That any significant change in a sub-system will provide a compensatory change in the sub-system. So this theory is applicable in Distance Studies because a change in one part of the system will affect other systems. For example if electronic learning is introduced, many students will assess the information through their computers.

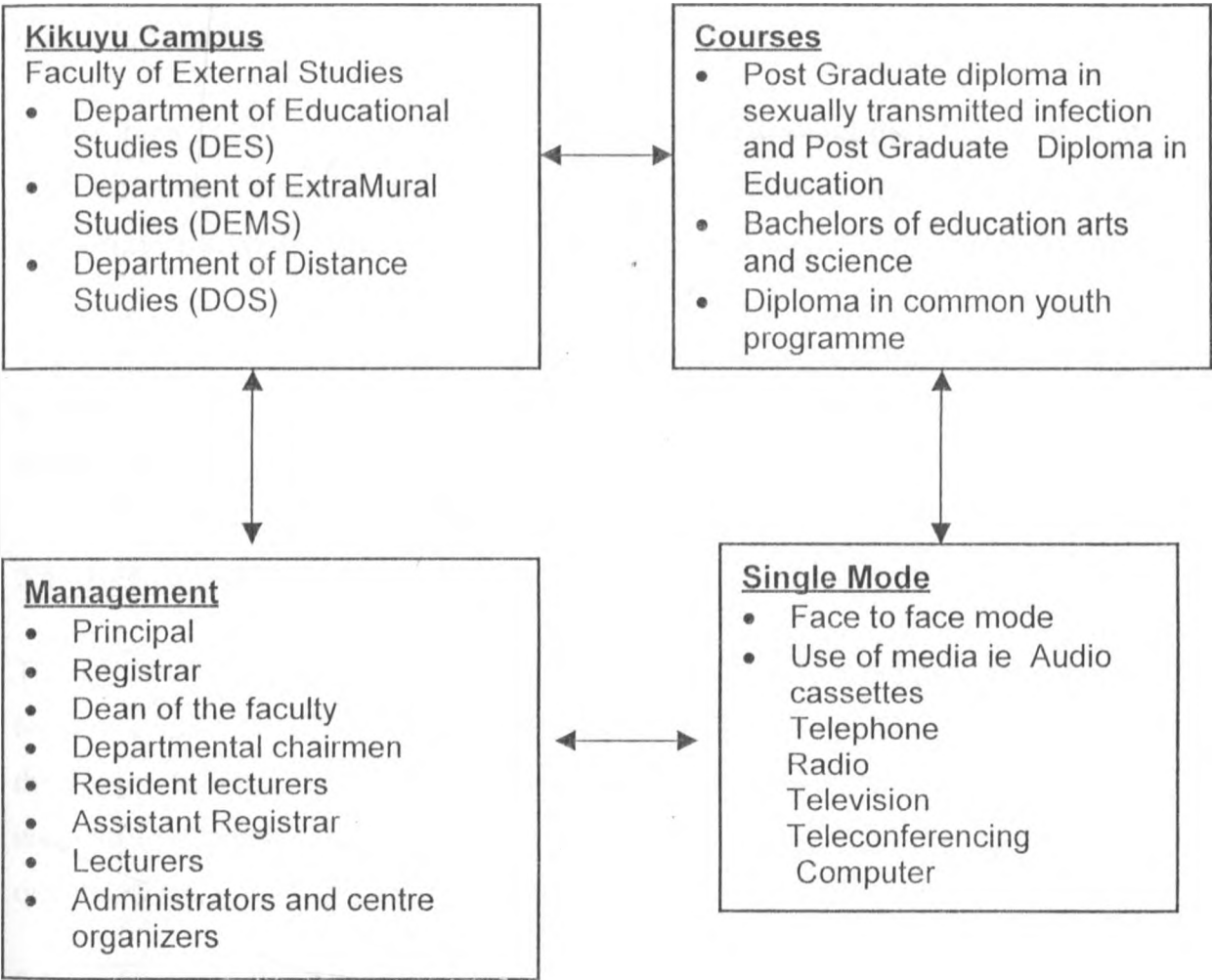
## 2.4 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The process and management of distance education is influenced by several features which include general management, student and lecturers involvement in running the programme and the various student support services which are available or should be made available for running the course.

If all these instruments and persons do not work as a whole, then distance education cannot succeed as another mode of access to higher education

Table 2:1 Conceptual framework

Conceptual Framework of the process and Management of distance education at the University Nairobi is discussed as follows:-



The conceptual framework is an adaptation of Holmberg , (1971 ) system of distance education, which are necessary in distance studies. The conceptual framework is based on systems theory.

# CHAPTER THREE

## METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

### 3.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter describe the methods and procedures that was used in collecting relevant data and how it was analyzed.

IT also present the research design, that was used to meet the objectives of the study. This included research setting, population, the sampling and sampling design, data collection instruments and procedures and also data it was analysed techniques.

The purpose of the study was to investigate the process and management of distanced studies programmes at the University of Nairobi and look into the problems that face those programmes.

### 3.1 RESEARCH DESIGN

The study sample was selected randomly from all the stakeholders at the University of Nairobi's Faculty of External Studies. A convenient random sample was selected from the target population. The design was selected for the study because the researcher was not in a position to manipulate the variables of the study like age, sex, academic qualifications, grade and experience.

### 3.2 TARGET POPULATION FOR THE STUDY

Study target key involved the faculty of External Studies Programmes that included the diploma course students, diploma students and Bachelor of Education students. The course administrators and the lecturers were also questioned.

**Table 3.1: Table and Target Population**

Population	Population Size	Population
Course administrators of the program	19	0.8%
Lecturers (FES)	80	3.2%
Post graduate Diploma Students	60	2.4
Bachelor of Education Students	2200	88.9%
Diploma Course Students	115	7.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>2474</b>	<b>100%</b>

### 3.3 SAMPLING DESIGN AND PROCEDURE

Random sampling method was used for the purpose of gathering the required study information such as a sample was convenient due to the anticipated limitation of the study.

A total Sample of 70 respondents was targeted as presented in the diagram below: The sample size has been specified by use of a table of determining the sample size from a given population random numbers was Isaac and Michael, (1987).

**Table 3.2: Sample Design Table**

Sample	Size	Percentage
Course Administrators	15	21.42%
Lectures (FES)	10	14.29%
Diploma course students	10	14.29%
Bachelor of Education students	25	35.7%
Post Graduate Diploma students	10	14.29%
<b>Total</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>100%</b>

The study tried to avoid variations in the study respondents results by making the sample size difference (minimal), as course administrators 14% Lecturers 14.29%, Bachelor of Education Students 35.7%, Diploma Course students 14.29% and Post Graduate students 14.29%

### 3.4 DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS

The study used both primary and secondary data. The primary data was sourced from the faculty of External studies through action-oriented approach whereby the researcher herself is an employee of the faculty of External studies, which deals with distance e studies.

Other sources of primary data included resource persons in the distance learning programmes, Administrators such as Extra Mural coordinators, departmental chairmen, Resident Lecturers, the Dean and the Principal.

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These sources were deemed necessary for the study in that they offer a thorough review of existing literature of the subject and facilitate comparison between the existing literature (secondary data) and the actual information in the field (primary data.).

### 3.5 VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY OF THE INSTRUMENTS

To assess the clarity of the instrument items, its validity as well as the language used in the instrument, a pilot study was conducted on the target population. All the instruments were tested. The students, lecturers and course administrators who participated in the pilot study were categorized. After filling the questionnaires, the items were discussed with them and adjusted to suit the study. This was done to bring clarity in the main study.

Following the results of the pilot study, the researcher was forced to alter some of the items in relation to the objectives of the study.

### **3.5.0 DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURES**

A survey pilot was conducted at the Nairobi Extramural center in order to test the appropriateness of the research instruments and procedures.

The study adopted questionnaire as the major tool for data collection. The principal investigator did the entire process of data collection. The study also utilized documentary (secondary) data from the libraries to supplement the primary data.

Relevant data collection instruments, questionnaire and interview schedule was designed according to the research variables and after survey; necessary revision was made on these instrument before a final instrument was drafted.

#### **3.5.1 VISITS**

The researcher took time to survey the sample target population for familiarization with their diversity and location. This was done through visits to all the six Extramural centers and the College of Education and External Studies (CEES) faculty of External studies to see how the records are kept.

Finally, the actual fieldwork was done by administering the questionnaires and observations, to all the sampled people involved in distance studies.

#### **3.5.2 RETRIEVAL OF INSTRUMENTS AND DATA PROCESSING**

The administered questionnaires and interview schedule was collected within a reasonable time. In case of any default, follow-ups were made to ensure that higher response is received. Reminders were also sent to extreme case of delayance in remitting the questionnaires. It was anticipated that four weeks were adequate for the respondents considering their geographical diversity. Two did not return the questions but the ones filled represented 99% return rate.

By the use of observational method, the required information was collected directly by the researcher. Some were in areas where interview schedules cannot be administered. As such only questionnaire were sent to the respondents.

The collected data was summarized edited and tabulated, for the purpose of making the collected data readily available for use.

### **3.6 DATA ANALYZING PROCEDURES (TECHNIQUES)**

Based on the data collection instruments, it was observed that the data collected was both qualitative and quantitative. Descriptive and judgmental opinion was used to analyze the authenticity of the qualitative data.

After the various test a measure of relationships was done through the use of Grammar, Phi and Pearson correlation co-efficient was applied.

For the descriptive purpose, tables were used. Other study textual data was analyzed through qualitative data analysis.

Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was available tool used in analyzing – data to come with qualitative conclusion.

# CHAPTER FOUR

## DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

This section presents the information compiled from the mass of the data collected. Sampling, classification and analysis of data was done in order to come up with clear, understandable, up to date, genuine and reliable information aimed at achieving objectives of the research study.

This section presents Interpretation.

**Table 4.1: Demographic characterization of respondents**

Sample	Sample size	Response sample	Response percentage
Course administrator	15	15	22.06
Lecturers	10	10	14.70
Diploma course students	10	10	14.70
Bachelor of education	25	25	36.76
Post graduate Diploma student	10	8	11.76
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>99.98%</b>

The table indicates that the response rate was very good and adequate for good results because it is about 100% of the sample size. These gave reliable information after the study.

The demographic characterization respondents consist of the stakeholders at he faculty of External Studies who are in one way or the other involve in Distance Studies programmes.

**Table 4.2: Sex distribution of respondents**

Description	Male	Female
Course administrator	Unknown	Unknown
Lecturers	6	4
Diploma course students	6	4
Bachelor of education	18	7
Post graduate Diploma students	5	3
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>18</b>

The analysis shows that there is unequal sex distribution between men and women. The number of men pursuing higher education is almost twice the number of women doing the same. This clearly shows that majority of women only stop at secondary education. This is clearly gender inequality even when looking at the lecturers, it seems men are preferred more than women or men are willing to lecture than women.

**Table 4.3: Age distribution of Respondents**

Description	Age				
	41+	36-40	31-35	25-30	18-20
Course administrator	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
Lecturers	5	4	1	-	-
Diploma course students	1	3	4	1	1
Bachelor of Education	4	5	10	2	4
Post graduate Diploma	2	4	1	1	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>

The information show that majority of people pursuing higher education are over the age of 30years. It seems that people realize the importance of education as they grow slightly towards maturity. Majority are between the age of 31-40 with those at over 40 years outnumbering those below 30 years. This shows that majority either delay while undertaking other courses or even some go to school late and they complete secondary Education in mid twenties. The outcome could also mean that people delay to join higher institutions of learning due to unknown reasons beyond the scope of this study .

**Table 4.4: Academic qualification**

Description	LEVEL					
	IV	VI	Diploma	Bachelors	Masters	PHD
Senior administrator	2	8	1	4	-	-
Lecturers	0	0	0	0	2	8
Diploma course students	4	1	3	2	-	-
Bachelor of education	15	7	3	-	-	-
Post graduate Diploma	-	-	2	6	-	-
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>8</b>

The data above indicate that Lecturers are the most qualified because majority have PHD with only 2 having masters degrees. It was also noted that senior administrators are also academically qualified and 8 have A level certificate and about 4 possess a bachelors degrees and 1 has Masters .

It was further observed that majority of people undertaking Bachelors degree and diploma have only form four education except for those doing post-graduate who possess either a diploma or a bachelors degree. Those with Diploma and doing postgraduate have other minor qualifications and a number of years of experience and they are over 40 years old.

**Table 4.5: Professional qualifications and occupation**

Description	Teacher	Lecturer	Agronomist	Accountant	Others
Senior administrator	-	10	1	1	3
Lecturers	-	10	-	-	-
Diploma Course Students	8	-	-	-	2
Bachelors of education	20	-	-	-	5
Post graduate diploma	3	2	-	-	3
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>13</b>

The outcome indicates that majority of the sample population are professionally trained teachers followed by lecturers and others in various specialized fields. This shows that may be they are further striving to gain knowledge and skills to improve their career path or advancement. Others like lecturers are pursuing self esteem and need fulfillment goals.

**Table 4.6: Knowledge about courses offered.**

Description	Friend	Former student	Media	Internet	Others
Diploma student	6	1	2	-	1
Bachelor of education	10	2	13	-	-
Postgraduate diploma	5	2	1	-	-
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>16</b>		<b>1</b>

This shows that the most active way through which people become aware of the Distance Studies programmes is through friends. Others knew through the media, hence it is necessary to intensify media campaigns and advertisements. None of the students got information from the internet. This signifies that either we have not realized the importance of internet technology. We cannot afford internet hence we are not accessible to its services due to high levels of poverty few are aware or our society is ignorant about the internet.

**Table 4.7: Reasons for doing the course.**

Description	Skills Knowledge	Payment	Promotion	Career development
Diploma students	6	1	2	1
Bachelors students	09	10	-	6
Post graduate	1	4	2	1
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>8</b>

The data analysis observes that people at Diploma level have an objective of achieving knowledge and skills because they are under-qualified but a few want to be promoted. It may be that they are working.

Better pay is also another reason for doing various courses for example in the case of Bachelor of Education and Post graduate Diploma in Education, the clients are mostly inclined to do the course to get better pay.

Career development is also vital for doing the course since the findings from Bachelor of Education respondents showed that they are interested in career development.

At Bachelors degree level, majority are after better future career skills and knowledge are also factors in doing the course. It could be that their major employer is Teachers Service Commission but it pays graduates better hence influences their coming to do the course

The move is total opposite at post graduate level because majority are taking the course to improve their pay package or go for greener pastures elsewhere.

**Table 4.8: Professional Experience**

Description	No. of years			
	1-5	6-10	11-15	16-20
Senior administrator	-	1	5	9
Lecturers	3	6	1	-
Diploma Course Students	4	2	2	2
Bachelors students	20	3	1	1
Post graduate diploma	-	1	2	4
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>16</b>

Table displays that Administrators have worked for many years with the university probably because of fringe benefits and their low levels of education does not necessitate staff turnover.

It seems that high mobility of labour is prevalent with lecturers because they do not have many years of experience, only one has been with the faculty for 11 years with a few between 1-5 years.

It was moreover realized that people at Diploma and Bachelors level do not have many years of experience, majority have five years with few who have even between 16-20 years but are still thirsty for knowledge.

Probable at post graduate level people want to meet their self esteem and actualization level that is why with many years of experience, they are still eager to read.

Generally many people have between 1-5 years experience followed by 16-20 years. This shows that need for education and knowledge is continuous and never ending and equally important as during earlier years.

**Table 4.9: Time students come to class**

Description	Time				
	Evening	Day	Holidays	Weekends	Others
Diploma student	6	3	1	1	-
Bachelors students	-	-	20	-	-
Post graduate	0	-	8	-	-
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>-</b>

This shows that most of the students are engaged in some employment may be as teachers/lecturers and can only afford to come to class during holidays. Probably that is the reason why they chose distance learning. Weekends was only favoured as convenient time for coming to class by 1 student.

**Table 4.10: Availability of teaching space.**

Description	Not available	Available	others
Diploma students	-	10	-
Bachelors students	-	25	-
Post graduate	-	8	-
Lecturers	-	10	-
<b>TOTALS</b>		<b>53</b>	

This table outlines that all the stakeholders agreed unanimously that teaching space is available.

**Table 4.11: Lecturers availability/class attendance**

Description	Readily available	Comes late	Misses	Others
Diploma students	3	3	4	-
Bachelor students	14	9	2	-
Post graduates	1	3	2	2
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>2</b>

Its only the Bachelors degree level and majority lecturers are readily available, attend classes in time but for the other courses, lecturers have a habit of missing classes or coming late which affects syllabus

This affects syllabus coverage because of time lost.

**Table 4.12: Resource material availability**

Description	Available	Not available	Others
Administration	15	-	-
Lecturers	10	-	-
Diploma Students	10	-	-
Bachelors Students	20	-	5
Post graduate	5	3	-
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>

The table shows that majority of the respondents agree that reference materials are available. Five (5) Post Graduate Diploma students agree that the materials are not available.

Reference material is a major issue in distance learning because it is the main source of study in the dual mode which the faculty of External studies uses in the distance studies programmes.

**Table 4.13: Fee payment procedures**

Description	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
Diploma students	-	4	5	1
Bachelors Students	-	20	5	-
Post graduate diploma students	-	5	3	-
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>1</b>

Majority consent that the mode and procedure of fee payment is fair although others say its good.

**Table 4.14: Fee payment problem**

Description	Yes	No
Diploma students	8	2
Bachelors Students	20	5
Post graduate diploma students	7	1
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>8</b>

The table above shows that; majority feel that fee payment is a problem and even complain that its very high. Fee problems also bring about the issue of dropout as students drop out because they cannot afford the fee

For some fee payment is not a problem because their organization pay for them. This was mostly realized among the Post Graduate Students and the Diploma Students.

**Table 4.15: Audio cassettes**

Description	Yes	No
Diploma students	-	10
Bachelors Students	20	5
Post graduate diploma students	-	6
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>

It seems that majority of audio cassette material is provided to those doing bachelors degree course. Considering that audio cassettes is a major component of distance learning, it should be made available to all students.

**Table 4.16: Rating of C.A.T'S and Exams**

Description	Very Poor	Poor	Good	Excellent
Diploma students	1	4	3	3
Bachelors Students	2	3	17	2
Post graduate	1	-	7	-
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>5</b>

Majority of students rate the way examination is conducted as good but a few feel that its the most poorly rated unlike C.A.T.S.

Postgraduate unanimously agree that the Examination is conducted well.

**Table 4.17: Rating of Services rendered**

Description	Very poor	Poor	Fair	Satisfactory	Excellent
Diploma students	-	-	3	6	1
Bachelors Students	1	3	20	1	-
Post graduate	-	3	4	1	-
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>1</b>

It shows the services rendered are fair as per the views of the majority even though few felt its very poor and even others say its poor.

Students support services is a major component of distance studies or distance education hence should be good at all levels.

**Table 4.18: Preferred mode of study**

Description	Regular	Parallel	Outreach	Distance
Diploma students	-	-	-	-
Bachelors Students	7	15	1	2
Post graduate	-	-	-	-
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>

The table indicates that the Bachelor Degree students prefer regular and parallel courses than External degree.

Parallel could be a preferred mode of study because it is shorter and face to face. Others prefers regular because they will be exempted from office work to concentrate on their studies.

Distance may not be a preferred mode because, it takes long, the residential sessions are at time held in a pleasant places and the agony of traveling every holiday leaving your family and others chores could be inconveniency.

**Table 4.19: Provincial distribution by number**

Description	Bachelors programme
Western Province	4
Nyanza Province	7
Rift Valley province	3
Eastern province	2
Central province	2
North eastern province	2
Coast province	3
Nairobi	2
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>25</b>

The table shows that the highest number of students pursuing the bachelors degree are from Nyanza followed by western then Coast, Rift Valley, Eastern province and North

Eastern and Central Province have the smallest number of students. This calls for marketing in all the provinces to create awareness to interested clients.

**Table 4.20: Years worked for external studies**

Description	Age			
	0-2	3-6	7-12	15+
	3	8	1	Non

The findings shows that; majority of the lecturers have stayed in the programme between 3-6 years this is adequate for them to understand the needs of the students.

**Table 4.21: Student understanding of the course**

Description	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good
Diploma students		1	8	1
Bachelors Students		6	3	1
Post graduate		8	1	1
<b>TOTALS</b>		<b>15</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>3</b>

The ratings are observed from the lecturers perspective majority of who agree that the level of understanding is good at diploma and undergraduate level. At Post Graduate level it is fair. This findings shows that either the courses are poorly taught or duration for taking them is inadequate.

**Table 4.22: Comparison between regular & distance studies**

Description	Regular better	Both the same
Lecturers	8	2

This table above shows that lecturers rate distance studies students lower than the regular arguing that regular perform better than distance. This could be attributed to the fact that regular students have enough time to study and do research unlike the Distance Studies Students.

## **4.2 QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS AND RESULTS**

### **4.2.1 Distance and open learning for solving Education issues.**

There is an escalating urge for higher education. The administrators said that the two systems that is distance and parallel are aimed at helping students who were left out in the regular systems in one way or the other to get higher education. Either they all appreciated the two programmes that they are very important in balancing and giving equal opportunities in the urge for higher education. A few argued that the system for controlling and checking standards in distance learning is the major problem but they agreed distance learning has helped a lot in solving the urge for higher education for majority of Kenyans left out in regular system or those who were busy in one way or the other to study earlier.

### **4.2.2 Year distance learning started and people trained**

The administrators gave different and conflicting ideas on the year and number of people trained so far. Four respondents said, the programmes started in 1960, others said it started in 1960 and 1962 but the remaining argued that it was in 1962 and 1986, but majority agree that it was in 1960's. This calls for more findings on the exact year distance studies at the university of Nairobi started.

The respondents also conflicted in giving the exact number of people trained so far by giving varying numbers ranging between 890, 4,000, 6,000-7,000, 8,000-9,000 respectively. They all agreed in one that the first course was a certificate in adult education and the distance programmes of University of Nairobi were adapted from Makerere University.

### **4.2.3. Constraints in the course**

The major constraints from administrators was that they wanted the programme computerized, they also said that making and sending study units, cassettes is becoming expensive.

They also cited minimal staff number in the faculty, financial problems, negative attitude of the society towards distance studies, lacks rooms due to increasing number of students and lack of support and commitment by the necessary stakeholders.

#### **4.2.4 Staff treatment/Lecturers**

The staff felt that the programmes make money hence they should be compensated well for their work.

The lecturers complained of poor communication between them and the faculty as normally reach them late

#### **4.2.5 Student challenges**

The researcher observed that the students do not always complete the syllabus in time. They also complained of reference books not available and the once available are outdated.

They argue that fee for the course is high hence they always do not meet financial requirements and are forced to overstay in one semester since they cannot continue or drop out.

The timetables are not planned properly hence too inconveniencing, cumbersome and at times makes the lecturers miss classes or even come late.

It was observed that the cost of school fees tuition and other direct costs should be reduced. The respondents cited the following recommendations.

- Reduce costs of the programme by reducing school fees.
- Give every individual a compulsory bursary to enable the students finish their courses.

- Improve the C.A.T's conducted at the extra mural centers.
- Give every individual who desires loans either from H.E.L.B or Bursary.
- Bring the tuition and study centres near the students
- Bring exam centres near the students.

There is an urgent need for better management of the distance studies and introduction of new technology to improve the quality of services offered.

Just like the students cited lack of continuous support from some lecturers. The lecturers said that the management/administration is only involved slightly yet their greater involvement could facilitate better management of the programme and even improve and trigger better performance.

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Majority of students take between 1 and 2 years to complete the normal post graduate diploma, however for the degree programme.

They take between 4 to 10 years to complete . The ordinary diploma students take about 1 year. All in all majority of the respondents say they joined the university between 1998 and 2003.

### Reading /Learning

It was observed that learning space is limited as the number of students have outnumbered the rooms available. The syllabus was also noted as congested and proposed that it be revised.

It was also observed that the course is managed well .The number of those who felt that its fair and good are more than those who felt it is poorly managed.

But a few students, observable from postgraduate diploma argued strongly that its poorly managed and needs to be improved to compete with the demand for higher education in Kenya.

### **Synthesis of the findings**

The study which carried out an in-depth investigation of the process and management of Distance Education programmes of the University of Nairobi discovered that majority of students in Distance Education are mostly men, the administrators are also mostly men and even the lecturers. Therefore gender disparity is a major finding of the study. This calls for more females to register for University courses and more in management. They should be considered to strike a balance and encourage other females to aspire for higher education.

The findings also showed that majority of the people pursuing higher education through distance studies are over the age of 30 years. This justifies the major characteristic that distinguishes distance and Open Learning from conventional education. Distance education is "open access" to education not condition – it is about admitting non traditional students which is key to democratization of education in Kenya. Karani (2004) says that "Admission policy should therefore, take the issue of ' open access' and democratization of education into account while also keeping, in view the quality requirement standards.

The study also found out that students support services are not so well managed although in distance studies sufficient and effective learner support system like access to advise and counseling, tutors contact sessions, learning and library resources, materials delivery mechanism and administrative and professional support is highly essential.

It was observed during the study that the courses offered at the faculty of external studies are facing communication breakdown problem, from the recruitment to the final stages. This is realized because modern facilities like internet, email, fax or the web is

not available to the students nor the lecturers for easy communication and faster responses.

The issues of staff development also come up as it was realized that most of the staff managing distance studies are trying with very little expertise and resources. The researcher found out that majority do not have enough expertise to handle all the chores allocated to them. They are required to perform duties like collecting fee, Counselling students, keeping students data and lectures records.

The researcher also observed the major problems that the students and administrators are facing like shortage of rooms, little time for syllabus coverage, unreachable residential venues, low pay for the university staff, lack of reference materials and constant closure of the University among others. These issues if addressed amicably can change the face of distance studies in Kenya to complement the regular studies which accommodates 60% percentage of students in the Public Universities in Kenya.

# CHAPTER FIVE

## SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

### 5.0 FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

It was observed that distance education is of paramount importance as it offers room and equal opportunity for every individual who wants to pursue higher education and it is even appreciated by both policy makers and stake holders, students and lecturers.

The mode of selection of students for the programme is fair as it is conducted through the Department, the Faculty, College Academic Board and Deans committee.

Generally it was observed that there are adequate resources and reference materials for the course. Majority of the students agreed that they are even provided with audio cassettes material and lecturers notes and guidance. About 85% agreed that the library has materials relevant to their study units. However, a few argue that in some cases like English courses, there are no reference materials. They also noted that the available literature is outdated and very scarce hence too competitive with the increasing number of students.

It was observed that there is a bright future for the Distance Studies Programmes because of the escalating demand for higher education in Kenya. And with the introduction of free primary Education, by the new government, the demand could be even be higher. The future is even brighter because the staff running the programme are highly qualified and in fact majority of them have PHD degrees except a few with Masters and the good thing is that they are of middle age, who are likely to work for more year before they retire. The majority of the administrators understands the needs of the students in the programme because they have stayed in it for between 3 – 6 years.

It was generally observed that teaching space is available but congested. Even the timetable and course management is fair. Although some students and lecturers argued that it is poorly planned and need to be improved in all aspects.

It was observed that major problems facing the lecturers are poor remuneration; little pay although with benefits, there is delay and moreover various challenges, on the side of transport costs and venues for classes which they feel are not centrally located in one point or planned in a manner convenient to lecturers and some students. This shows that lecturers are demotivated from qualitative analysis and there is likely to be high labour turnover and even absenteeism.

It was observed there is gender inequality between the ratios of men to women. The number of men is almost as twice that of women. This is evident throughout the sample size as from Administrators, Lecturers and even students. The same inequality when it comes to age because majority of people pursuing the programme are over 31 years. This shows that the University is not sensitive about affirmative action and gender equality.

It was observed that majority of students in the programme are working class, married and major objectives/aims for pursuing the course is to gain knowledge and skills, be promoted and increase their pay levels.

It was also observed during the research that fees payment is a major problem to students because majority argued that its too high. Others request for compulsory bursaries, better loan scheme which are automatic to everyone who needs reduced fees. They further argue that there is need for better systems and time schedule replanned.

According to the researcher it was observed that the highest demand for distance programme is in Nyanza province followed by Western Province, Coast Province, Central Province, North Eastern and Nairobi had a small number of students in the programmes. Rift Valley and Eastern Province have the fewest.

It was observed that the CATS are rated fairly done according to the opinions and views of all the students, the rating of examination supervision was observed as poor. They say that there is need to review the examination systems and mode of supervision.

The services rendered are generally fair but there is need for improvement considering the large number of students who have joined the courses.

## 5.1 CONCLUSIONS

The distance education programmes in Kenya has a bright future and is a good strategy for promoting equal opportunities in the education sector. However, there is need for participation and increased support from the administration who are involved in the running the programmes. Nevertheless there is need to invest in extra financial resources for computerization, increasing staff and creating open learning center.

The major financial challenge observed were fee payment by students hence need for a loan scheme and high fees that they propose reduction, bursaries and loan scheme.

There is also need to improve examining standards although the CATS are standardized and there also need to increase the number of classes to accommodate students, improve library facilities and general management, administration plus communication processes.

Efficiency in provision of student support services is vital in the whole of distance studies programmes because without Proper guidance the students can easily dropout.

Gender inequality is evident hence needs to be balanced. Lecturers lateness and missing of classes was evident hence should be discouraged to ensure syllabus coverage. All in all, the general management of services provided was fairly good.

## 5.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

Considering the escalating urge for education in Kenya which the regular programmes cannot cope with, distance studies should be encouraged and invested as it provides alternative way of assessing Higher Education. This is seen in fact that the Distance Studies allows students to study at there own pace, time and place.

In the case of finance, policy guidelines should address the question whether distance studies students should be given loans, bursary and scholarships on the course itself, capital investment in well designed courses and course material the cost of which is spread over a large number of students is cost effective. Computers, satellites, emails, internet is also another way to cut down the cost of running the Distance Studies programmes in Kenya.

At the University of Nairobi there is need to establish a center for open learning and distance studies to cater for all the courses and the University ensure that they are accessible to students wherever they are. This will make University Education available to aspiring Kenyans wherever they are.

Concerning the curricula and syllabus coverage, distance studies programmes should not be mediocre but should be able to address the extensive educational needs of the country, it is essential to put in place guidelines for identification and prioritization of knowledge, skills and attitudes of the target groups and expected outcomes.

Students support services in distance studies should be efficient, effective and reliable so as to vary with the consortium of technologies used by the provider, including access to advise and counseling, tutors contact sessions, learning and library resources, material delivery mechanism, and administrative and professional support.

## **Suggestion for further Studies**

Since the findings of this study are not conclusive, the following suggestions should be considered:-

1. The study should be replicated using other study, observation schedules or participating observation.
2. A study should be conducted on learner support systems to ensure proper and effective running of distance studies programmes in Kenya.
3. A study should be also conducted on Tutor support systems collaboration to ensure the lecturers' performance is greatly improved.
4. And finally a study on national policy on distance education or open learning in Kenya should be conducted to give the universities a way forward on how to operate.

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## APPENDIX I

Department of Educational  
Administration and Planning  
P.O. BOX 92,  
Kikuyu.

Dear Colleagues,

The attached questionnaires are part of a research study I am undertaking titled **“An Investigation into the Process and Management of Distance Education Programmes at the University of Nairobi.”**

Kindly respond to the questions based on your experience as a lecturer, an Administrator or a student at the Faculty of External Studies. The responses will be used to improve distance education at the University of Nairobi and other institutions.

The information given will be kept strictly confidential.

Yours Sincerely

**ASEEY ANNE A.**

## APPENDIX II

### QUESTIONNAIRE FOR SENIOR ADMINISTRATORS

1. Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_
2. Qualifications  
Academic \_\_\_\_\_  
Professional \_\_\_\_\_
3. Subject Area \_\_\_\_\_
4. Years worked for the University \_\_\_\_\_
5. Distance and Open learning are considered as a way for solving the escalating urge for higher education. What is your opinion on this issue?  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. How is distance education programme run in your college?  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. The year University of Nairobi started distance studies \_\_\_\_\_
8. First course offered \_\_\_\_\_
9. Students enrolment at the moment \_\_\_\_\_
10. Comment on the selection process of distance learning students \_\_\_\_\_
11. Resources used by the learners \_\_\_\_\_
12. Linkages between lecturers, students and administration \_\_\_\_\_
13. Distance learning has become very popular, what measures are you putting in place to ensure efficiency in the programmes \_\_\_\_\_
14. Constraints faced in running the programmes \_\_\_\_\_
15. Comment on top management involvement in the programmes \_\_\_\_\_
16. What is the future of distance studies at the University of Nairobi?  
\_\_\_\_\_
17. Challenges faced in distance education \_\_\_\_\_
18. Suggestion and recommendations \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX III

### QUESTIONNAIRE FOR POST GRADUATE DIPLOMA COURSE STUDENTS

This questionnaire is designed to gather general information about the process and management of distance studies at the University of Nairobi. Your answers will be treated **CONFIDENTIALLY**.

Please indicate the correct option as honestly and as correctly as possible by putting a tick ( ) on one of the options. For the questions that require your own opinion, please fill blanks.

1. Indicate your sex
  - (a) Male
  - (b) Female

Indicate your age in years

- (a) 41 and above
- (b) 36 – 40
- (c) 31 -35
- (d) 25 - 30
- (e) 21 - 18

3. Indicate your highest academic qualifications

- (a) KCE / EACE
- (b) EACE /KACE with diploma
- (c) Bachelors
- (d) Bachelors with post Graduate
- (e) Masters
- (f) Other specify

4. Year of joining the university \_\_\_\_\_

5. Course undertaking \_\_\_\_\_

6. Indicate the source you learnt about the courses from

- (a) Friend
- (b) Former students
- (c) Media
- (d) Internet
- (e) Others specify

7. Your current occupation \_\_\_\_\_

8. Reason for doing the course

\_\_\_\_\_

9. Indicate your professional experience

- (a) 1 – 5 years
- (b) 6 – 10 years
- (c) 11 –15 years
- (d) 16 – 20 years
- (e) Over 20 years

10. Time you come for classes
  - (a) Evening
  - (b) Daytime
  - (c) During holidays
  - (d) Weekends
11. Availability of Teaching space
  - (a) Available
  - (b) Not available
  - (c) Others specify
12. Lecturers promptness
  - (a) Very prompt
  - (b) Comes late
  - (c) Misses classes
  - (d) Others specify
13. Comment on the staff treatment of students
14. Availability of resource reference material
  - (a) Very available
  - (b) Fairly available
  - (c) Available
  - (d) Not available
15. Fee collection procedures
  - (a) poor
  - (b) Fair
  - (c) Good
  - (d) Excellent
16. Comment on the CATS and examinations given for the course
17. 

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Challenges you are facing while pursuing the course
18. 

---

Comment on the management of the course you are doing
19. 

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Comment on the lecturers use of instructional methods and resources.

## APPENDIX IV

### QUESTIONNAIRE FOR LECTURERS

This questionnaire is designed to gather general information about the process and management of distance studies at the University of Nairobi. Your answers will be treated **CONFIDENTIALLY**.

Please indicate the correct option as honestly and as correctly as possible by putting a tick ( ) on one of the options. For the questions that require your own opinion, please fill blanks

1. Indicate your sex
  - (a) Male
  - (b) Female
  
2. Indicate your age in years
  - (a) 41 and above
  - (b) 36 - 40
  - (c) 31 - 35
  - (d) 25 - 30
  - (e) 21 - 18
  
3. Indicate your highest academic qualification
  - (a) KCE (b) EACE /KACE
  - (c) Bachelors with Post Graduate
  - (d) Masters
  - (e) PHD
  
4. Year of joining the university
  
5. Teaching area / subject
  
6. Year you have taught for the faculty of External Studies
  - (a) 0 - 2
  - (b) 3 - 6
  - (c) 7 - 12
  - (d) 15 and above
  
7. How is the information requiring you to teach relayed to you
  
8. \_\_\_\_\_  
Comment on the time tabling of your subject  
\_\_\_\_\_
  
9. Student understanding of the course
  - (a) Poor
  - (b) Fair
  - (c) Good
  - (d) Very Good

10. Available of teaching space  
(a) Not available  
  
(b) available  
(c) other specify
11. Do you teach regular students?  
(a) Yes  
(b) No
12. If yes, compare the performance of the regular and distance students in examples
13. Is time allocated to you enough to cover the syllabus  
(a) Yes  
(b) No
14. How regular do you meet with your students  
(a) regularly  
(b) not so regularly  
(c) only during residential sessions  
(d) others specify
15. Comment on the payment of services rendered
16. Available of reference material for your course for the student.  
(a) available  
(b) not available  
(c) other specify
17. Challenges you are facing  
\_\_\_\_\_
18. Recommendations  
\_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX V

### QUESTIONNAIRE FOR BACHELOR OF EDUCATION STUDENTS

This questionnaire is designed to gather general information about the process and management of distance studies at the University of Nairobi. Your answers will be treated **CONFIDENTIALLY**.

Please indicate the correct option as honestly and as correctly as possible by putting a tick on one of the options. For the questions that require your own opinion, please fill blanks ( ).

1. Name of the institution  
School \_\_\_\_\_  
District \_\_\_\_\_  
Province \_\_\_\_\_
2. Sex: Male \_\_\_\_\_  
Female \_\_\_\_\_
3. Marital status: Single \_\_\_\_\_  
Married \_\_\_\_\_
4. Age  
a) 20 – 25 years  
b) 26 – 30 years  
c) 31 – 35 years  
d) 36 – 40 years  
e) Over 40 year
5. Academic qualification  
a) Form IV  
b) Form VI  
c) Other (specify)
6. Professional qualification  
a) PI  
b) SI  
c) Diploma  
d) Others (specify)
7. Year of joining the university  
\_\_\_\_\_
8. Course Undertaking  
\_\_\_\_\_
9. How did you come to learn about the distance studies programme at the University of Nairobi?  
a) Through a friend ( )  
b) Through a former student ( )  
c) Through the media ( )



18. How do you rate the services rendered to you by the faculty of external studies staff?
- a) Very poor
  - b) Fair
  - c) Good
  - d) Excellent

19. Benefits from the course

---

20. Preferred mode of study at the University of Nairobi

- a) Regular
- b) Parallel
- c) Outreach
- d) Distance

21. Comment on lecturer's use of instructional methods and resources

---

22. Comment on the availability of reading/reference materials for your course.

---

23. Problems faced

---

---

24. Recommendations for distance programme

- a) \_\_\_\_\_
- b) \_\_\_\_\_
- c) \_\_\_\_\_
- d) \_\_\_\_\_
- e) \_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX VI

### QUESTIONNAIRE FOR DIPLOMA COURSE STUDENTS

This questionnaire is designed to gather general information about the process and management of distance studies at the University of Nairobi. Your answers will be treated **CONFIDENTIALLY**.

Please indicate the correct option as honestly and as correctly as possible by putting a tick ( ) on one of the options. For the questions that require your own opinion, please fill blanks ( ).

1. Indicate your sex
  - (a) Male
  - (b) Female
  
2. Indicate your age in years
  - (a) 41 and above
  - (b) 36 – 40
  - (c) 31 -35
  - (d) 25 - 30
  - (e) 21 - 18
  
3. Indicate your highest academic qualifications
  - (a) KCE / EACE
  - (b) EACE /KACE with diploma
  - (c) Bachelors
  - (d) Bachelors with post Graduate
  - (e) Masters
  - (f) Other specify
  
4. Year of study \_\_\_\_\_
  
5. Course undertaking \_\_\_\_\_
  
6. Indicate the source you learnt about the courses from
  - (a) Friend
  - (b) Former students
  - (c) Media
  - (d) Internet
  - (e) Others specify
  
7. Your current occupation \_\_\_\_\_
  
8. Reason for doing the course \_\_\_\_\_
  
9. Indicate your professional experience
  - (a) 1 – 5 years
  - (b) 6 – 10 years
  - (c) 11 –15 years

- (d) 16 – 20 years
- (e) Over 20 years

10. Time you come for classes

- (a) Evening
- (b) Daytime
- (c) During holidays
- (d) Weekends

11. Availability of Teaching space

- (a) Available
- (b) Not available
- (c) Others specify

12. Lecturers availability

- (i) Readily available
- (ii) Comes late
- (iii) Misses classes
- (iv) Others specify

13. Comment on the staff treatment of students

---

14. Availability of resource reference material

- (a) Very available
- (b) Fairly available
- (c) Available
- (d) Very available
- (e) Not available

15. Comment on the CATS and examinations given for the course

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16. Problems faced \_\_\_\_\_

17. Suggestions and Recommendations

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