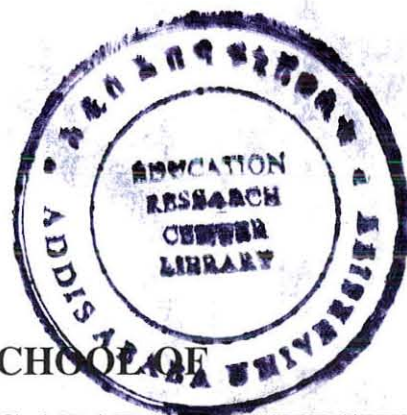
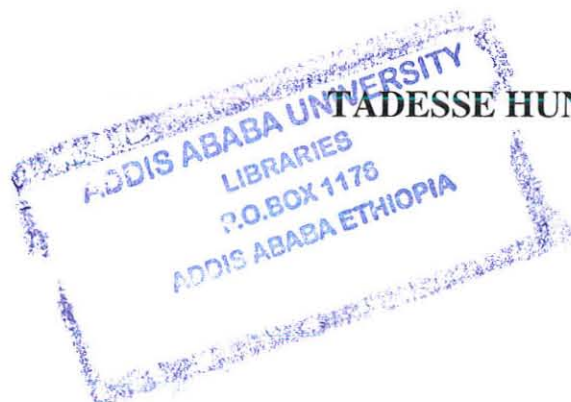


**AN ASSESSMENT OF PRACTICES AND CHALLENGES OF
DISTANCE EDUCATION IN ETHIOPIA: IN THE CASE OF
ETHIOPIAN CIVIL SERVICE AND ALPHA COLLEGE OF DISTANCE
STUDY**



**A THESIS TO THE SCHOOL OF
GRADUATE STUDIES OF ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY**

**IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT FOR THE REQUIREMENTS OF
THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS IN
CURRICULUM AND TEACHERS PROFESSIONAL
DEVELOPMENT STUDIES**



TADESSE HUNDIE ABDI

JANUARY, 2008




ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA

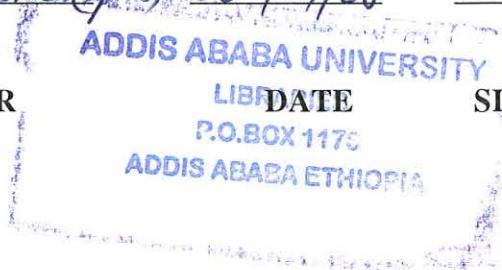
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List of Acronyms

AAU=Addis Ababa University

ACDS=Alpha College of Distance Studies

AUCDS=Alpha University College of Distance Studies

BESO=Basic Education Strategic Objective

DE=Distance Education

DEP=Distance Education Program

EMA=Education Media Agency

ESDP=Educational Sector Development Program

ETP=Education and Training Policy

ICDE=International Council for Distance Education

IICBA=International Institute for Capacity Building in Africa

MA=Master of Art

MEd=Master in Education

MOE=Ministry of Education

REBs=Regional Education Bureaus

UNESCO=United National Educational Scientific and Cultural
Organization

UNICEF= United Nation International Children's Emergency Fund

Abstract

The intent of this study was to find out the practice and challenges of distance mode of teaching. The study was conducted with reference to Ethiopian Civil Service College and Alpha University College of Distance Studies. The researcher made Awassa and Debre Brehan as the sites of this study.

A comparative case study method was used; questionnaires, interviews, observation and document analysis were employed for data gathering while learners, tutors, center coordinators and some documents were taken as sources of data. Then the collected data have been analyzed and the major findings spelled out. Accordingly, the distance education program has enabled adults to have access to education who otherwise couldn't join the higher institutions regular program due to various reasons.

However, during the conduct of the distance program many challenges such as lack of trained man power, absence of various learning materials, absence of close follow- up to meet learners' interest, learners' financial constraints and lack of transportation and inconvenience of tutorial centers were observed.

Finally, some important points of the study were summarized. And then the conclusion was drawn from it about the implementation of distance program. At the end some recommendations were made for observed challenges or problems of the distance program.

3.2 Methodology	26
3.3. Sources of Data.....	26
3.4 Instruments of Data Collection.....	26
3.4.1 Questionnaire	27
3.4.2 Interview	27
3.4.3 Observation	27
3.4.4 Document Analysis	27
3.5 Sampling.....	28
3.6. Data Analysis	29
CHAPTER FOUR	
Data Presentation and Discussion.....	30
4.1 Data collected from Students	30
4.1.1 Questionnaire	30
4.1.2 Interview	62
4.1.3 Observation	69
4.2 Data Collected from Center Coordinators.....	72
4.3 Data Collected from Tutors.....	80
CHAPTER FIVE	
Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations	83
5.1 Summary	83
5.2 Conclusions	85
5.3 Recommendations	86
References	
Appendix A-Questionnaire for Learners	
Appendix B-Interview Guides with Learners	
Appendix C- Interview Guides with Center Coordinator	
Appendix D- Interview Guides with Tutors	
Appendix E-Program Observation Checklist	
Appendix F-Tutorial Session Observation Class Room Performance Checklist	

Lists of Tables

Table 1- Learners jobs	31
Table 2- Learners fee payments	31
Table 3- Purpose of admission to distance learning	32
Table 4- Reasons why learners prefer distance mode learning	33
Table 5- Dispatching course materials	34
Table 6- Appropriateness of course materials	35
Table 7- Understandability of the materials	36
Table 8- Quality of distance materials of ECSC	37
Table 9- Quality of distance materials of ACDS.....	38
Table 10- Attending tutorial classes	40
Table 11- Frequency of attending on the tutorial program.....	41
Table 12- Reasons for not attending on the Program	42
Table 13- Significance of the tutorial Program	43
Table 14- Degree of learners' doubts clarified	44
Table 15- Learners and counselors (Tutors) time contact	45
Table 16- Learners' contact with necessary persons.....	46
Table 17- Means of communication with tutors\coordinator(s)	47
Table 18- Availability of multi media at tutorial centers	48
Table 19- Employing media in distance courses	49
Table 20- Extent of the efficiency of managements.....	50
Table 21- Degree of learners' problems in academic success	52
Table 22- Degree of hindrances for completion.....	54
Table 23- Extent of explanation help to achieve goals.....	55
Table 24- Provided Feedback.....	56
Table 25- Explanation given for unanswered Questions.....	58
Table 26- Adequacy of tutorial sessions	59
Table 27- Usefulness of comments given by tutors	60
Table 28- Administration contribution for success of DEP.....	61

Table of Contents

	Page
Acknowledgements.....	i
List of Acronyms	ii
Abstract.....	iii
CHAPTER ONE	
Introduction	1
1.1 Background of the Study.....	1
1.2 Statement of the Problem.....	3
1.3 Significance of the Study	4
1.4 Delimitation of the Study.....	5
1.5 Limitation of the Study	5
1.6 Organization of the Study	6
1.7 Operational Definition of Terms.....	6
CHAPTER TWO	
Review of the Related Literature.....	7
2.1. Concept of Distance Education.....	7
2.2. Historical Development	8
2.2.1. Distance Education in the World	8
2.2.2. Distance Education in Africa	10
2.2.3. Distance Education in Ethiopia.....	11
2.3. Managements of Distance Education.....	14
2.3.1 Planning Distance Education Program.....	14
2.3.2 Organization of Distance Education	15
2.3.3 Implementation of Distance Education.....	16
2.3.4 Functions Tutorial Center	20
2.3.5 Evaluation of Distance Learners	21
2.4 Role of the Concerned Bodies	22
CHAPTER THREE	
Research Design and Methodology	25
3.1 Research Design	25

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Education is the most important factor to change the world. It plays role by enhancing human mind to transmit his rich experiences and values accumulated over the years to the next generation. It plays pivotal role in creating friendship and intimacy among the people. It also helps to establish individual status in the society and to become an activate problem solver in social contexts. Education helps to develop scientific outlook in the fight against harmful practices. Education greatly contributes to the shaping of human mind and thereby helps improve, change, and carefully manipulate one's environment. This in turn helps to diffuse science and technology in the society.

Then, education and training policy of Ethiopia (1994:4) is founded on the demand for the contribution of education. It gives high emphasis to the role that education plays in solving social problems. Taking this major objective of education into consideration the education and training policy (1994:14) encourages the expansion of special and distance learning as complementary to conventional educational systems as a means to produce skilled manpower through in- service training.

Distance education is defined by many writers in different ways. For instance, Siddique (2004:1) says:

Distance learning is any type of education that occurs while location, time or both separate the participants. In distance learning the teacher, through the use of technology, delivers instruction to a student at separate location. The teacher then receives feed back either immediate or delayed from the student.

According to Siddiqu and other writers' views, distance education is the kind of education delivered when the teacher and learner are separate in space and time that underscores the importance of modern technology as means of delivering instruction to students. Keegan (1980) in Keegan (1996:44) also explains distance education using some elements .Such as:

The separation of the teacher and learner which distinguishes it from face to face lecturing;

- The influence of an educational organization which distinguish it from private study;
- The use of technical media, usually print to unite teacher and learner and carry educational content;
- The provision of two way communication so that the student may benefit from or even initiate dialogue;
- The possibility of occasional meetings for both didactic and socialization purposes; and
- The participation in an industrialized form of education which, if accepted, contains the genus of radical separation of distance education from other forms with in the educational spectrum.

As these elements indicate that technical media plays important role in distance education in facilitating the way to imparting the lesson. Distance education began 150 years ago. It was known by different alternative names such as:” *correspondence studies, teaching at a distance, off campus study, open learning.*” (Keegan 1996)

In thirty- four Africa countries there are 157 institutions have been conducting distance education because conventional education cannot accommodate all school age children and adults due to resource and trained manpower constraints. This indicates the role of DE to overcome the shortage of trained manpower. That is why Manjulika and Reddy (1996:183) underscore its possible or actual implication for Africa:” *no continent has as great a need for distance education to extend access to formal education, although most public institutions have often been severely constrained by lack of finance and man power*”.

Distance education has been practiced in Ethiopia since 1940s. Yalew (2004) says that distance education began in early 1940s to upgrade the level of primary school teachers without taking them out of their work place. Teshome and Tilson (2001) take the history of distance education:”*back to 1967 when the MOE collaborate with AAU to establish a correspondence study under the extension Division of the University.*”

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Distance education is not a recent phenomenon in Ethiopia but it hasn't been given much attention for many years due to the lack of sound policies and strategies for its implementation side by side with conventional education.

The main objective of this study is to assess the current status of distance education practice and challenges in Ethiopia in the case of government and private higher institutions. It is not a recent phenomenon in Ethiopia as it has been practiced for more than thirty years in Ethiopia that traced back to 1967 (Teshome and Tilson 2003).

Teshome and Tilson (2003) identified some important prospective to conduct distance education in Ethiopia. These are: expanding access, improving flexibility of education, improving the competence of teachers, improving students learning, reducing educational costs, and strengthening capacity in the education and civil service sectors.

However, there are multidimensional hindrances to implement distance that include

- *Law status is given to distance education;*
- *Lack of awareness regarding the true potential of distance education one of the modes of delivering education to the masses. For example, policy makers, faculty members of higher education institutions and the public at large generally see distance education as inferior to regular programs*
- *There is acute lack of trained manpower in the field in most higher education institutions*
- *Adequate budget is not allocated to run distance education initiatives (UNESCO, IICBA News letter, 2003: 6).*

Manjulika and Reddy (1996:205) also point out more or less similar challenges that hamper the progress of distance education underscoring that there is.

- *lack of adequate finance;*
- *Shortage of communication and infrastructure facilities;*
- *No proper government policies;*

- *Under utilization of the range of audiovisual media available;*
- *Shortage of personnel in media course ware production;*
- *Lack of financial and academic autonomy (institution attached to conventional Universities);*
- *Above all skeptical attitude to words distance education with regard to quality of learning achieved; and*
- *Degree awards have lesser value and acceptability.*

The researcher attempt to find out practice, challenges and prospective of distance education in Ethiopia and to forward possible solution so that distance education is better implemented in Ethiopia. Thus, to achieve the already introduced objectives, the researcher has set the following basic research questions

1. What does the practice of DE in Alpha college of Distance Studies and Ethiopian Civil Service College look like in conducting the program? Why it practice in this way?
2. What are the major factors that affect the smooth implementation of DE in these institutions?
3. To what extent are the teaching materials accessible to learners?
4. Are there appropriate communication channels between the center coordinators, tutors and learners?
5. Are there necessary and appropriate teaching materials in sufficient amount?
6. What are the prospects of DE from the point view of the above mentioned institutions?

1.3 Significance of the Study

Nowadays, distance education has become more popular than ever before in both developed and developing countries because it creates learning opportunity for all people regardless of their educational level, age and economic status. This study is, therefore, believed to have the following significances.

1. It tries to raise the awareness of all concerned bodies (especially those who run distance education programs) to assess the challenges of implementing distance education and act accordingly;

2. The college officials, tutors, facilitators will have better knowledge of the core problems that hinder the quality and effectiveness of running the program;
3. It may also initiate other researchers to conduct further and detailed study on distance education; and
4. It may give chance for the colleges to share experiences and share their respective best practices

1.4. Delimitation of the Study

This study is mainly concerned with finding out the practices, challenges and prospective of distance education in Ethiopia with reference to *Ethiopia Civil Service College and Alpha College*. It tries to assess, the availability of learning resources, problems related to lack of qualified man power in running the program, the adequacy of support services provided for the learners, the means of communication between students and the institutions about the teaching materials and the mechanisms used to evaluate student's progress. The study focused on two study centers (Awassa and Debra Berehan) because they have large number of student population and because of their relative proximity to the capital city.

1.5. Limitation of the Study

The absence of adequate and exhaustive research conducted on the distance education program in the Ethiopian context restricted to relay on using the available few materials repeatedly as source of the study.

The full time working condition of the researcher also affected to work on the research fully; unwillingness of some private colleges for research purposes and lack of interests or carelessness of some respondents to respond for all questions which are given in questionnaire .And these situations affects the reliability of the results of the finding to some extent. In addition, shortage of finance was also the other problem encountered to include more centers and informants to make the research more comprehensive. The researcher overcame these limitations by using spare times exhaustively and by minimizing the numbers of centers.

1.6. Organization of the Study

The study has five major parts. The first part of the study is the introduction: containing the background, statement of the problems, objective of the study, significance of the study, limitations and delimitation of the study.

The second chapter of the study is the review of related literature which contains the concept and historical development of DE in Africa and particularly in Ethiopia.

The third chapter is theoretical framework of the research methodology, research design, instrument of data collection and data analysis, while the fourth deals with presentation and analysis of the data.

Chapter five is a summary, research findings and recommendations. This part focuses on the discovery of the research and the possible solution for already stated problem based on the results of the study.

1.7. Operational Definitions of Terms

Center coordinator-it refers to the person who is responsible to facilitate and control the delivery of the distance program at the center

Delivery system-is a way in which distance education program was provided to learners.

Distance education-is the teaching and learning process through print and electronic devices in the separation of tutors and learners.

Distance learning-is the process of learning at a distance from one's tutors and usually helps learners who are separated from their tutors in a distance.

Study center-refers to the branch office of the institution to conduct the distance program.

Tutors-are the persons who are employed to help distance learners by giving face to face tutorial program to solve their academic problem, evaluate learners' progress, advice and guide them.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

This part of the thesis deals with review of the related literature to the problem of study. It discusses issues related to background of distance education in world wide and in Ethiopia, the challenges faced during its implementation, the mode of delivery of distance education and its contribution in solving social problems by creating trained manpower.

2.1. Concepts of Distance Education

The term distance education was introduced recently. It was known by correspondence education for many years. Holmerg (1967) defines correspondence education as the instruction in which the instructor and the students are at a distance from each other and exchange the lessons by mail. The approach of teaching at a distance through written (print materials) gradually incorporates with different modern technologies like: telephone, computer and fax to teach at a distance. Then, this the term gradually replaced by distance education because of the change of one way of communication to two ways. Then, it has been defined by different educators in various ways. For example, Manjulika and Reddy (1996:3) define distance education as the system of education in which education is imparted to students at a distance. These educators mainly focuses on the physical separation of teacher and learner, and teachers and students meeting only for selected tasks such as counseling, giving tutorials or solving students' problems they faced in the course of their study.

Many specialists in the field(Holmberg,1981;Perraton,1991;Rowntree,1992) shared common views, they define distance education as educational process in which teaching and learning conducted at a distance in space and time communication through various media such as :print, telephone, fax, computer ,E-mail and the like.

Among these devices print materials are major learning materials that used as bridge to exchange ideas conduct teaching at a distance which has begun to be supported by electronic devices to make the teaching learning process more effective. World Book Encyclopedia (2001:238) explains that:

Distance learning is a process in which students learn by using resources that are far away from them, even in another city or country. The students gain access to resources, including the instructors by using communication technology. The technology may be as simple as printed materials by mail or as advanced as interactive conferencing by computer over the WWW

This explanation consists of many important points. The first important issue is the opportunity of the learner to explore resources that are far from them, even other city or country that can be used by the learners for academic purposes. This core gives more emphasis about the access of using communication technology for teaching learning process in order to make it more effective than traditional way of teaching because the modern communication technologies make situations easy to exchange messages between learners and tutors. These modern technologies also help distance learners to develop self learning or student center approach. The teacher role also changed from lecturing/direct teaching to guiding or coaching. In distance learning, the teacher, through the use of technology, delivers instruction to a student at a separate location that can enable distance learners and tutors to exchange ideas in real time by the use of two ways communication. Delling (1966) in Keegan (1996:57) explained it as planned and systematic activities based on supervision and provision of students through different media

Many scholars define distance education as the educational practice that conducting when teacher and learners are physically separated by time and location.

Generally, as already defined by many scholars DE is the kind of education that conducted in separation tutors and learners. The scholars state that modern media technology helps for effective implementation.

2.2. Historical Developments

2.2.1. Distance Education in the World

Different writers state that the introduction of distance education goes back about 150 years. Manjulik and Reddy (1996:165) explained that it has been found in Boston Gazette, 20 March, 1728. However, it became the most popular system of teaching since 1870 to 1970. In many parts of the world, it was well known by correspondence study. However, many scholars employed different others names for this terms. These others names include: home study, independent

study, off-campus study and Extramural system (Manjulika and Reddy 1996). These names changed to distance education were introduced since 1982 because the names used were not appropriate to represent the innovative mode of education. Manjulika and Reddy 1996: 3) state that many writers call it with different names for instance, Moore (1975) calls distance education telematic teaching, Delling (1976) distance study and the like employed in different parts of the world .

Due to the contribution potential of distance education, it got considerable attention. Because of the high demand for schools supply and change of new way of living (Sharma 2005).. Since many developing countries could not supply enough resources for education sector, countries were forced to search for alternative approaches that enable them to provide education reasonable expenditure and human resource because it was cheap in costs comparing with conventional education. As Sharma (2005:3) states:

Distance teaching attracts the economist because it uses mass production methods, which change the structure educational costs. With traditional classroom methods, the costs of education rise in proportion to the number of children being educated. When every thirty or forty children need a teacher and a class room, salaries and buildings swallow up most of an educational budge.

This indicates that DE is broadly accepted globally because of its relative minimum costs to implement education for large number of population. As the result, it has been distributed throughout the world as indicated below

Distance education of the 21st century couldn't be considered as alternative or supplementary education to assist the conversional education. It can stand by itself as new system of education to cover many parts of the world. Goel (2003) in Zenebe (2005:68) explains:

Distance education in the 21st century couldn't be considered as alternative to conventional system but a new stage in the evolution of education which recognizes the fact that in many situations, it is easier to transport knowledge to people than to transport people to the place of knowledge.

It is also well recognized for its student centered and flexible method of teaching compared to conventional education which is highly structured and mostly confined to lecturing method of teaching in the fixed place

2.2.2. Distance Education in Africa

As already explained, DE has many contribution for many African counties particularly because of the scarcity of resource. Many Africans could not send their children to school and they couldn't get educational opportunities. For this reason, many school age African children have lost the chance of attending conventional educations. Zenebe (2005:72) explains that in some African countries, distance education was started as crash (emergency) program to train or upgrade huge teacher population with an aim to supply qualified teachers for primary and secondary schools.

Distance education has been employed in the most of African countries to train teachers in sufficient numbers. As Sharma's distance education distribution in the world table indicates that distance education has been conducted in 34 African countries. This shows that it has been playing a significance role in widening education in Africa. Jenkins (1989) in Manjulika and Riddy (1996:183) states why distance education considered as a solution particularly for Africa that include to overcome lack of access to formal education, lack of finance and manpower and lack of necessary infrastructure and necessities.

Dodds and Glennie (1998) in Zenebe (2005:70) indicate the role of distance education in training young Africans as follows: "preliminary indications are that about 42% of all 1997 African students studying at universities are studying through distance education." This percent of African student's attending distance education can be witness that Africans are highly engaged in distance education programs.

The above factors give us clear picture of distance education programs potential in helping the people. It can provide knowledge, skills, etc for adults and young's students who haven't been got the chance of conventional education at universities, colleges' etc. due to the scarcity of resource and necessary materials. According to Arger (1990) in UNESCO-IICBA-News letter (vol. 5 No. 4 Dec. 2003:1) the contribution of distance education for third world countries enabled to avoid the opportunity cost of taking people out of their normal employment for training, reach a large number of individuals, democratize education, raise educational standards through the use of high quality materials and effectively and efficiently provision of education than traditional college and campus based educational system.

2.2.3 Distance Education in Ethiopia

The significance of education has been already stated in the background of this study. The objective of education is to change the world by enhancing the human mind. This major objective of education needs different systems to be fruitful and beneficiaries. This objective can not be achieved through conventional (traditional) system only because of resource and skilled man power constraints. These constraints limited the coverage of conventional education in Ethiopia. To overcome these constraints, Ethiopia has started employing distance education. Yalew (2004:131) states that “it began in early 1940s to upgrade the level of primary school teachers without taking them out of their work place”. Furthermore, Fisseha (2006: 9 -10) also suggests that at the on set of the 19th century, when Ethiopia government introduces formal education, the government was faced challenges of trained manpower to conduct this newly introduced modern education. This forced government to train the untrained teachers through distance education program for primary and secondary school teachers. Regarding to the historical development of distance education MOE :(1985) in (Teshome and Tilson 2001:20-21) states the following points:

The initiation of distance education in Ethiopia goes back to 1967 when Ministry of Education collaborated with Addis Ababa University to establish correspondence study unit under the Extension Division of the University. The main target of the unit was to develop senior secondary correspondence course for adults who were working in various ministries, factories and military organizations in general and teachers in particular.

This shows that DE has begun to train teachers for primary level and to upgrade teachers for junior and secondary schools. It was led by Addis Ababa University until 1976 under department of the extension division. Then the task of leading and organizing of the programs was transferred to the ministry of education under the department of adult and continuing Education, and later the Educational Media Agency (EMA). Although the initial development of the secondary correspondence course had taken place during the early years, it was not until 1978 that ministry made available six courses MOE, 1985) in (Teshome and Tilson(2001:20-22)

Sahelmariam (2004:27) also states in his MA thesis that the historical development of DE goes back to the late 1960s with intention of opening educational opportunities to those who could not be able to participate in the conventional schools (EMA 2003:2)

He explains that in 1968 the AAU and MOE signed agreement with Dutch. After two years in 1970, the Netherlands governments gave a short term scholarship for two Ethiopians. After coming back to Ethiopia, the trained Ethiopians began initiating some special courses to primary school teachers to upgrade their qualification and developing curriculum for of Amharic, English, Mathematics and Geography subjects.

After MOE took the leading responsibility in 1977with in two years, it widened the concept of distance education from primary to secondary education and achieved a lot of educational goals. As the result, the number of participants had increased from 1979 – 2001 that enabled to provide secondary education to over 13,426 learners found in various regions of the country (Sahelmariam 2004:28.)

By 2001, on top of its long- standing area of operation for secondary schools, distance provision started to provide teachers' education to over 21,000 primary school teachers at diploma level.

Similarly, Educational Sector Development Program (ESDP) 2002 also suggests that the total number of primary school teachers attending diploma program to upgrade their qualification through distance program was about 21,400. Ayalew (2003) also states that historical background of distance mode of education system in Ethiopia goes back to 1962-1964 when the Addis Ababa University of distance education division invited by the Dean of the Extension Division of Nebraska University ,America to help in designing courses for distance education. However, the promoting distance education failed because the designed courses didn't meet the interest of Ethiopians as the course was imported from Nebraska University IGNOU (2002) in Ayalew (2003:131).

In this historical development process , many measures have been taken to improve distance education program in Ethiopia comprises radio broad cast to schools to supplement and enrich the curriculum, a non-formal secondary level distance education program for out of school youth and adults. In addition, AAU initiated its first postgraduate distance education program in 1998 with two M.ED degree programs in education, one in educational management and administration and the other in curriculum development studies Tilson and Getachew (2003) in Ayalew (2003:131)

Distance Education program has begun flourishing after the introduction of the new Ethiopian Education and Training Policy (ETP) designed in 1994. ETP (1994:9) gives clue to satisfy the country's need for skilled manpower by providing training in various skills and at different levels. ETP indicates that conventional education only can not solve the problems of the country due to the lack of sufficient educational resources and the constraints of skilled manpower for different economic sectors particular for high demands of teachers' primary and secondary education teachers. DE was widely employed to over-come the shortage of primary and secondary education teachers. The education sector strategy (1994) indicates that the government gave due attention for distance education for those who live at the remotest area and for those who dropout from the school due to different problems.

Distance education has begun to show progress since the era of Ethiopia revolution. Since, then, AAU and MOE began working on the distance of mode teaching. However, due to the command education policy of the Derg, private organization could not take part in education sector that hindered the role of NGOs in the sector. After the socialist ideology overthrown and new education and training policy was introduced, the government encouraged the participation private institutions in education sector. Currently many government and private higher institutions are delivering distance education to the broad mass of Ethiopians who live in the remotest areas of the country. /

2.3. Management of Distance Education

Management has great contribution for effectiveness of any task. Longman English Dictionary (1987:636) defines management as:” an art or practice of managing of the business or money to achieve valuable results.” It includes the tasks like: planning, implementing, operating and evaluating (Shoemaker 1998:25) that has great contribution in the process of controlling the efficiency of the institution. It plays very decisive role in providing the necessary information that can help achieving the designed goals. Shoemaker (1998: 29) states that Planning, Clarifying, Monitoring, and Problem solving as basic characteristic of managing the work .The term management also defined as purposeful and wide coverage activities to obtain the concept of efficiency and effectiveness the goal of tasks achieved (Aspinwall, et al. 1992) while Drucker (1974) expresses as the art of doing things right' and effective.

Rumble (1992) in Fesseha (2006:14) defines it as the process of getting activities done efficiently and effectively. It plays role in making decisions on what to do and how to do it and checking that it has been done. Rumble clarifies four important functions of modern management as planning, organizing, leading and controlling. These functions basically play a significant role for effective and efficient modern management. Relating management conceptions to distance education, Dimmock (1993:2) states that learners' academic success or failure is based on the effective managements and dedicated leadership particularly from the principal of the school indicating that modern management is very necessary for success of distance education.

2.3.1. Planning Distance Education Program

Planning distance education has been taken many important strategies into consideration to direct distance education program effectively. Planning, according to Dash (2002) in Zenebe (2005:91) can be the application of the rational and systematic analysis to the process of educational development with the aim of making education more effective and efficient. As Dash indicates the main target of planning is to analyses the process of education to find out its strength and weakness. Relating to the idea of planning distance education, Zenebe (2005:91) explains it as critical activities for dealing with the present and future problems of social changes.

2.3.2 Organizing Distance Education

Longman English Dictionary (1978:728) defines the term organization as arrangement or planning of parts so as to form an effective. It means that well organized and planned distance education program has great contribution for success of distance learners. In support of this, Rumble (1992) in Fisseha (2006:15) also explains the contribution of organizing various tasks such as identifying the tasks to be done, deciding who does what, how the tasks are to be grouped, who report to whom, and where the decisions are made is indicator of effective DE program.

Planning as one part of management is important to understand what is going on and what will happen in the future World Bank (2000:1) explains the importance of planning in different educational organizations (institutions) as:

for managing budgets and finances ;or defining and reviewing institutional misled; for allocating human and financial resources among competing student

demands and markets; for selecting, appointing, training and monitoring teachers; for recruiting, registering and supervising students; for selecting and controlling materials productions systems;.

Planning also enables to guide distance education program and to conduct it in an effective way and also to save resources and manpower wastage. Fisseha (2006:14) also emphasis about the significance of planning in distance education it was stated as a means of achieving the intended goal. Effective distance education begins with careful planning and focused understanding of courses requirements and students needs. Hence, it includes defining the goals itself. Fisseha shows that effective result of distance education begins in the effective planning includes the setting up of basic strategies that would enables achieve the intended goals and predict problems that will face the program in the course of implementation.

UNESCO (2001) in Zenbe (2005:81) summarizes the significance of planning and managing distance education program says:

if distance education is planned carefully, managed wisely and employee's appropriate media, it has paramount significance in training teachers in its varied programs such as professional education, continuing professional development, and curriculum reform.

It is, therefore, clear that distance education can give access for many people if special attention is given to its planning and wise management.

2.3.3. Implementing Distance Education

Implementation refers as the actual use of money, materials, time and manpower in conducting the program. Regarding to implementation of distance education, Marew (2000) cited in Fisseha (2006:17) explains some important dimensions of implementation such as:

- change in material,
- structure /organizational structure,
- role behavior or knowledge and understanding
- Value internalization.

As Vertecchi in Ejeta (2005) explained that implementation in distance education regard as many activities are required to ensure regular communication with learners since they registered to distance program through dispatching material, correcting assignments, etc

The success of implementing distance education program can be noticed from different aspects of role-relationship between institutions, learner and tutors.

Course Material Dispatch

The dispatching of necessary materials for distance students' helps them to get enough time to read the materials. As already stated dispatching the necessary materials on time is one of the characteristic of effective management. Holmberg (1981:100) explains the significance of material distribution on the right time and place as follows.

To send study material on dates decided in advance without paying attention to individual students' needs seems to be counter productive, as then such a great number of course units can be amassed on a slow working student's desk that he feels frustrated and discouraged.

Holmberg states that due to improper way or delayed teaching material distributions particularly slow learner students highly disappointed and frustrated seeing piles of material. Thus, well preparation of distance teaching material alone can't bring the expected outcome in distance education unless it distributed on right time and place. In addition to this, on time distribution of material encourage the slow learner to practice the subject matter sufficiently.

Communication between Institution and Learners

Communication can plays decisive role in all economic sectors. Aggarwal (1995:343) explains it as:” *a process of exchange i.e. gives and takes of information by message. It is the means of sharing ideas between two bodies. It plays a vital role in teaching learning process.*”

The continuous communication between institutions and distance education program participants has great role for the success and failure of the program. Distance learners can be effective if they get sufficient support from concerned administration the supporting groups (tutors). This can be true when there is appropriate means of communication.

Holmberg (1981) recommend the two way communication between the distance learner and the institutions (superfine group) for counseling. One of the main possible ways of interaction with the their supporting groups (service) in facilitating their learning

The possible ways where learners need to get support service (institutions) is through correcting of and commenting on students' papers and the right tutor and necessary information should be provide with out delay (Holmberg 1981:10-1).

A tutor has crucial roe in checking the assignments of the students on time and send it back for the learner with constructive feedback as fast as possible because correcting their papers and sending them on time pedagogically advantage. These help learners for furtherer reading to score the better grade.

EMA (2002) in Fisseha (2006:20) suggest that due to various reasons most distance institutions took some months for getting the assignments checked and brought back to the learners. This happened due to the lack of effective communication among the concerned individuals. Holumberg (1981:83) recommends the significance of effective communication in distance education to: support students motivation and interest by contact with an encouraging tutor and counselor, support and facilitate student earning by having students apply the knowledge and skills acquired as well as by tutors comments, explanations and suggestions and to assessing students progress.

Delivering Method of Distance Education

Distance education has been delivered in different ways. The appropriate method of delivering distance education has direct relationship for effective implementing the distance education program. The different method of delivering distance education needs its own selection. Siddiqui (2004:2) Categories the delivery of distance education program in to four parts. 1. Printed Materials 2. Audio /voice/, 3.Computer, 4.Video have the advantages of developing learners self learning in distance education. These delivering methods of distance education can be used independently or in combination in distance teaching program. They help imparting the lesson very easily and effectively. Nettleton (1991) in Teshome (2001:8) summarizes "*radio, broadest television, non- broadcast Audio- visuals, face to face tutorials and students support services, and advanced technology including computers and telecommunications.*

Print

Printing has been played pivotal role in delivering the distance education. The term print includes the written materials like letters, textbooks or written assignments etc to provide basic foundation for learning.

As already stated print media may take different forms. Fisseha (2006:26) explain as:

*...workbooks, study guide, textbooks, reference manuals, maps, wall charts and others.
Print makes possible the mass production to develop the people learning by their own.
Print materials are very important to learn at home, in the working place and on the bus.
They don't need special equipments.*

Print materials have some draw backs in teaching at a distance. Teshome (2001) indicates some disadvantages of the print materials in teaching psychomotor skills, laboratory skills in sciences etc.

Radio

Radio is one of the most widely used electronic devices. Its waves travel through the air all in direction in a very short period of time. Teshome (2001) states the role of radio items of its coverage and low cost as second important behind print as a delivery medium for distance education. The radio coverage helps as to addition instructional delivery. Teshome suggests advantages of using radio in distance education. These are: radio provides access to learning to students who are removed by location or scheduling from conventional institution, radio offers to distance education opportunity for advertising instruction, providing variety, enrichment and motivation to students, and pacing the student's progress through course work, less cost studies have been done for radio than television, although those that have been done can firm that radio is cost effective and radio allows students to follow printed material at the same time the learner hears the broad cast. (Teshome 2001: 9).

Television

Television plays role in distance teaching by transmitting both sound and images. Aggarwal (1995:333) explains as that TV can be an important central media in providing formal and no-formal education to the masses. It has various advantages in disseminate the education from one

TV center to other different parts of the country. It gives chance to the distance learners to watch the various events to make the subjects more tangible. Furthermore, Teshome (2001:10) emphasis that television images can clarify hard to observe processes, show practical skills, reinforce learning through visual cues, and affect opinions and beliefs powerful images. Teaching through television in distance education helps to make the subject tangible and concrete

Audio Teaching

The term audio defines in different ways by many scholars. Longman English Dictionary (1978) defines the term audio as the recorded sound, usually that of human voice, and other sounds like (animals, musical etc) that relevant to learning. It plays role in distance learning because the audio materials don't need fixed schedule and time like radio. The distance learner can use them where ever he/she wants to use them. Rowtree (2000) in Fesseha (2006:27) explains the advantages of audio teaching in distance education as to make the teaching learning process more human and personal.

Video Teaching

Video is one of the modern technologies that now a day widely used to teach at distance. Heinch, et al. (1998:198) states it helps to transmit the knowledge in the form real life situation. It helps distance learners to make the lesson more concrete and easy to understand .Heinch recommends three technique of video teaching. These are: discussion (question and answer sessions, buzz groups , panel, discussions, debates), dramatization (role playing, skits, oral presentations) and projects(experiments, reports, exhibits, models, demonstrations, drawings, story writings bulletin boards, media production) (Ibid:216)

Motion and visuals can be combined in a single format so that complex or obstruct concepts can be illustrated through visual stimulation: video teaching is very effective if it used wisely for summarizing and reviewing concepts.

Computer

Computer is widely employed in teaching learning process Heinich, et al. (1998) indicates that computer provides virtually immediate response to student in put. It has both storing and manipulating the capacity of the information to serve many individuals simultaneously. Computer has various advantages in teaching learning process by combing different media like

still pictures, graphics and moving pictures as well as printed information. Distance teaching can be effective by using computer because it has the ability of recording, analyzing and reacting to student responses. Generally, computer encourages distance learners to guide their self learning.

Yared (2002:404) summarizes the relationship between media, Technology and distance education apparition of technology as follows:

...saying what he want to say his printed work book, then saying it again in sound on the radio, pictures, or television. This is not to mean that all students need them all but using all three helps ensure that every one gets his/ hers own best way.

The changing instructional media from one medium to another helps the distance learners to refresh their mind and eager them to learn more.

2.3.4. Functions of Tutorial Centers

A tutorials center holds the major responsibility of conducting distance education program. Manjulika and Reddy (1996:) states tutorial centers have the responsibility of conducting tutorials according to the time table, dispatching distance materials, counseling, collecting assignments and prepare the rooms for examination.

2.3.5. Evaluation of Distance Learners

Evaluation is one of the key instruments to get the necessary information to improve the quality of education. It helps one's to understand what is going on, to judge and to make decision Derebssa (2004:203) defines the tem evaluation as any means used to collect evidence of progress to ward desired learning outcomes; I evidence of what a student knows and is able to do. Evaluation plays crucial role in testing, appraising and judging learners academic achievements.

The process of the evaluation create opportunity to gather data to enable them to make decision to accepted, to change or to identify the strengths or weakness of the distances education program and helps to take measure to improve it. Similarly Rowtree (2000) cited in Fesseha (2006:18) defines evaluation as:” ----*the collection, analysis and interpretation of information about any aspect of a program of education and training, as part of are cognized process of judging its effectiveness its efficiency and any other out comes it may have*”. These definitions indicate that evaluation has plays significances role in providing the directions to get information about the

delivery of the programs and learners academic achievement .Generally, evaluation divided in to two parts according to its purposes and time of information collected. They are: formative and summative evaluations

Formative evaluation has great contributions to find out the weakness or the strength of distance education program while it has been conducting. Derebssa (2004:205) states that formative evaluation helps encompasses with activities to be improved an existing program. Evidence is shows that decisions can be made about how to receive program while it is being developed. That is, data are collected during the development phase of the program in order to modify the program be it is implemented.

As this, explanation shows that the higher institution which conducted distance education programmed through out the country should evaluated the program thoroughly as Derebssa's report shows that distance education program need day to day fellow up during its implementation because it gives feed back for concerned bodies to identify its strength and weakness. Formative evaluation plays great contribution to modify the program.

Nardos (1999:41) explains the significance formative evaluations and its techniques used as:

The formative evaluations are those which are continuously conducted at strategic times, periodically during students' active learning life. Usually the techniques used for this purpose are teacher made quizzes, tests, on with material like a chapter in a book or hand out, home work class works, essays, reports, projects, oral question etc.

The main point is, a formative evaluation happens continuously and they supposed to give information about distance materials and distance learners' progress. The results, of formative evaluations help teacher's tutors or distance program facilitators to advise and guide the students by giving appropriate feedback. Because of this, the continuous evaluation has made the students alert, attentive and hard worker during the program conducted. Hence, formative evaluations have great contribution for distance education progress growth and for learners to achieve the expected education goals.

Summative evaluation is the bind of evaluation that frequently happened after the program completed. Nardos (1999:41) defines that: it is the assessment at the end of a predetermined stage of schooling like at the end of a term, semester or year.

Summative evaluation is to assess the extent to which the program are academically effective. Information thus obtained is used for making the major decisions about distance education program and a distance learner deserves grade in his/her higher institutions.

The purposes of evaluation develop the effectiveness of distance education program role in producing the well trained man power by expanding the access of education.

Generally, evaluations provide evidence the evidence for distance education activities to give judgment to determine its quality through systematic study, collecting analyzing the gathered data in formation. English and Harris (1992) in Ayele (2006:21) recommend three things to be succeeded during our evaluation. These are: outlining clear purpose, gathering evidence and judgment.

2.4. Roles of the Concerned Bodies

Distance education could be valuable when all the concerned bodies equally take part. Wedemey in Kegan (1993) indicates the main bodies that are responsible to accomplish necessary tasks while the distance program is conducted. These bodies are: learner, teacher, communication system and something to be thought (learnt).

Role of Institution

The organization patterns of the intuitions to conduct distance education help to implement the program effectively. Ejecta (2005) state the duties and responsibility of the educational Media Agency (EMA) on behalf of the MOE, Regional Education Bureaus (REBS), Regional and federal colleges and Tutorial centers. In Ethiopia these intuitions have playing role in designing, implementing, disseminating, monitoring and evaluating the distance program.

Role of the Distance Learner

Distance learners can contribute their parts for the success of the distance education. Harry, etal (1993:15) states that distance student can play role to determines the when, where and how of his or her learning. It means that distance learners have the responsibility for his or her learning. Keegan (1993) emphasis the autonomy of the learner to structure and control the learning situation according to his/ her needs. This is called *self directed learners*. Vered in (1991) in Ejeta (2005:20) conclude that because of the significance of people's perceptions for behavior

and learning, it is most important for educators to consider those things that determine or affect human perception. The identifiable perceptual determinants here marked are: believes values, needs, attitudes and self- experiences. These shows that distance learners have the responsibility of playing vital role in the program.

Role of student support service

Distance learners usually work with the packages of distance teaching materials. However, the packages are rarely enough to give all necessary information due to various constraints in the materials. Because of this, distance learners need support. The lack of necessary assistance on the right time and place can discourage the learners. Tait (2000) in Tait and Mills (2003:58-9) categorized students support into: cognitive (supporting and developing learning through the mediation of the standard and uniform elements of course materials and learning resources for individual students), affective (providing an environment which supports students, commitment and enhances self esteem and systemic establishing administrative processes and information management systems which are effective, transparent and over all student friendly. These functions of student supports need some typical services. The provision of needed service include: enquiry, admission pre- study advisory services, tutoring, guidance and counseling services. Assessment of prior learning and credit transfer, Study and examination centers, and Library services .These services are encouraging the learners for their further reading. Reddy (1996:10) recommend three important criteria for effective support services. They are:

- *Open access to education with regard to enhance requirements, time constraint, geographical distances social and cultural barriers etc.*
- *Flexible learning i.e. widening learning choice over the content of the curriculum and the means by which it is delivered.*
- *Learner centered approach which promotes autonomy and self- reliance in the learners, what ever their age and ability and also improves the quality of the learning process. Therefore, courses are flexibly designed to meet individual requirements.*

Generally, the provision of effective support plays deceive role to achieve the objectives of the program and also it helps to minimize the number of dropout rates.

Roles of the Tutor

Tutor can play significance role for the success of distance program. Tait and Mills (2003:67) state the contribution of effective tutor as follow:

In distance education effective learning takes place when students process the material they have studied, and completion of assignments and assimilation of the tutors' responses to them is an essential part of this learning. This feedback and student led exchange, in which the teaching starts with the students work; it is individual tuition in the form of a dialogue between a single student and the tutor. Each student presents particular challenges and thus the tutor student dialogue has to focus on different things accordingly: for instance understanding the course, lack of appropriate skills required to demonstrate and understanding, lack of presentational skills.

This shows that tutors have multi purposes in the distance program. They help the learners by solving their academic problems, facilitating students learning, guiding, advising and giving constructive feed back. Tait and Mills (2003:67) suggest tasks of subject's tutors to facilitate students' learning. This is done through: sensitive and full commentaries feedback on students' assignments, being available on the phone or via email so that students can contact tutors for advise, introducing the key learning points of the module at the two residential schools associated with the module, and devising group and individual sessions to assist understanding of the module and maintain necessary contact with your students' tutor mentors.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1. Research Design

The main objective of this study was to find out the practice and challenges of distance education program in Ethiopian Civil Service College (government) and Alpha University College (private) institutions. Awassa and Debre Brehan centers were employed this study for their proximity and population.

For this study, the researcher employed the case study method. Koul (2006) explains the significance of case study in research as follows:

- 1) The case study attempts to understand an individual unity in-depth .It tries to understand the whole 'case' in the totality of its environment. Not only present status of an individual, but its past can be thoroughly probed.*
- 2) The case study often provides an opportunity for a researcher to develop insight into basic aspects of human development.*
- 3) The case study helps the researcher to observe events both within and outside the educational setting.*

Furthermore, Makinde (1994:204) also explained that case study helps the researcher to collect facts relating to individual educational history, home and community background deeply. Having this in mind, the researcher employed the case study methods of collecting information to respond to the stated basic questions. Qualitative research method employs to collect direct and first hand information. Kothari (2006) states that qualitative methods basically concerned with subjective assessments of attitudes and opinions respondents have toward the problem being studied. The researcher use this method to understand distance learners feeling toward program.

3.2. Methodology

In this study, the researcher has employed qualitative and quantitative to study the practice, challenges and provision of distance education in both government and private institutions. Denzin in Patton (1987) recommended multiple instruments that help to achieve right goal of case study. The researcher dominantly employed four types of data gathering instrument for the success of the study such as: questionnaire, interview, observation and document analysis.

3.3. Sources of Data

The study was conducted with reference to Ethiopian civil service and Alpha University Colleges. These institutions provide different courses in certificate, diploma and degree programs through distance education. The researcher prefers Awassa and Debre Brehan as a main site of this study due to the proximity of the centers to the capital city. Thus;

- The researcher believes that Awassa and Debre Brehan are thought better sites than others to obtain more number of respondents than other sites because of their high enrollment;
- Both institutions have center branches in these two sites. The researcher has selected the stakeholders who have great roles in the programs as the main sources of the data. These are coordinators of each study center; some selected learners who are third year diploma program students in different fields of studies were selected to provide information. The tutors are also considered as sources of data for this study. The tutors who are participating many times in tutorial programs were selected as informants because the researcher of this study considers that the rich experience of the tutors by itself has much contribution to gather necessary information required by the researcher.

3.4. Data Collection Instruments

The researcher employed multiple instruments to obtain valuable data for the study that includes: questionnaire, interview, observation and document analysis.

3.4.1 Questionnaire

Questionnaire is one of the most important instruments for data collection and also widely employed by many researchers Koul (2006:146) explains questionnaire as: " a device consisting a series of questions dealing with---social, educational; etc, topics sent or given to an individual or a group of individuals, with the object of obtaining data with regard to some problems under investigation ". The researcher of this study also employed questionnaire to obtain tangible information to respond to the basic questions. It has two types of questions which are closed and open ended questions. The closed type of questions give a maximum of five alternatives to the respondents to select one or more according to his/her feeling. The second type of questions included in the questionnaire were open ended type that thought to give more freedom for the respondent to write his/ her feeling about the program as broad as he\she can.

3.4.2 Interview

Interview is one of the commonly used instruments for collecting data. Kothari (2006) and Koul (2006) explained it as method of collected data through oral communication (verbally).This method of data collection helps the researcher for intensive investigation about the subject being studied.

It also plays significant role in data collection because it enables to get first hand information. In this study, structured and semi- structured interview were employed to gather necessary information from the learners, tutors and program coordinators.

3.4.3 Observation

It helps to gather necessary data from natural setting because some information can be obtained through practical activities. Kothari (2006:17) explains observation as:" without interviewing the respondents. The information obtained relates to what is currently happening and is not complicated by either the past behavior or future." It was conducted based on the guiding observation checklists.

3.4.4 Document Analysis

Documents that were supposed to provide the necessary information about historical background of the institutions in general; their establishment, location, population size, the total number of

the fields of the study, number of staffs and their qualification, the future plan of the institutions were consulted. Print materials like magazines and brochures, available in the two selected higher institutions were collected and supplemented to main data.

3.5 Sampling

The selected two institutions conduct the distance education program through out the country. But the researcher selected only two tutorial centers for this study. The main intention of the researcher in this available sampling method was selected to collect data from two different locations by taking respondents to investigate how tutorial classes are conducted in these two different regions. Accordingly, the setting of the research encompassed two geographical areas of the country. Debre Brehan is located in Amahara regional state, Northern Shoa. It is about 120 kilometers from Addis Ababa. Ethiopian Civil Service College uses Haile Mariam Mamo Senior Secondary School as the main tutorial center where as Alpha University College of Distance studies uses St. Silassie Church's compound as the branch office and uses the near by schools as tutorial centers.

Similarly, both institutions have tutorial centers in Awassa which is the capital city of SNNPR. It is about 274 kilometers from Addis Ababa. ECSC uses Awassa Betekihinet Primary School as the tutorial center where as AUCDS employee Tabour Junior Secondary School as the tutorial center.

In this study ECSC and ACDS third year diploma program students were selected because they have participated in distance education program since 1997 E.C. and they have acquired rich experience to cope up with the challenges they faced when the program was conducted.

For this study availability of sampling procedure was used because it was not possible to collect data from all participants at the same time at the given specific area. Therefore, the researcher decided to collect the data while the learners are working on exam and face- to- face tutorial programs. Their availability at tutorial center also depends on the condition of their job situation. This condition forced the researcher to employ availability sampling for data collection because it involves using what ever subjects are available to the research McMillan and Schumacher (1989) in Ejeta (2005:49) Because of this, the researcher planned to all 155 sixth semester diploma graduating class of both colleges. However, due to unknown reasons 21 distance learners were

not attending on the face to face program and only 134 questionnaires were administered for both colleges' participants; however, 10 respondents were not willing to give the questionnaire back to the researcher. Finally, 124 questionnaires were collected.

3.6 Data Analysis

As it is already stated above, the study basically qualitative and quantitative case study to achieve the intended objective the researcher employed various ways of data collection.

The data obtained using interview, questionnaire and observation were analyzed and summarized by using figures (percentage) and word expressions. The data obtained from documents were supplemented to the main interpretation. The analysis of data begins with providing background information of the institutions and their tutorial centers, based on information obtained from various sources.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION

This chapter deals with the presentation and discussion of the data collected from selected sources. The major objective of this study was to find out the practice, challenges and prospective of distance education in Alpha University College of Distance Studies (AUCDS) and Ethiopian Civil Service College (ECSC) higher institutions in producing skilled manpower through this program.

4.1. Data Collected from Students

4.1.1. Questionnaire

1. Respondents Profile

Regarding personal detail the researcher asked some related questions because, it helps him to obtain data about learners' age, sex, marital status, residence and professions. They play a great role to assess distance learners problems in their academic success.

From 124 respondents of distance learners, 76 (100%) of Ethiopian Civil Service College 63 (82.89%) of the respondents and out of 48 (100%) ACDS respondents 40 (83.33%) are between 21__40 age group. This shows that the majority in the respondents were young and adults. These participants will be qualified with different professions through distance programs to serve their country in different sectors. In terms sex distribution 70 (92.10%) of ECSC and ACDS 33 (68.75%) were males where as the rest were females.

It will be deduced from this that the majority of the distance education participants might have family burdens. This may inconvenience them during study, assignments and exam preparation. In other words, family commitment could negatively affect the overall academic performances.

Table 4 also shows that out of 76 (100%) ECSC respondents 36 (47.36%) of them live in urban areas and 40 (52.63%) live in the rural areas. Similarly out of 48 (100%) respondents of ACDS 23 (47.92%) of them live in urban areas and whereas 25 (52.08%) of them live in rural areas. It can be seen from these data in table 4 the majority of the distance learners live in rural areas.

Table 1: Learners Jobs

Institutions	Professions															
	Teacher				Police				F.W				Others			
	M	F	T	Per.	M	F	T	Per.	M	F	T	Per.	M	F	T	Per.
ECSC	21	3	24	31.58%	9	0	9	11.84%	5	0	5	6.59%	36	2	38	50%
ACDS	5	3	8	16.67%	10	0	10	20.83%	7	5	12	25%	12	6	18	37.5%

Key F.W. = Finance Workers; M=Male; F=Female

The subjects of this study were asked about their professions. As the collected data shows, out of 76 (100%) respondents of ECSC, 24 (31.58%) are teachers, 9 (11.84%) police, 5 (6.59%) finance workers and the rest 38 (50%) come from different professions. Similarly, out of 48 (100%) of ACDS respondents, 8 (16.67%) are teachers, 10 (20.83%) police, 12 (25%) finance workers, where as 18 (37.5%) of them from various professions.

As the data in table 1 shows although the participants are from different professions, a greater proportion is contributed by teachers. It is also learnt from the data that the majority of teachers study the subjects which don't directly related to teaching profession where as the others such as: police, finance workers and a lot others studied subjects relating to their profession.

Table 2: Learners Fee payments

Question	Intuiti- ons	Centers	Self finance fee- paying	Fully government
2.1. Who finances your education?	ECSC	Awassa	50	2
		DebreBrehan	23	1
		Total	73	3
		Percent	96.05%	3.95%
	ACDS	Awassa	15	4
		Debrebrhan	29	0
		Total	44	4
		Percent	91.67%	8.33%

Source=Researcher, Data 2007

The subjects were asked about who finances their education. The data shows that out of 76 (100%) ECSC and 48 (100%) respondents, 73 (96.05%) and 44 (91.67%) of respondents respectively are self-sponsors, only 3 (3.95%) of ECSC and 4 (8.33%) of ACDS respondents are sponsored by the government.

This shows that almost all the distance education program participants do not get any financial support from any direction. This lack of support coupled with other factors could be one of the hindrances that might affect the overall academic performance of the learners.

Table 3: Purpose of Admission to Distance Learning

2.2 Reasons for admission distance mode of learning	Institute	Center	1	2	3	4	5
		ECSC	Awassa	17	12	11	4
DebreBrehan			10	9	3	1	1
Total			27	21	14	5	9
Percent			35.53%	27.63%	18.42%	6.58%	11.84%
ACDS		Awassa	10	4	2	2	1
		DebreBrehan	7	6	4	8	2
		Total	17	10	6	10	3
		Percent	35.42%	20.83%	7.89%	20.83%	6.25%

Source=Researcher, Data2007

Key: 1 = Improve qualification so as to earn high pay, 2 = Acquire skill,

3= Seek other job, 4= Promotion, 5 = Academic interest

Table 3 shows the reasons why the learners prefer distance mode of learning. From 76 (100%) ECSC and 48(100%) ACDS respondents 27 (35.53%) and 17 (35.42%) of the respondents respectively indicated that they do so to improve their qualification and earn high pay, 21 (27.63%) ECSC and 10 (20.83%) of ACDS respondents respectively indicated that they joined it to acquire skill and to be competent in all aspects, 14 (18.42%) of ECSC and 6 (7.89%) of ACDS respondents explained that they prefer distance mode of learning to change their profession and to have other jobs and where as some of the participants to jobs promotion and to satisfying their academic interests.

This shows that the three most important reasons for their preference have to do with improving their qualification, getting better salary and acquiring skills.

Table 4: Reasons why learners prefer distance mode learning

	Institution	Centers	1	2	3
2.3 Why have you chosen, Distance mode for your study?	ECSC	Awassa	15	35	2
		Debrebrehan	9	12	3
		Total	24	47	5
		Per.	31.58%	61.84%	6.57%
	ACDS	Awassa	2	16	1
		Debrbrihan	14	13	2
		Total	16	29	3
		Per.	33.33%	60.42%	6.25%

Source: Researcher's data, 2007

1. Couldn't get admission in to regular college
2. Full time employment to join conventional college
3. Financially less expensive

As table 4 shows distance mode of learning was preferred by learners due to variety of reasons. Out of 76 (100%) of ECSC and 48 (100%) of ACDS respondents, 24 (31.58%) and 16 (33.33%) of respondents respectively said they did because of the absence of higher institution that conducts regular program in their areas. On the other hand, 47 (61.84%) of ECSC and 29 (60.42%) of ACDS respondents confirmed that they couldn't join regular program because of their fulltime working condition, where as 5 (6.58%) of ECSC and 3 (6.25%) of ACDS respondents prefer the distance mode of learning because it is financially less expensive.

To sum up, the majority of the respondents have joined distance education program because of their overcrowded working condition and lack of higher institutions where they live.

2. Course Materials distribution

In this part, the study examined about the dispatching, availability and adequacy of course materials delivered for distance program.

Table 5: Dispatching course materials

	Institution	Centers	Yes	No
3.1 Do you receive the course materials on time?	ECSC	Awassa	51	1
		DebreBrehan	20	4
		Total 76	71	5
		Percent	93.42%	6.58%
	ACDS	Awassa	13	6
		DebreBrehan	17	12
		Total 48	30	18
		Percent	62.5%	37.5%

Source = Researcher's data, 2007

The dispatching of course materials on time plays a pivotal role in the learners' academic success because they can get enough time to read their materials in detail. Hence, the researcher raised a pertinent question to find out information about the materials dispatch. From 76 (100%) ECSC and 48 (100%) ACDS respondents, 71 (93.42%) and 30 (62.5%) of them responds respectively indicate that they got the course materials on time, whereas 5 (6.58%) of ECSC and 18 (37.5%) of ACDS respondents expressed their dissatisfaction on material distribution.

As the data in Table 5 shows the majority students at ECSC collected their course materials on time. This indicates that Ethiopia Civil Service College is better in material distribution than Alpha College of Distance Studies.

Therefore, the concerned bodies of the colleges should pay attention to the dispatching course materials on time. It must also be emphasized that course materials cannot give enough knowledge only for the learners in the absence of additional reference materials. Rajput (1996) in Ejeta 2005:83) explained that the significance of the availability of learning resources as an integral part of the learning process.

3. Appropriateness of Course Materials

The researcher forwarded related question to obtain data about the appropriateness of the course materials.

Table 6: Appropriateness of course materials

	Institutes	Centers	1	2	3	4
3.2 To what extent do you find the course material (s) useful	ECSC	Awassa	22	14	14	2
		Debre.Brehan	4	6	14	0
		Total	26	20	28	2
		Percent	34.21%	26.31%	36.84%	2.63%
	ACDS	Awassa	2	6	10	1
		DebreBrehan	15	7	4	3
		Total	17	13	14	4
		Percent	35.42%	27.08%	18.42%	8.33%

Source: Researcher's data, 2007

Key: 1= highly appropriate, 2= Appropriate, 3 =Medium 4 = Inappropriate

The data in table 6 indicates; out of 76 (100%) of ECSC and 48 (100%) of ACDS respondents, 26 (34.21%) and 17 (35. 42%) of them respectively indicated that the materials are highly appropriate, 20 (26.31%) of ECSC and 13 (27.08%) of ACDS respectively said respectively that the materials are appropriate, 28 (36.84%) of ECSC and 14 (18.42%) of ACDS respectively replied medium whereas 2 (2.63%) of ECSC and 4 (8.33%) of ACDS respondents explained that course materials are inappropriate.

In general, a large number of the respondents of both intuitions showed are positive attitudes toward the appropriateness of the course materials.

4. Understandability of the Materials

The researcher asked a relevant question to understand the degree of understandability of the materials.

Table 7: Understandability of the materials

	Institution	Centers	1	2	3	4	5
3.3 To what extent do you think the course materials are easily understandable?	ECSC	Awassa	16	19	13	0	14
		DebreBrehan	1	4	13	1	5
		Total	17	23	26	1	9
		Per.	22.37%	30.26%	34.21%	1.31%	11.84%
	ACDS	Awassa	0	2	15	0	2
		DebreBrehan	5	6	12	4	2
		Total	5	8	27	4	4
		Per.	10.42%	16.67%	56.25%	8.33%	8.33%

Source= Researcher's data, 2007

Key: 1= Very easy to understand, 2 = Understandable, 3= Medium

4= Un understandable, 5 = Very difficult to understand;

The data in Table 7 indicates that out of 76 (100%) ECSC and 48 (100%) ACDS respondents, 17 (22.37%) of ECSC and 5 (10.42%) ACDS respondents replied that contents of the course materials are very easy to understand while 23 (30.26%) of ECSC and 8 (16.67%) of ACDS respondents expressed their agreement about the understandability of the materials and 26 (34.21% of ECSC and 27 (56.25%) of the ACDS respondents said that the course materials are understandable to some extent. Only 1 (1.31%) of ECSC and 4 (8.33%) of ACDS respondents said the materials are un-understandable and 9 (11.84%) of ECSC and 4 (8.33%) of ACDS respondents also said that materials are very difficult to understand.

The majority of the respondents agreed that the course materials are understandable. This shows that the large numbers of the respondents are able to understand the content of the materials. It may therefore be concluded that the materials have been prepared at the academic level of the course participants.

5. Quality of Course Materials

The quality of the course materials has been assessed from different perspectives: the paper, content structure, questions included and the recent production of the materials.

Table 8: Quality of Distance Materials of ECSC

		ECSC					
		In terms of	1	2	3	4	5
3.4 The quality of distance materials of the various courses	Paper	T	46	22	4	2	2
		Per.	60.52%	28.95%	5.23%	2.63%	2.63%
	Content	T	39	27	7	2	1
		Per.	51.31%	35.53%	9.21%	2.63%	1.31%
	Structure	T	41	25	9	1	0
		Per.	53.95%	32.89%	1.84%	1.31%	0
	In text	T	41	24	9	1	1
		Per.	53.95%	31.58%	11.84%	1.31%	1.31%
	Question	T	41	24	9	1	1
		Per.	53.95%	31.58%	11.84%	1.31%	1.31%
	Up to datedness	T	36	25	12	2	1
		Per.	47.37%	32.89%	15.79%	2.63%	1.31%

Source = Researcher's data, 2007

Key: 1= Very good, 2= Good; 3=Medium, 4= Poor, 5= Very poor

As table 8 shows 76 (100%) Ethiopian Civil Service College respondents commented upon the quality of distance materials. Out of these respondents, 46 (60.52%) said the quality of the paper is very good, 22 (28.95%) said good and 4 (5.23%) of them also said that it is a medium quality, where as 2 (2.63%) and 1 (1.31%) of the respondents replied that the quality of the paper is poor and very poor respectively. This clarified that the quality of the distance material paper is positively accepted by the majority of the respondents.

In terms of the contents of the material, out of the total respondents of ECSC, 39 (51.31%) and 27 (35.53%) of the respondents respectively said that it is very good and good respectively, 7 (9.21%) of them said medium, where as 2 (2.63%) and 1 (1.31%) of the respondents respectively replied saying poor and very poor.

The revision of teaching materials helps to have up-to-date teaching distance materials (modules). Having this in mind, the researcher for warded some related questions, According to this, 36 (47.37%) and 25 (32.89%) of them assured the up to datedness of ECSC teaching materials, where as 2 (2.63%) and 1 (1.31%) respondents judged the materials as being poor and very poor respectively.

Table 9: Quality of distance Material of ACDS

		ACDS					
		In terms of	1	2	3	4	5
3.5 The quality of distance materials for the various courses	Paper	T	23	15	10	0	0
		Per	47.92%	31.25%	20.83%	0	0
	Content	T	11	20	16	1	0
		Per	22.92%	41.67%	33.33%	2.08%	0%
	Structure	T	15	24	9	0	0
		Per	31.25%	50%	18.75%	0	0%
	In text question	T	16	16	15	1	0
		Per	33.33%	33.33%	31.25%	2.08%	0%
	Up to datedness	T	9	20	19	0	0
		Per	18.75%	41.67%	39.58%	0%	0%

Source: Researcher's Data, 2007

Key: 1 = Very good; 2 = Medium, 3 = Very poor, 4 = Good, 5 = Poor

As indicated in table9, the quality of distance materials can be seen from different perspectives. ACDS's respondents' perception is summarized in table 9. Accordingly to this, out of 48 (100%) respondents, 23 (47.92%) and 15 (31.25%) of them respectively said that the quality of the paper is very good and good .Only 10 (20.83%) of the respondents suggested that it is good to some extent (medium quality).

Regarding the contents of the course materials, 11 (22.92%) of the respondents said it is very good while 20 (41.67%) of them said that good respectively, where as 16 (33.33%) of them said it is good to some extent (medium) and only 1 (2.08%) the respondents said it is poor. This indicates that the content of Alpha University College distance materials are positively accepted by its learners.

Regarding the structure of the materials, 15 (31.25%) and 24 (50%) of the respondents respectively said that it is very good and only 9 (18.75%) of them said that it is good to some extent (medium). This indicated that ACDS materials more or less it is well structured to provide enough knowledge and motivate distance learners to practice self -learning.

In relation to text the questions, 16 (33.33%) of the learners said that it was very good, where as 16 (33.33%) of them replied that it is good. Only 15 (31.25%) and 1 (2.08%) of the respondents respectively said that it is good to some extent and poor. Therefore, almost all the respondents are positive about the activities in the text.

ACDS respondents commented about the up-to-datedness of the distance materials as follows: 9 (18.75%) and 20 (41.67%) of them respectively said that it is very good and good whereas 19 (39.58) of them said it is good to some extent .This indicates a great number of the respondents revealed that the materials are up-to-date in the real sense of the term.

As the data in table 12 and 13 show depict, teaching materials prepared at ECSC are given more values than those prepared at ACDS in many ways.

6. Tutorial Sessions

Distance learners can obtain valuable information from the center coordinators, tutors, counselors and their peers as they attend classes. The researcher asked pertinent questions regarding where the learners attend the tutorial program according to their colleges' schedules.

Table 10: Attending Tutorial classes

	Institute	Centers	Yes	No
4.1 Do you attend your tutorial class as per the set schedule?	ECSC	Awassa	20	32
		DebreBrehan	16	8
		Total 76	36	40
		Percent	47.37%	52.63%
	ACDS	Awassa	7	12
		DebreBrehan	11	18
		Total 48	18	30
		Percent	37.5%	62.5%

Source: Researcher's Data, 2007

As to the data in Table 10 reveals, out of 76 (100%) of ECSC and out of 48 (100%, 36 (47.37%) of ECSC and 18 (37.59%) of ACDS respondents replied respectively that they attended tutorial classes according to their college's timetable, 40 (52.63%) of ECSC and 30 (62.5%) of ACDS learners indicated that they did not attend tutorial classes. It should be noted that due to various reasons a large number of learners of both institutions couldn't be beneficiaries from the tutorial program.

7. Frequency of Attending Tutorial Programs

In table 14 the some respondents of both institutions assured that they attend tutorial programs. They were also asked how often they attended the tutorial program according to their college's annual plan.

Table 11: Frequency of Attending on the Tutorial Program.

	Intuitions	Centers	Regularly	Sometimes	Rarely
4.2 If your answer is 'Yes' for question no 4.1 how often?	ECSC	Awassa	6	10	4
		DebreBrehan	5	7	4
		Total 76	11	17	8
		Percent	30.56%	47.22%	22.22%
	ACDS	Awassa	2	5	0
		DebreBrehan	4	7	0
		Total 48	6	12	0
		Percent	33.33%	66.67%	0%

Source = Researcher's data, 2007

As learners responses in table 11 indicate, out of the total respondents of both colleges, 11 (30.56%) of ECSC and 6 (33.33%) of ACDS respondents reported that they attended the tutorial program regularly according to their college annual program, where as 17 (47.22%) of ECSC and 12 (66.67%) of ACDS respondents attended the classes sometimes. Only 8 (22.22%) of ECSC learners said they did it rarely.

Regarding the frequency of attendance of the tutorial program, as the collected data shows, from who said that they attended the program they attended the classes sometimes, while a few ECSC

respondents were attending rarely. It was learned from table 14 and 15 that out of the total, almost only one-third of the respondents benefited from the face to face tutorial program.

Table 12: Reasons for not attending on the program

Question Items	Response item	ECSC		ACDS	
		Total	Percent	Total	Percent
4.3 If your answer is "No" to question no.4.1, what are the major reasons?	Study center far away from residence.	15	37.50%	16	53.33%
	Lack of time	9	22.50%	7	23.33%
	Financial constraints	10	25.00%	4	13.33%
	Felt it is not much necessary	0	0%	0	0%
	Multiple reasons	6	15.00%	3	10.00%
	Total	40	100	30	100%

As already explained in table10, the majority of the course participants could not attend the tutorial program according to their respective colleges' schedule. The researcher asked to find out as to why they did not do so. Out of 40 (100%) of ECSC and 30 (100%) of ACDS respondents, 15 (37.5%) and 16 (53.33%) of them said respectively they were not attending the tutorial classes because of the long distance between center and their residence, 9 (22.50%) of ECSC and 7 (23.33%) of ACDS respondents complained about lack of time for their not attending. 10 (25%) of ECSC and 4 (13.33%) of ACDS' respondents stated financial constraints as major reason for not attending, while the program 6 (15.00%) of ECSC and 3 (10.00%) of ACDS respondents forwarded various reasons for their not attending at the tutorial program.

The majority of the learners complained about the length of their study centers from their residence as the major reasons for their not attending the tutorial program. They also revealed that time and financial constraint as barriers to attending the program. It was learnt from the collected data that distance learners can benefit more, if the tutorial programs are carried out at Zone or Woreda levels.

Table 13: Significance of the tutorial program

Question item	Institution	Centers	Alternatives				
			1	2	3	4	5
4.4 How do you evaluate the usefulness of face to face classes?	ECSC	Awassa	12	16	18	6	0
		DebreBrehan	8	5	10	1	0
		Total	20	21	28	7	0
		. Percent	26.31%	27.63%	36.84%	9.21%	0 (%)
	ACDS	Awassa	10	3	6	0	0
		Debre.Brehan	14	9	4	2	0
		Total	24	12	10	2	0
		Percent	50%	25%	20.83%	4.17%	0%

Source = Researcher's data 2007

Key: 1= Very useful, 2 = Useful, 3 = Medium 4= Not Useful, 5 = extremely useless

The researcher wanted to know learners view of the importance of tutorial program .To this end, a relevant question was set. As data in table 13 shows that out of 76 (100%) of ECSC's respondents, 20 (26.31%) of them and out of 48 (100%) ACDS's respondents 24 (50%) of them indicated that face to face tutorial was very useful, where as 21 (27.63%) of ECSC and 12 (25%) of ACDS respondents said that it's useful, where as 28 (36.84%) of ECSC and 10 (20.83%) ACDS respondents said that the tutorial program is partially useful, and only 7 (9.21%) of ECSC and 2 (4.17%) of ACDS respondents respectively said that it is not useful.

As table 17 shows that more than 95% of ECSC and ACDS respondents confirmed the face to face tutorial program was useful. It is learned that learners believed that the tutorial program has a bearing on their academic success.

Table 14: Degree of learners doubts clarified

Question	Institution	Centers	1	2	3	4	5	6
4.5 To what extent are your doubts clarified by your counselors (tutors)	ECSC	Awassa	18	14	18	2	0	0
		DebreBrehan	6	6	10	2	0	0
		Total	24	20	28	4	0	0
		Per.	31.58%	26.31%	36.84%	5.26%	0%	0%
	ACDS	Awassa	1	3	12	2	0%	0%
		DebreBrehan	3	4	13	4	2	4
		Total	4	7	25	6	2	4
		Per.	8.33%	14.58%	52.08%	12.5%	4.17%	8.33 %

Source = Researcher's data, 2007

Key: 1 = Well clarified, 2 = Clarified, 3= Medium, 4= Not clarified; 5= Undecided,

6 = No response

Distance learners' doubts can be solved with the help of their tutors\counselors\ .A pertinent question raised to obtain data regarding the extent to which learners' doubts are clarified by tutors or counselors. Table 14 indicated that out of the total respondents of both colleges, 24 (31.58%) of ECSC and 4 (8.33%) ACDS said respectively that their doubts were well-clarified, 20 (26.31%) of ECSC and 7 (14.58%) of ACDS of the respondents explained that their doubts were clarified, where as 28 (36.84%) of ECSC and 25 (52.08%) of ACDS respondents were partially satisfied, Only 4 (5.26%) of ECSC and 6 (12.5%) ACDS respondent's said their doubts were not clarified. 2 (4.17%) of ACDS respondents were not decided and while 4 (8.33%) of ACDS respondents did not respond at all. It was learnt that a large numbers of learners doubt clarified.

8. Time of Contact with Counselors (Tutors)

Tutors/Counselors/could helps their learners as they get enough time of contact. Hence, the researcher raised related question to the learners regarding the frequency of contact with tutors.

Table 15: Learners and counselors (Tutors) Time contact

Question item	Institute	Centers	Alternatives					
			1	2	3	4	5	6
4.6 Frequency of contact with counselors (tutors) at the tutorial center	ECSC	Awassa	3	9	19	21	0	0
		DebreBerhan	1	4	5	14	0	0
		Total 76	4	13	24	35	0	0
		Percent	5.26%	17.10%	31.58%	46.05%	0%	0%
	ACDS	Awassa	2	3	6	8	0	0
		DebreBerhan	1	2	5	11	9	1
		Total 48	3	5	11	19	9	1
		Percent	6.25%	10.42%	22.92%	39.58%	18.75%	2.08%

Source = Researcher's data, 2007

Key: 1 = More than enough, 2 = Enough, 3 = Medium, 4 = Not enough

5=No response, 6 = extremely not enough

Table 15 shows that, out of 76 (100%) ECSC and 48 (100%) ACDS respondents, 4 (5.26%) of ECSC and 3 (6.25%) of ACDS respondents said respectively that frequency of contact is more than enough, 13 (17.10%) of ECSC and 5 (10.42%) of ACDS respondents said that it was enough, 24 (31.58%) of ECSC and 11 (22.92%) of the respondents reported that it was enough to some extent, where as 35 (46.05%) of ECSC and 19 (39.58%) of ACDS respondents said that the frequency of contact with tutors (counselors) is not enough. 9 (18.75%) of ACDS respondents explained that it is not enough at all . Only 1 (2.08%) of ACDS respondents did not

respond to the question. As the data in table 15 revealed the learners of both colleges complained about the shortage of time to contact with counselors (tutors).

9. Learners' Contact with Necessary Persons

Distance learners' could obtain essential information when they contact with their tutors, center coordinators and peers to exchange various ideas.

Table 16: Learners' contact with necessary persons

Question	Institutions				
		ECSC		ACDS	
4.7 Do you have contacts outside of the center with your		Yes	No	Yes	No
1. tutor	T	25	51	7	41
	Per	32.8%	67.10%	14.58%	85.42%
2. center coordinator	T	44	32	16	32
	Per	57.8%	42.10%	33.33%	66.67%
3. peers (with other distance course learners)	T	28	48	20	28
	Per	36.8%	63.16%	41.67%	58.33%

Source = researchers data, 2007

As collected data in table 16 shows, 25 (32.89%) of the ECSC and 7 (14.58%) of ACDS respondents said that they had opportunity of contacting with their tutors outside the face to face program, while 51 (67.10%) of ECSC and 41 (85.42%) of ACDS respondents pointed out that they did not have contact with their tutors outside tutorial centers. It was learnt from data in table 16 that a large number of ECSC and almost all respondents of ACDS did not have any chance of contact with their tutor outside the general face to face program.

As the gathered data in table 16 reveals, out of 76 (100%) ECSC and 48 (100%) ACDS respondents, 44 (57.89%) of ECSC and 16 (33.33%) of the respondents said respectively that they had contact with center coordinators outside of tutorial program, whereas 32 (42.10%) of ECSC and 32 (66.67%) of ACDS respondents didn't have contact with center coordinators.

As table 16 shows ECSC learners have better opportunity of contact their center coordinators than those in ACDS.

As table 16 shows 28 (36.8%) of ECSC and 20 (41.67%) of ACDS respondents said that they had the opportunity of contacting with their peers (other distance learners) where as 48 (63.16%) of ECSC and 28 (58.33%) of ACDS the respondents did not have the chance of contacting with their peers. This also indicates a large number of distance learners did not contact among themselves.

10. Means of Communication

Communication has its own impact on distance instructional process. Distance learners were expected to make frequent contacts with their counselors or tutors. According to Rowtree (2000) in Fesseha (2006:44) states that much of tutoring or assistance is usually done via telephone or correspondence. Taking this into account, the researcher raised the following question for the respondents to obtain necessary data.

Table 17: Means of communication with tutor\coordinator

Question Item	Institute	Centers	Alternatives			
			Telephone	Through written (postal eservice)	Personal face to face)	Other multiple means
4.8 Which means of communication do you prefer to contact your tutor or center coordinator?	ECS	Awassa	27	2	10	13
		DebreBrehan	10	0	5	9
		Total	37	2	15	22
		Percent.	48.68%	2.63%	19.74%	28.95%
	ACD	Awassa	9	2	5	3
		Debre Brehan	8	3	7	11
		Total	17	5	12	14
		Percent.	35.42%	10.42%	25.00%	29.17%

Source = Researchers data, 2007

As the data in table 17 showed that out of the total respondents of ECSC and ACDS among which 37 (48.68%) of ECSC and 17 (35.42%) of ACDS learners had contacts through the

telephone. 2(2.63%) of ECSC and 5 (10.42%) ACDS of the responded that they communicated through writing (postal service), 15 (19.74%) of ECSC and 12 (25%) of ACDS said that they preferred in person (face to face) communication. From the total of ECSC respondents, 22 (28.95%) of them and 14 (29.17%) of ACDS respondents preferred multiple means of communication such as: telephone, fax, postal service and face to face contact.

It was learnt from data in table 17 that even though distance learners employed multiple ways of communication to contact with their tutors and center coordinators; however, telephone was employed predominantly.

11. Library Facilities

The availability of library at the tutorial center creates the opportunities for distance learners to engage in further reading .A question has designed to solicit library facilities.

Table 18: Availability of library at the centers

Question item	Institutions	Centers	Yes	No	Nr
5.1 Are there library facilities at your tutorial center that are accessible to students?	ECSE	Awassa	10	42	0
		Debre.Brehan	5	19	0
		Total	15	61	0
		Per.	19.74%	80.26%	0
	ACDS	Awassa	1	18	0
		DebreBrehan	0	27	2
		Total	1	45	2
		Per.	2.08%	93.75%	4.17%

Source =Researcher's data, 2007

Key: Nr=No response.

The data in table 18 indicates that out of the 76 (100%) respondents of ECSC and 48 (100%) of ACDS, 15 (19.74%) of ECSC and 1 (2.08%) of ACDS reported the availability of library. 61 (80.26%) of ECSC and 45 (93.75) of ACDS respondents; however, indicated that there is no library at their tutorial centers., 2 (4.17%) of ACDS learners didn't respond to this question at all.

As the information in table 18 shows that out of the 124 (100%), 85.48% (combined) of them did not employee to libraries at all.

12. Employed Media

The communication media technology plays a great role in facilitating self learning in distance education program. Zenebe (2005.126) states that the significance of multimedia in higher institutions as: “for a university with distance education system, not using a variety of multi-media in its instructional process is a missed opportunity.” Having this in mind, the researcher raised a question in which extent the multi media are employed in both colleges while the distance program was conducted.

Table 19: Employing Media in Distance Courses

Question item	Institution	Centers	1	2	3	4	5	6
5.3 Which of the following media services did you use most in your distance courses?	ECSE	Awassa	0	0	0	0	52	0
		DebreBrehan	0	0	0	0	21	3
		Total	0	0	0	0	73	3
		Per.	0%	0%	0%	0%	96.05%	3.95%
	ACDS	Awassa	0	2	0	0	17	0
		DebreBrehan	0	0	0	0	25	4
		Total	0	2	0	0	42	4
		Per.	0%	4.17%	0%	0%	87.5%	8.33%

Source = Researchers data, 2007

Key: 1= Radio, 2=Audio cassette, 3= video, 4= All accordingly, 5= none; 6 = No response

The learners responses' (in Table 19) indicated that 73 (96.05%) of ECSC and 42 (87.5%) of ACDS respondents didn't obtain any media services where 3 (3.95%) of ECSC and 4 (8.33%) ACDS subjects didn't respond. As table 23 shows, in both institutions there are not any media services provided. As Ready (1996) in Ejeta (2005:85) noted technology can help to disseminate education from all of the world's best sources to all people crossing all geographical constraints. It was learnt that both colleges' learners missed the opportunity of employing communication media.

13. Managing the Distance Program

Management has the responsibility of setting a proper direction, designing short and long term plan and following up the whole program operations. All these tasks can show fruits if the management was effective enough and dedicated. Having this in mind, the researcher raised a relevant question to the learners.

Table 20: Extent of the efficiency of managements

Question Item	Institution	Center	1	2	3	4	5	6
6.1 To what extent is the program management effective to conduct the distance mode of education?	ECSC	Awassa	10	20	13	2	0	7
		DebreBrehan	2	7	12	2	0	1
		Total	12	27	25	4	0	8
		Percent	15.79%	35.52%	32.89%	5.26%	0	10.52%
	ACDS	Awassa	0	11	7	0	0	1
		DebreBrehan	5	2	18	2	2	0
		Total	5	13	25	2	2	1
		Percent	10.42%	27.08%	52.08%	4.17%	4.17%	2.83%

Source =Researchers data, 2007

Key: 1=highly effective, 2=Effective, 3=Medium, 4=Ineffective, 5 = highly ineffective;

6 = No response,

Table 20 indicates that from the total respondents of both colleges, 12 (15.79 %) ECSC and 5 (10.42%) of ACDS respondents said that the management was highly effective, while 27 (35.52%) of ECSC and 13 (27.08%) of them said that the college management was effective, 25 (32.89%) of ECSC and 25 (52.08%) of ACDS respondents said that the management was partially effective, where as 4 (5.26%) of ECSC and 2 (4.17%) of ACDS respondents said that the management is inefficient. Only 8 (10.52%) of ECSC and 1 (2.83%) of ACDS learners did not respond at all.

Data in table 20 shows that Ethiopian Civil Service college management has slightly better performance than Alpha University College.

14. Factors Affecting Academic Achievements

Distance learners' academic achievements could be affected in various ways. Ejeta (2005:88) explained that some major factors as:

"Difficulty level of course materials, delay in the arrival of the module/materials, delay of feedbacks, voluminous of the modules, inconsistency of tutorial schedules and delay in the years for completion of their study program."

A question was set to assess the factors which affect learners' academic success.

Table 21: Degree of problems affecting learners' academic success

6.2 Which of the following could be the major reasons	Institutions											
	ECSC					ACDS						
	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	6	
1. Difficulties of course material	T	13	9	29	17	8	10	7	22	5	2	2
	Per	17.10%	11.84%	38.16%	22.36%	10.52%	20.83%	14.58%	45.83%	10.41	4.17%	4.17
2. Lack of study skill	T	3	13	31	16	13	2	10	20	11	1	2
	Per	3.95%	17.10%	40.79%	21.05%	17.10%	4.17%	20.83%	41.67%	22.92%	2.08%	4.17%
3. Delay of teaching materials	T	13	5	23	22	13	5	5	22	11	3	2
	Per	7.10%	6.58%	30.26%	28.95%	17.10%	10.42%	10.42%	45.83%	22.92%	6.25%	4.17%
4. Delay of assignments feedback	T	24	18	12	12	11	20	6	8	11	1	2
	Per	31.58%	23.68%	15.79%	15.79%	14.47%	41.67%	12.5%	16.67%	22.92%	2.08%	4.17%
5. In consistence of tutorial schedules	T	11	7	20	28	8	9	12	9	11	5	2
	Per	14.47%	9.21%	26.31%	36.84%	10.52%	18.75%	25%	18.75%	22.92%	10.42%	4.17%
6. Unavailability of means of transportation	T	18	28	10	8	12	16	13	7	7	5	0
	Per	23.68%	36.84%	13.16%	10.52%	15.79%	33.33%	27.08%	14.58%	14.58%	10.42%	0%
7. Lack of communication with college staffs	T	26	15	10	10	13	19	11	6	8	4	0
	Per	34.21%	19.74%	13.16%	13.16%	17.10%	39.58%	22.92%	12.5%	16.67%	8.33%	0%

Source= Researchers data 2007

Key: 1 = Very much; 2= Much, 3= Medium, 4=Less, 5= Not at all, 6 = No response

From table 21, we can see that 20 (31.58%) of ECSC and 20 (41.67%) of ACDS respondents confirm that the delayed feedback has affected their academic achievements very much, while 18 (23.68%) of ECSC and 16 (33.33%) of ACDS respondents emphasized lack of transportation, 26 (34.21%) of ECSC and 19 (39.58%) of ACDS respondents reported the lack of communication with college staffs is affecting their academic achievements very much.

It was learnt that all the factors in table 21 have had their own impacts on learners' academic success. However, as respondents reported lack of immediate feedback to assignments or sometimes inexistent, lack of transportation and communication with college staffs are the serious challenges they have had on learners' academic success.

15. Hindrance for Course Completion

Learners' course completion could be hindered due to various reasons. This study focuses in examining degree of hindrances.

Table 22: Degree of hindrances for Completion

Questions items.		E C S C						ACDS					
		1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
6.3 To what extent...													
1. You are clear about your learning objective	Total	14	18	34	8	21	1	8	12	21	3	3	1
	Per	18.42%	23.68%	44.74%	10.52%	27.63%	1.31%	16.67%	25%	43.75%	6.25%	6.25%	2.08
2 Commitment in self learning	Total	13	19	29	8	2	5	7	9	21	8	2	1
	per	17.10%	25%	38.15%	10.52%	2.63%	6.58%	14.58%	18.75%	43.15%	16.67%	4.17%	2.08
3. Efficiency in preparing assignment	Total	19	28	21	2	3	3	17	10	11	1	7	2
	Per	25%	36.84%	27.63%	2.63%	3.94%	3.94%	35.42%	20.83%	22.92%	2.08%	14.58%	4.17
4. Efficiency for preparing for exam	Total	8	21	38	3	2	4	9	11	17	4	4	3
	Per	10.52%	27.63%	50%	3.94%	2.63%	5.26%	18.75%	22.92%	35.42%	8.33%	8.33%	6.25

Source: Researchers data, 2007

Key: 1= Very high; 2 = High, 3 = Medium, 4 = Less, 5 = least, 6 = Not at all

Learners' course completion can be hindered in different ways. This study has assessed the factors and their degree of hindrance. As indicated in table 22, 14 (18.42%) of ECSC and 8 (16.67%) of ACDS respondent confirmed that the lack of clarity about learning objectives as a hindering factor, 18 (23.68%) of ECSC and 12 (25%) of ACDS respondents said that it is a high factor, 34 (44.47%) of ECSC and 2 (43.75%) ACDS respondents' lack of clarity of objective can be a reason partly.

Moreover, learners' self learning commitments also have positive or negative impacts on learners' academic success. The data in table 22 indicates, 29 (38.15%) and 21 (43.15%) of ECSC and ACDS learners respectively said that the lack of commitment of self learning can partly hinder their course completion. Among the learners (Table 22), 28 (36.84%) of ECSC and 17 (35.42%) ACDS of them believe that lack of efficiency in preparing assignments have had high side effect. The lack of efficiency in preparing for exam also affected learners' course completion. 38 (50%) of ECSC and 17 (35.42%) ACDS respondents said that there is lack of efficiency to prepare for the exam. This reflects that learners didn't realize their low performance (Preparation) for exam as hindrance to academic completion.

17. Role of Provided Explanation

The researcher asked the distance learners to what extent the provided explanation help them to achieve their expected goals.

Table 23: Extent of Explanations helps to achieve goals.

	Institution	Centers	Alternatives				
			1	2	3	4	5
7.1 To what extent do explanations help you to achieve the expected results?	ECSC	Awassa	9	29	10	4	0
		DebreBrehan	3	7	9	4	1
		Total	12	36	19	8	1
		Percent	15.79%	43.37%	25%	10.52%	1.31%
	ACDS	Awassa	2	4	9	1	3
		DebreBrehan	8	9	11	0	1
		Total	10	13	20	1	4
		Percent	20.83%	27.08%	41.67%	2.08%	8.33%

Key: 1=A lot of help; 2 = enough help; 3= Medium, 4= Less help; 5 = extremely no help

According to table 23, 21 (15.79%) of ECSC and 10 (20.83%) ACDS respondents said that the explanations given during tutorial program helped them a lot, 36 (43.37% of ECSC and 13 (27.08%) ACDS of them said that it had given them enough help, 19 (25%) of ECSC and ACDS 20 (41.67%) of them said that it did so to a certain extent.

18. Obtaining Feedback for their Assignments

Learners needed their tutor's assistance to write their assignments in effective way. Having this in mind the researcher forwarded the question pertinent information about provided feedback. Tutors play a great role in clearing learners' academic and solving learners' personal problems. The researcher wanted to know the extents to which learners are satisfied with the support provided in writing their assignment.

Table 24: Provided Feedback

	Institution	Centers	Alternatives				
			1	2	3	4	5
7.2 To what extent did you get assistance or help from your tutor in writing your assignments	ECSC	Awassa	12	10	10	2	18
		DebreBrehan	3	4	10	1	6
		Total	15	14	20	3	24
		Percent	19.75%	18.42%	26.32%	3.95%	31.58%
	ACDS	Awassa	1	3	1	2	12
		DebreBerehan	4	6	8	0	11
		Total	5	9	9	2	23
		Percent	10.42%	18.75%	18.75%	4.17%	47.92%

Source = Researcher's data, 2007

Key: 1= Much assistance; 2 = Average assistance, 3= some assistance;

4= Negligible assistance, 5= Not at all

As the data in table 24 shows, 15 (19.75%) of ECSC and 5 (10.42%) of ACDS respondents stressed that they obtained much assistance, while 14 (18.42%) of ECSC and 9 (18.75%) of ACDS of them replied that they obtained average assistance. 20 (26.32%) of ECSC and 9 (18.75%) of ACDS respondents explained that the provided assistance is negligible where as 24

(31.58%) of ECSC and 23 (47.92%) of ACDS respondents complained about the absence of any assistance. It was understood that a large number of ECSC and half (50%) of ACDS respondents got insignificant assistance while they were writing their assignments.

Even if the learners of both institutions got insignificant assistance as they were working on their assignments as data in table 24 shows ECSC learners got better assistance than ACDS.

19. Expected Assistances to be obtained

As the response provided for question 7.3 indicates, almost all the respondents needed the help of their tutor while they were working on their assignments and studying. However, they didn't get any. The respondents specified some crucial assistance they always wished to get. These are:

- Additional materials (reference) during their preparation. This is because the learners wanted to get more information in addition to their modules. This calls for the provision of reference materials from their respective colleges.
- They need the assistance of well-experienced tutors. Unfortunately, some of the tutors were inexperienced to help their learners. The respondents argued that the college employees the tutors, it should be focused on their experience rather than the qualification they have had.
- The learners reported that even though they make calls from very remote areas but the responsible person at the colleges are not willing to respond to their calls.
- They (learners) needed to get all necessary information including their educational credentials from the branch office. But they argued that they couldn't obtain these after the completion of course. So, they were forced to go Addis Ababa's head office, which cost them money and time
- Learners needed to obtain frequent feedback and results for their assignments. However, they didn't get feedback or sometimes their results at all.
- They reported that the academic calendar should be flexible because the course participants were full time employees.

- Learners want to have tutorial center at Woreda level to get all the necessary and timely support.
- Typographic errors in distance materials and the meaning of some terminologies should be provided at the right time.
- Learners said that they needed discussion on some difficult questions. Unfortunately, they said that they couldn't get their tutors on telephone lines.

20. Explanations for Challenging Questions

Learners could develop their knowledge from their previous mistakes. This could be true as they got immediate feedback for their previous works. This study wanted to find out the frequency with which the learners got explanation or discussion for difficult questions.

Table 25: Explanation given for unanswered Question

	Institution	Centers	Alternatives				
			1	2	3	4	5
7.4 How often does your tutor give explanation and guide concerning questions you failed to answer in your assignments?	ECSC	Awassa	2	11	19	9	11
		DebreBerehan	3	1	1	9	10
		Total	5	12	20	18	21
		Percent	6.58%	15.79%	26.32%	23.68%	27.63%
	ACDS	Awassa	0	1	4	9	5
		Debre.Berhan	1	4	13	6	5
		Total	1	5	17	15	10
		Percent	2.08%	10.42%	35.42%	31.25%	20.83%

Key: 1 = Always; 2 = Most of the time; 3= Sometimes 4= rarely; 5 = Not at all

Table 25 shows that 5 (6.58%) of ECSC and 1 (2.08%) of ACDS respondent reported that they always got explanations for unanswered questions, whereas 12 (15.79%) of ECSC and 5 (10.42%) of them said that they got explanations most of the time, while 20 (26.32%) of ECSC and 17 (35.42%) of the respondents said that they got explanations sometimes, 18 (23.68%) of ECSC and 15 (31.25%) of ACDS respondents explained that they got explanation 'rarely' for

unanswered questions only 21 (27.63%)of ECSC and 10 (20.83%) of ACDS learners reported that they didn't get any guide and explanations for the questions the failed to be answered.

It can be said that tutors' contributions were much limited in guiding and solving learners' academic problems. In this regard, learners got negligible guidance and explanations from their tutors.

Table 26: Adequacy of tutorial sessions

Question Item	Institution	Centers	1	2	3	4	5
7.5 How would you rate the adequacy of face to face tutorial sessions in your distance program	ECSC	Awassa	7	10	14	21	0
		DebreBrehan	4	1	5	11	3
		Total	11	11	19	32	3
		Percent	14.47%	14.47%	25%	42.10%	3.95%
	ACDS	Awassa	4	1	1	13	0
		DebreBrehan	7	2	12	8	0
		Total	11	3	13	21	0
		Percent	22.92%	6.25%	27.08%	43.75%	0%

Key: 1 = Most adequate; 2= Adequate, 3 = fairly adequate, 4= Less adequate, 5= Not adequate

The data in table 26 shows that from the total respondents, 11 (14.47%) of ECSC and 11 (22.92%) of ACDS learners felt face to face tutorial program was the most satisfactory whereas 11 (14.47%) of ECSC and 3 (6.25%) of ACDS respondents said it is sufficient while 19 (25%) of ECSC and 13 (27.08%) of ACDS said that it was fairly adequate. Only 32 (42.10%) of ECSC and 21 (43.75%) ACDS complained about the inadequacy of the face to face tutorial program, 3 (3.95%) of ECSC respondents said that it is not adequate at all.

This indicated that the majority of the participants believe that face to face tutorial program was less satisfactory.

21. Evaluating Tutors' Comments

Tutors' comments helped learners to improve their academic achievements and develop the required knowledge and skills.

The researcher raised a pertinent question to evaluate about the usefulness of the comments given by tutors on students 'previous works.

Table 27: Usefulness of comments given by tutors

	Institution	Centers	Alternatives				
			5	4	3	2	1
7.6 How do you evaluate the comments given by your tutor for your work in your previous work?	ECSC	Awassa	12	3	23	14	0
		DebreBrehan	4	4	12	3	1
		Total	16	7	35	17	1
		Percent	21.05%	9.21%	46.05%	22.37%	1.31%
	ACDS	Awassa	0	7	3	6	3
		DebreBrehan	3	6	7	11	2
		Total	3	13	10	17	5
		Percent	6.25%	27.08%	20.83%	35.42%	10.42%

Key: 5 = Most encouraging; 4= Encouraging; 3= Less encouraging 2= Least encouraging;

1 = Not Encouraging at all

Learners' responses show that from the total respondents of both colleges, 16 (21.05%) of ECSC and 3 (6.25%) of ACDS participant supposed that the comments provided were most encouraging where as 7 (9.21%) of ECSC and 13 (27.08%) of ACDS respondents said that they were 'encouraging', 35 (46.05%) of ECSC and 10 (20.83%) ACDS respondents said that they were less encouraging, where as 17 (22.37%) of ECSC and 17 (35.42%) of ACDS respondent said it was the least encouraging. Only 1 (1.31%) of ECSC and 5 (10.42%) of ACDS respondents believed that the given comments were not encouraging at all.

We can therefore conclude that the provided comments weren't sufficient. Distance learning could be effective as the tutors give appropriate comments (feed back) on time.

22. Administration's Role for Success of DE Program

Achieving successful goals requires high commitments of the concerned colleges' administration. The researcher set some questions to find out the effectiveness of administration

Table 28: Administration contribution for success of DEP

7.7 How do you evaluate the comment of your college administration for success for the distance education program?	Institution	Centers	1	2	3	4	5
			ECSC	Awassa	9	14	17
DebreBrehan	4	3		14	1	2	
Total	13	17		31	11	4	
Per	17.10%	22.37%		40.79%	14.47%	5.26%	
ACDS	Awassa	2	6	8	3	0	
	DebreBrehan	8	7	12	2	0	
	Total	10	13	20	5	0	
	Per	20.83%	27.08%	41.67%	10.42%	0%	

Key: 1 = Very effective; 2 = Effective: 3 = Less effective, 4 = Not Effective at all;

5 = Not decided;

The data in table 28 shows,13 (17.10%) of ECSC and 10 (20.83%) of ACDS learners pointed out that the administration accomplished very effective tasks,17 (22.37%)of ECSC and 13 (27.08%) of ACDS said that they were effective while 31 (40.79%) of ECSC and 20 (41.67%)of ACDS respondents said they were less effective. On the other hand, 11 (14.47%) of ECSC and 5 (10.42%) of ACDS learners argued that their college's administration is less efficient to the success of the program. 4 (5.26%) of ECSC learners didn't respond at all. The majority of the learners felt their college's administration were less efficient to conduct distance education program.

The concerned bodies of these colleges should supervise their branch office administration properly.

4.1.2 Interview

In this study, the researcher has employed personal interviews to collect relevant data besides other instruments. Kothari (2006:97) explains the significance of personal interviews as:

“ To collect the in formation personally from the sources concerned. It has to be on the spot and has to meet people from whom data have to be collected. This method is particularly suitable for intensive investigations”

The researcher began his data collection by interviewing concerned individuals at the head offices of Ethiopian Civil Service College and Alpha College of distance studies in Addis Ababa. The interview helped him to obtain important information regarding when tutorial and the examinations were conducted and the total number of the distance learners at national level. After the discussions with these people the researcher selected Awassa and Debre Brehan centers for data the collection.

1. Interview with Students

Distance education program helps to train those isolated from conventional education due to different reasons Sharma (2005) explains the contribution of the program as good opportunity to train man power in different professions. Keeping this in mind, the researcher wanted to know why participants preferred to join this program. To this end structured and semi-structured interviews questions were prepared and forwarded to the learners.

1.1. Why learners Prefer Distance Mode of Learning

The participant was asked to explain his reasons to join distance program.

He says:

I have been working in government office for the last 23years. I want to continue my education in the regular program but I couldn't attend even the extension class because there is no higher institution in my Woreda (village).Now, I am a third year student at ECSC.

(14, April 2007)

As it was understood from this interview, learners joined this program due to the absence of other opportunity. .The researcher raised a similar question to ACDS third year accounting students. The informant says:

I was a student at Arbaminch University seven years ago. However, I couldn't continue my education there. I didn't get other university or college because I live 85Km far away from Awassa. I heard the advertisement and then I decided to join Alpha University College three years ago. It opens good chance for those particularly for house wives who didn't get the chance to attend the regular class (21, April 2007)

As this interviewee said that distance education helped those who were not able to attend the regular classes such as house wives, office workers and others. Furthermore, the researcher asked ECSC college third year student as to why he want to continue his education through distance program

He says:

It is a great chance to me to continue my education in distance program. I graduated from Disse Teachers Training Institution (DTTI) 18 years ago. I have been teaching at the remotest area. I could not continue my education due to financial and family burden. This program creates better chance of learning for those who have multiple problems.

(17, March 2007)

The above informant said that distance learners have multiple problems to attend regular program. These are finance, family size and distance from the city and others. Therefore, distance program has played a great role in alleviating the shortage skilled manpower.

1.2 Giving prior Orientation

Basically, distance learners need to get enough information. They should be oriented about the rules and regulation of the college and the kind of courses they are going to learn and duration (total credit hours) to qualify for a diploma or degree. This is so because orientation helps them to decide about the courses they are going to learn and handle the program effectively. The information obtained from the learners and centers coordinator showed that the learners get enrolled to the institutions without having prior formal orientation.

Some learners explained that they got information about the subjects they are going to learn by their own efforts. Thus, they gathered information by consulting their seniors, center coordinators and from print materials (Brochures). One of interviewees from ECSC tells his previous experience like this:

I went the branch center for first the time to have information about the program I collected the annual calendar, Brochures and other print materials. I got some information from the center coordinators; he was very busy to give me additional information. I also consulted few learners attending the program. Then, I joined distance program and now I am third year student.

(15, April 2007)

This showed that the college didn't have formal orientation program for new comers. As the interviewee said it is the learners who create their own mechanism to acquire necessary information.

The researcher asked similar questions to a third year ACDS student. He explained his previous experiences as follows;

I collected calendar and brochures from branch office. I was already informed about some fields of study. I am third year accounting student. I got all the information from senior students. I am lucky that my best friends have graduated from this college two years before. I didn't get enough information as I was enrolled first. As far as my knowledge is concerned, the college didn't have orientation program.

(21, April 2007)

Generally, both colleges didn't have orientation program for newly enrolled students and learners joined the program without enough information.

1.3 The Problems Faced During the Course

Since learners come from different places to the tutorial centers and they face different problems. This study attempted to find out the problems they faced while they were taking the courses. To this end some questions were prepared for the interviewees. One of them says:

All students have their own problem I am very busy to work on my assignments and prepare for examination. I couldn't get information. The main problem I faced was lack of understanding the material. There was shortage of time and money to attend the tutorial program. There was also lack of information and additional reference materials and communication with tutors.

(14, April 2007)

It was learnt from the interviewees both institutions' participants have various problems like: time and money constraints and lack of reference materials and others mainly.

1.4 Tutorial Sessions

The tutorial program can help distance learners to have enough knowledge about their subject matter. Holmberg (1981:88) says, "*the task of tutors in distance study are often based in a limited view which concerns the necessity to correct what is wrong in a paper and assess the student's achievement*".

Therefore, face to face tutorial classes could play a vital role in solving the problems students face while they deal with their distance teaching materials.

In this regard, Alpha and Ethiopian Civil Service College center coordinators and learners were asked some questions. One of them is a sixth semester accounting student at ECSC He explained that Ethiopian Civil Service College conducted face to face tutorial program monthly to overcome the problems faced while the program was being conducted.

A similar question was raised for ACDS learner who reported that Alpha college of Distance studies conducted the tutorial program every three months. The time was also very limited to get information. He said that he was the representative of the students in his area. He indicated that learners who live in the same areas hired a tutor by themselves rather than traveling long distance to attend the tutorial program.

Holmberg (1981) explained tutors' tasks were not lecturing the subject matters but also to support the motivation of students by engaging them in thinking, reading other activities that make sense and direct their attention to what comes later in the course.

Comparatively, ECSC is slightly better than ACDS in providing material and moral supports for its distance learners.

Challenges faced

The researcher asked ECSC students to summarize the main problem they faced during face to face program conducted. They explained lack of transportation, time and money constraints, family problems (particularly for females) and health problem stated as the main challenges they faced. ACDS learners shared the same views with ECSC learners in terms of the problems but ECSC learners had better chance to contact their tutors monthly.

Learners of both colleges suggested that face to face tutorial program should be at Woreda level to make a large number of distance learners' beneficiaries.

1.6 Communication

The researcher asked both ECSC and ACDS students regarding the means of communication. They prefer multiple means of communication such as: letter, fax and in person to exchange message with their tutors but they dominantly employed telephone. Because of its fastest means of communication

1.7 Dispatching course Material

Homlburge (1981) in Fisseha (2006) states distributing all the necessary materials at once as a main strategy for dispatching course materials. This way of distribution could be more useful in Ethiopia, for those who come from the remotest areas with many constraints. Regarding these interviews was conducted with ECSC and ACDS distance learners .One of ECSC learners explained that he collected four modules and study guides once. However, ACDS learner explained that he collected distance materials when he came for enrollment to the center and then the center coordinator told them to come back again after a month to the center to collect the remaining materials.

Therefore, dispatching distance materials once like ECSC does help the learners to save their time and money .It is also better for ACDS to follow this method of dispatching the necessary materials

1.8 Evaluation

Evaluation is the means of collecting information about academic achievements of the students. Derebssa 2004:221) defines it as:

Any means which used to collect evidence of progress toward desired learning outcomes; i.e. evidence of what a student knows and is able to do. The process of testing, appraising and judging achievement, growth, product and process or changes ...

All this as it may, the researcher decided to visit both colleges as they were evaluating their students. They evaluated their students by giving them assignments and final examination.

1.8.1. Assignments

Assignments have had a lot of advantages to develop students' self study for the success of distance programs. They helped them to strengthen the relationship between learners and the tutors, and their center coordinators. Assignments encouraged the learners to read and refer different materials in addition to their modules. Assignments are compulsory in distance education system. Students were not allowed to take the final examination if they did not submit it on time. Tutors and counselors' comment on the assignments answered that papers encouraged the learners in their studies.

In this survey study a question relating to the assignments posed to a student from ECSC. He says:

I submit the assignments given on the dates due, however; I haven't got two corrected assignments. I collected assignments as I went to the center for final exam. As I asked for the previous assignments, the center coordinator asked me for apologized that they would do so soon. I sat for the final exam with out getting any feedback.

(14, April 2007)

Another student from ACDS adds:

I have never collected any corrected assignments recently. I did them when I was first year student and I didn't get my assignment paper since then. I was hopeless to call the center for my assignments. I didn't get frequent feedback for my assignment. One of my classmates didn't submit his assignments last year. In fact, no body asked him why he didn't. As to me assignments have had dual purposes. The tutors could understand their students' academic achievements.

(21, April 2007)

EMA (2002) in Fesseha (2006) states scholars in the field recommend the significance of providing feedbacks on student's assignments and sending them soon and has pedagogical advantages. The feed back encouraged the learners for further study.

Ethiopian Civil Service College learners have had better chance collecting their assignments during their monthly tutorial program session. But ACDS learners have had less opportunity to do so during their tutorial. Assignments were compulsory for both colleges.

1.8.2. Examination

It is one of the widely used strategies to get information about the progress of students. The information showed both institutions conducted final examination at the end each of semester. However, Ethiopian Civil Service College marks the final exam out of 70% where as Alpha College of Distance Studies corrected it out of 60%.

When the final exam was conducted, some ACDS students complained not getting their previous results. The center coordinator also admitted that such kind of minor problems might happen, but he said that his office automatically corrected if the students sign during the exam on attendance lists. In some sessions, the invigilators were standing near the door talking with people outside. This was observed by the researcher in one exam section. This gave rise to them copying from one another.

ACDS student who had some problems in locating exam room said:

I told a lot to day to get my exam room. I asked the assistant coordinator .He told me to see it from the notice board. I was disturbed, I asked the center coordinator, and showed me the exam room. I started the exam fifteen minutes late.

(Interview held, 21, April, 2007)

It was observed that in both institutions some learners spent much time in searching their exam rooms.

The Mainly Faced Challenges

The researcher raised some pertinent questions to assess the challenges of distance education.

The interviewees reportedly indicate the following major challenges:

- ◆ Un availability of reference materials for further reading
- ◆ Loose communication between learners, tutors and center coordinators.
- ◆ Delay in giving feedback to assignments.
- ◆ Lack of frequent responses for the telephone calls from the remote areas
- ◆ Time and money constraints to attend the face to face tutorial programs
- ◆ Lack of commitment of concerned bodies (to support learners.
- ◆ Centralized tutorial or unavailability of tutorial centers at Woreda or Zones level

- ◆ Length of time for course completion (long)
- ◆ Lack of enough transportation
- ◆ Lack of clear policy for distance education
- ◆ Lack of computer conference, audiovisual, tap recorder, video cassettes
- ◆ Lack of necessary facilities like library,

(Interview held with coordinator, tutors and /learners 2007).

4.1.3 Observation

The observation method is one of the most commonly used instruments for data collection. Kothari (2006:96) states the significance of data collection under the observation method as:

Under the observation method, the information is sought by way of investigators' own direct observation with out asking from the respondent.... the investigator instead of asking the brand of wrist watch used by the respondent, may himself look at watch.

Therefore, research employed observation method of data collection by directly participating in the present tutorial atmosphere. Kothari explained the advantage of observation method of data collection from the natural setting. He says:

- *Information obtained under this method relates to what is currently happening; is not complicated by either the past or future intentions or attitudes.*
- *This method is independent of respondents' willingness to respond.*
- *This method is particularly suitable to the studies that deals with subjects i.e.; respondents who are not capable of giving verbal reports of their feelings for one reason or the other. (2006:96).*

Having these in mind, observation was employed in data collection meant for triangulation. It was carried out as the tutorial and examination program were being conducted. Prior to the observation a checklist was prepared to record the events observed in and outside of the classrooms.

1. ECSC Tutorial Session Observation

Session I (Morning)

It was on 14th April 2007 that the tutorial was given at Betekihnet Junior Secondary School. The center coordinator arrived half an hour before the beginning of the tutorial program. He posted the timetable of the tutorial program on the school wall. Eight sections (two blocks) were prepared for this purpose. At 8:30 A.M the program was stated. Then, I went to Room 5 and introduced myself to the tutor. I asked his permission to attend his class. He allowed me and then I sat at the back to take my notes. The class was not convenient; the desks were prepared for small children. The windows were broken.

I was already informed that they were third year law major students. They were fourteen in number and nine of them were males and the rest five females. I asked a woman near by about the total number of females. She told me that they were seven but two of them did not frequently attend the face to face tutorial program due to their personal problems.

The tutor started his activities by introducing the courses and him self and then, he informed learners as to what they were supposed to do prior and after break.

He started lecturing by writing the unit and sub-title of the modules. Some learners began taking lecture notes and others preferred listening the lecture to taking notes. In between, he stopped his lecture and told the learners to read notes given in their modules. The teaching learning process continued through lecturing method. He finished the first part of module before the break time. Only one student asked a question before they went out for break.

From the observation, it was learnt that the course just has two modules. Tutor told the learners repeatedly to turn to certain pages. He was hurrying to exhaust the whole content of the module before lunch time.

Finally, the bell rang and the learners went out from their class with out uttering a word from school compound.

After the break the in were only eleven students. The tutor continued lecturing the second part of the module. Then students began to ask some questions. He gave a chance for two students to

respond to the question. Then, he himself replied question frequently to proceed to the second part of the module.

As to learning resources, chalk, duster, module and tutor's short notes (prepared by him) were used.

From the observation, it was understood that the teaching learning process was just un-directional. Learners were passive recipients when the program was conducted.

Session II (Afternoon)

I also observed a tutorial program for students majoring in Public Administration. There were twelve males and five females in the class. The classrooms situation was poor facilitated. The doors, windows and desks were broken. Black board and the classroom were unpainted. There was no light at all.

When the tutor came in to the class, learners smiled. After they greeted each other, he started revising previous lessons. He forwarded one question to the class and waited for a while. Then, he called the name a student to respond and the student attempted to respond .The researcher observed better interaction between the tutor and learners

Even if the tutor dominantly employed lecture method of teaching, he raised some questions in the middle of his lecture; he raised some questions to participate them and he gave a few minutes for discussion .Then, he began hurrying to cover the whole parts of the module before the given time was over. He began to write some short notes while he was lecturing. Learners focused on copying rather than listening to his lecture. After a few minutes he stopped his lecture and said good bye and left the class.

Chalk, duster, module and notes (prepared by the tutor) were the learning materials for that particular class.

2. ACDS Tutorial Session Observation at Awassa

Class Observation was conducted on 21st, April 2007in Tabour Junior Secondary School. When class observation was conducting, there were only nine males and two females' students in the class. The tutor began his lecture by revising what they did in their previous tutorial program.

In the middle of his lecture, he told the learners to read some pages of the module for their further information. They did every now and then, as they were told them to do. Finally, he asked the students if they had questions. Two students asked some questions. Then the tutor asked the students themselves to answer. However, only one student tried to do so.

The tutor answered all the questions. Learners didn't get the chance to discuss the questions in pairs or in-groups. Finally, he summarized important points and stopped lecturing and left the class.

There were no teaching materials except chalk, duster, module and notes which prepared by tutor himself.

4.2. Data from Center Coordinators

The centers coordinators of both institutions were selected for data collection to this interview to get pertinent data from their rich experience.

1. ECSC Awassa Center Coordinator

The researcher asked the center coordinator to share his personal information. He said:

I graduated from Dilla University in 1999 and then I had been teaching history for two years in the high school. Then, I have begun serving as center coordinator at Awassa center since 2002. For the last five years; I served as center coordinator with out assistance coordinator.

(14, April 2007)

This shows that the center coordinator has the experience of managing the program properly. Then, the researcher raised the question for the center coordinator as to how many students he served in the center. He said:

In these zones there were about 1500 ECSC distance participants. However, some students didn't attend face to face tutorial program every month regularly due to: lack of transportation, distance from the center, money, time, family and other problems.

(14, April 2007)

As the result of questionnaire, interview conducted with center coordinators, tutors and learners and observation carried out at the tutorial centers indicate a large number of distance course participants couldn't be beneficiary from the tutorial program because of lack of transportation,

distance from center, financial and time constraints and family problems are stated as the main barriers. While the interview was conducting, the researcher raised the question to the center coordinator how the tutors were recruited .He explained:

They were recruited as set criteria of the college. The tutors' submit their documents and the management sorts out carefully. And then the tutors were selected according to the criteria. Then, the tutors would be hired according to their qualification and experiences.

(14, April 2007).

This shows that the college has given a due attention for both qualification and experienced tutors so that they can share their rich knowledge and handle the adult learners properly. How ever, as the results questionnaire and interviews show that some distance learners complained about their tutors experience and poor handling the learners.

The researcher asked the center coordinators previous experiences as to how he has communicated with his distance learners. He says:

Some distance learners come to my office in person or call to my office to get information. As much as possible, they can get frequent provision for their question. Incase, if their questions were beyond my office. I contact with head office through fax or telephone to obtain frequent responds for learners' questions from the head office by giving them other appointment.

(14, April 2007)

This shows that the center coordinator has frequently communicated with distance learners. Nevertheless, as the result of questionnaires and interviews indicate that distance learners complained for loose communication between learners and center coordinator and also for the absence of frequent responses to their requests.

The researcher asked the center coordinator about provided services while distance program was carried out. He says:

There are a lot of problems that hinders our service provisions .These are: lack of trained manpower, lack means of communication, over-loaded working condition, lack of transportation and other related problems. Due to these reasons, we couldn't provide all services to our learners as needed. However, we did all our bests to serve our distance learners.

(14, April 2007)

But as data collected from learners indicate and also as it was observed by the researcher, distance learners got an insignificant service from their center.

The researcher raised additional question for center coordinator about preparation and dispatching of distance materials (modules).The center coordinator said:

Our distance materials were prepared with the team of higher institutions instructors. They employed their rich knowledge and experience in preparation of distance materials. The distance materials include all necessary activities and information. Our distance learners like the materials.

The distance materials, guide and annual calendar dispatched once while learners were registering for their courses. I didn't come across to any problems or complain while the distance materials preparing and dispatching.

(14, April 2007)

As data collected from the learners and center coordinator show that ECSC distance materials prepared by including all necessary information and activities.

The researcher continued asking the center coordinator how the college evaluates its distance learner's academic achievements. He said:

Two types of evaluations were widely employed. These are: assignment and final examination. The assignment's manual was marked out of 30% where as the final examination was marked out of 70%.The researcher asked the center coordinator about the consistence of an assignment .The center coordinator suggested that there were no possible ways to be sure whether the learner worked- out the assignments by their own or not . However, we tried to control the learners seriously to reduce cheating while the examination was going on.

(14, April 2007)

The researcher raised the final question to the center coordinator. The question was mainly focused on the problem faced while the program was implemented. The center coordinator explains:

We faced many problems while we were implementing the program. These could be: lack of trained manpower; problem of transportations, financial constraints and lack of learners' motivation in self learning.

(14, April 2007)

2. ECSC Debre Brehan Center Coordinator

ECSC has one center coordinator and one assistant coordinator in Debre Brehan branch office. The researcher asked the center coordinator to explain as to how many distance learners registered in the center. The center coordinator explained:

It is difficult to tell the exact number of students because they move from place to place but approximately the total number of learners enrolled could be more than 860.

(7, April 2007)

Then, the researcher asked the question how was face to face program conducted .The center coordinator explained:

Eight sections were prepared to conduct the face to face program but there were a few learners were available in this monthly tutorial program. They always complained about time, money constraints and lack of transportation as main problems.

(7, April, 2007)

As the results of questionnaire, interview held with learners and center coordinator views indicate that the majority of the distance learners couldn't be beneficiary from monthly tutorial program. They mainly raised lack of transportation, money and time constraints as main hindrances.

The researcher asked the center coordinator, how the center coordinator was recruited. He said:

The tutor was recruited according to the criteria of the college. In my center, we focused on experiences beside to the qualification they have had but some times we were forced to hire even tutors who didn't have experience when we came across the shortage of experienced tutors. Otherwise, I prefer not to hire unqualified tutors.

(7, April 2007)

The researcher asked the center coordinator how the learners communicate with the branch office. The center coordinator said:

The students can communicate in various ways. Some of them liked to send message via postal office and some of them sent different individuals who come to Debre Berehan for their own purposes. Infact, the majority of the respondents prefer to call us. Hence, we tried to solve their problems if they are not beyond our capacity.

(7, April 2007)

This shows that Debre Berehan center communicate with learners in various ways. However, as the data collected from learners' show that they hardly communicate with branch office.

The researcher proceeds to the provided service while the program was going on. The center coordinator explained:

There are huge number distance learners in our center but including center coordinator we are only four. Our distance learners have come to our center with different problems. Because of this, it is very difficult to satisfy them as they needed. This happens because of in balance number between staff workers and learners who needed services.

(7 April 2007)

As center coordinator points of views show that there is less number of office workers. But the numbers of distance learners increase from time to time. Because of this, some times we could fail to provide the needed service as needed. The researcher continued asking him if there are some problems in preparation and dispatching the distance materials (modules).The center coordinator explained:

In terms of preparation and dispatching our distance materials, I didn't come across any complain so far. Because as far as my knowledge is concerned, our distance materials were prepared with well qualified higher institutions lecturers and also the students collect their modules and study guides once when they registered for their courses.

(7 April, 2007)

This shows that there is no any complain comes from learners in preparation and dispatching distance materials. In addition to distance materials the researcher wanted to know how learners' academic achievement evaluation carried out. The center coordinator said:

The process of evaluation program has the same procedure thought out the country. The students submit their assignments before they sit for their final examination according to the college's annual time table. After the assignments are marked and commented, the learners were made to have it back with constructive feed backs.

(7, April 2007)

This shows us the procedures of evaluation of ECSC are the same through out the country. Finally, the researcher asked the center coordinators the problem they faced while the program was going on.

As I already stated that ECSC expends a lot of money for tutors during the conduct of face to face program but only a few learners have been frequently taking part in. Some learners come to the center only for an assignment submission and for final examination. In addition, now a day there are a lot of government and private colleges are conducting the distance education program throughout the country. However, as far as I know each college is follows their own system of delivering the courses. There is no fixed policy on implementation.

(21, April 2007)

Generally, both ECSC centers coordinators have shared some common points in conducting the distance program. Debre Brehan center has one assistance coordinator and where as Awassa has only one center coordinator to serve huge number of distance participants. Generally, Debre Brehan center has relatively better trained manpower than Awassa center .This is because Debre Brehan center has more opportunity to provide better services than Awassa center so far.

3. ACDS Awassa Center Coordinator

As already explained in back ground of this study, Alpha College of Distance Studies has many years experience in conducting distance education program. Because of this, the researcher prefers to interview the centers coordinators to obtain pertinent data for his study. And then the researcher raised his question about the number of his staff members and the total number learners enrolled in this center. The center coordinator explained:

The distance education program could not be carried by one center coordinator This program needs team works rather than individual works. In this center, there are two assistants' coordinators and two secretaries and one assistance secretary, one accountant are there. All of them run to accomplish their tasks. Our main target is to implement the distance program effectively. However, due large number distance learners our office workers are always busy.

(21, April 2007)

Even if, the center coordinator appreciates his staff members in accomplishing their tasks effectively but the learners complained them for their lack of transparency and unwillingness to give information or responds.

As it was proved in observation less number of learners were attending in face to face tutorial programs. The researcher was asked as to why the learners were not attending the program regularly. He says:

There was few number of students who only attended on the program regularly because the majority of students have come from the remotest areas. In fact, those who came from the remotest areas have wasted much time and money. They suffered a lot to come to the centers due to time, financial constraints and transportation problems.

(21, April, 2007)

The researcher asked the center coordinator how as to his center recruited the tutors. He says:

Alpha college has recruited tutors according to their qualification and experience. We give more priority for those who have had high experience and have deep knowledge about the subject matter in teaching.

(21 April, 2007)

This showed that Alpha College has given a due attention to experience and academic qualification of the candidates in their recruitment. Generally, as the data collected shows that both Alpha and ECSC colleges have given due attention for experiences besides to their qualifications.

The researcher asked the center coordinator how as to the learners communicate with the branch office. The center coordinator said that our students can contact with the center staffs in various ways. However, the majority of the learners prefer telephone to other means of communication.

As the results observation and interviews show that the learners explain that they hardly communicate with the branch office. Learners complained about unwillingness of some workers to give response their questions.

The researcher asked the center coordinator about the preparation and distribution of distance materials. He explained that our distance materials (modules) didn't prepare at the center .The main duty of our branch office is only dispatching the distance materials .Hence; we distributed the modules at once. As far as my knowledge is concerned, I didn't come across any complaint about the preparation and dispatching of our distance materials to the targeted learners. (21, April, 2007).

4. ACDS Debre Berehan Center Coordinator

The researcher asked the center coordinator the general frame work of distance program in the Debre Berehan center. The center coordinator says:

There are three staff members in Debre Berehan branch office. These are an assistant center coordinator and two secretaries who are working permanently in the office. The numbers of staff members are not enough to provide sufficient services for a large number of course participants.

(26, May 2007)

As the collected data show that the numbers of staff workers are not enough to provide sufficient service to the learners. Then, the researcher raised the question for the center coordinator how as to face to face program conducted in Debre Berehan. The center coordinator said that face to face program conducted in Atse Zeryikobe Junior Secondary school, four sections are prepared to conduct the program; however, due to various reasons only few students present in this program

As the results of questionnaire, interview and observation show lack of time, transportation, financial constraints are the main hindrances to attend face to face tutorial. In addition, center coordinator reported that his center selected the tutors according to their qualification and experience. If students complained tutors they look for other experienced tutors for the next face to face program.

The center coordinator explained that learners can communicate with concerned bodies and obtain in various ways. They mostly prefer telephones to others means of communication. They reported that all their staff members are ready to give learners the necessary information. However, as the results of data collected from the learners indicate there is loose connection between learners and branch offices.

Finally, the researcher raised question to the center coordinator regarding to learners evaluation. He explained that Alpha University College employs the same principle of evaluation. Learners are evaluated in two ways using assignments and final examinations. The students submit their assignments according to the time table of the college. Tutors mark their assignments out of 40% and send them back to the learners with constructive comments. (26, May 2007)

4.3 Data from Tutors

It was believed that tutors' rich experience help the researcher to obtain necessary information for the study. Holmberg (1981:88) explained that" tutors can play role in distance education by correcting what is wrong in a paper and assess the students' achievement". Having this mind, the researcher asked some related questions to get relevant information about the practice and challenges of distance education

Interviews with ECSC's Tutors

The researcher asked the tutor to explain about his personal detail .Accordingly, he said that he has been teaching in the high for the last 14 years and he has been working as tutor for the last five years. He was asked what kind of method he has dominantly employed while the program was carried out .He said;

I prefer learner center method of teaching basically; however, it is difficult to implement it here because of time constraints. So now I employ lecturing method. They need detailed discussions and explanations for each of the topics and subtopics because some learners come to the tutorial program without reading their modules and the majority of the students don't attend the monthly tutorial program.

(26 May 2007)

The inconvenience of tutorial center is a major problem because some students come to the tutorial center from the remotest area. They spend a lot of money and time to attend on the program. Generally, distance program needs clear policy at the federal level like regular program. The researcher raised some related questions to the tutors to know their roles and responsibilities. The interview was conducted at the tutorial center during ECSC is face to face program .He (tutor) says:

I am usually accomplishing my routine tasks. The first task is to prepare some related notes based on the given modules a few weeks before the tutorial day. I summarize the most important parts of the modules for tutorial class. In fact, some students ask me related questions or even their personal problem out side tutorial class. When they need my assistance, I do all my best but I don't ask any payments from the college.

(14 April, 2007)

Generally, tutors used lecturing method of teaching dominantly. They state that they rush to cover the given modules in the given two hours. They assist their learners outside the classes.

The tutors raised some challenges they faced while the tutorial was program conducted. These include: learners' less motivation, lack of preparedness for exam and assignments and the inconvenience of the tutorial center.

Debre Berehan Session Observation ECSC

Class observation was conducted on May 26, and 27 2007. The researcher observed the tutorial center. The tutorial program was conducted in Hilemariam Mamo Secondary School from 8:30 – 10:30am. Four sections were prepared for tutorial program. The tutor dominantly employed the lecture method .He jotted down some important points on the blackboard.

The researcher attended sixth semester accounting class which was conducted on May 26, 2007. There were seven males and two females' students present. The tutor began his lecture by revising the previous lessons. In the middle of his lecture, he told them to read some pages of their module for detail. The learners did that as they were told. Finally, they were asked if they had questions. In fact, three learners asked some question but they did not get a chance to discuss the questions in pairs or in groups. Finally, the tutor summarized some important points and left the class.

The afternoon session was conducted from 2: pm to 4:00pm. There were three students in the first classroom, one student in the second room, two students in third room and no students at all in the fourth classroom. The tutor was standing in front of classroom alone. After half an hour he left the school compound. There were no teaching materials observed except chalk, duster, module and notes (prepared by tutor himself).

It was observed that course participants who came from the remotest areas could not afford to attend the face to face program. The majority of the distance participants couldn't benefit from the face to face program.

Interviews with ACDS Tutors

The researcher raises some questions for ACDS tutors. The first question was related to the tutor's experience. The tutor said that he has been teaching for four years in nearby governmental higher institution. He employed different methods of teaching in his respective classes to motivate his students but now he prefers lecturing during the tutorial program conducted to cover the portion. The tutor further explained that group work is important in many ways but it is time consuming to cover all units of the modules in the given period of time. The researcher asked him if he faced any problem while the tutorial program was conducted. He says:

I faced many problems. Some students didn't come to the tutorial center according to the time table. For instance, now I am teaching the last part of the course. This course has three parts. Those students who missed one or two tutorial program have come to day. Some learners come from the remotest areas and spend a lot of money. To my understanding tutorial centers should be opened at Wareda level. Learners' problem should be assessed by the concerned bodies very carefully.

(21, April ad 26, May, 2007)

ACDS Session Observation at DebreBerehan

The face to face tutorial program was conducted at Atse Zeraykob Junior Secondary school. There were 8 males and 3 females in the class when the tutor came to the class. The tutor started revising the previous lessons and lecturing by referring to his notes. Some students started taking lecture notes but the others preferred listening. He asked them to read their modules in the middle of his lecturing and continued lecturing in the same way.

He saw his watch again and again and he was rushing to cover the portion before the time was over. Then he told the students that he covered all the necessary parts of the module and gave them the chance to ask questions. Two students asked some questions. And then the tutor invited other students to answer the questions but nobody attempted. After he answered the questions, he told the students to read their module for further information

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1. Summary

The major objective of this study has been to find out the practice and challenges of Ethiopian Civil Service College (Government) and Alpha College of Distance Studies (private) institutions in delivering distance education.

In an attempt to achieve the stated objective and to reach the set target, the researcher has designed different tools to enable him to study the practice and challenges of implementing distance program.

Under the review of related literature concepts and other theoretical issues relating to distance education have been discussed. In this regard various definitions which were provided by different scholars, its historical developments all over the world in developed and developing countries), management of distance education, role of concerned bodies in conducting the program, evaluation of learners' achievements and producing teaching material and its dispatching are included in detail.

The researcher employed multiple tools to gather the necessary data: questionnaire, interview (structured and semi-structured), observation and document analysis. He has selected them to obtain first hand information.

As source of data, two distance learning centers from Amahara and SNNPR were selected purposefully on the basis of availability of sufficient informants. The informants' of the sixth semester (third year diploma) learners were selected specifically to obtain their rich experiences. Moreover, tutors and center coordinators of these sites were selected to utilize their rich experiences for this study.

The instruments were pilot- tested on five selected distance learners, two tutors and two coordinators so that they could be reliable and valid. Thus three questions from the questionnaire and two questions from the interviews were rejected and some modifications were made for the remaining questions.

The information gathered from these sources were organized and analyzed (explained) in diverse (table, percent and narrative) ways. Thus, the information gathered through questionnaire gave chances for all sixth semester (third year) diploma graduating students to respond to the set questions. The questionnaires were administered while the distance program participants were attending the last third year (sixth semesters) face to face tutorial program.

The collected data with the multiple tools were described by using narrative approaches and word quotations, from the respondents (in semi structured interview case). The collected data were operated via statically operations such as tables and percentage.

Findings

The study revealed that the majority of the distance learners were found to be between the age 20 and 51. This implies that the beneficiaries were both youngsters and adults. It was also found out that the majority of the course participants were males (less females' participation).

With regard to their marital status, it was learnt that large number of distance learners were married. It will be deduced from this that the majority of the course participants might have additional responsibilities. It was also find out that the large number of distance course participants lived in the rural area.

It was learnt that a large number of distance learners particular by those who come from rural areas were faced various problems to take part in the face to face tutorial program. For instance; financial and time constraints, family burden, lack of transportation and distance from the centers.

Those who came for the tutorial program also complained that learners expected fewer outcomes from the tutorial program and they consider as the wastage of time and money. This reveal that learners and tutors time of contact was not enough.

Regarding the availability and dispatching the distance materials, it was discovered that there was the difference between these colleges. In this regard, ECSC was much better than ACDS.

It was discovered that learners of both colleges prefer various means of communication to contact the concerned individuals, center coordinators and tutors. Particularly, telephone was dominantly used better than other means of communication to obtain rapid responses. However, it is learnt

that there is complain that they could not get sufficient service from concerned individuals. It was also learnt that communication play role in implementing the program effectively.

It is true that tutors assistance play crucial role while they were working on their assignments. Tutors can help their learners by giving necessary information and solving their problems they faced. It was learnt that distance learners could not get any assistance from their tutors.

Tutors feedback plays role in encouraging the learners for their further working. However, both colleges distance learners did not get appropriate feedback and explanation for unanswered questions on time.

It is clear that dedicated managements can play significant role to achieve the targeted objective. It was understood that due to lack of trained manpower in each centers, both colleges managements fail to provide sufficient services for their learners.

Employing modern media technologies have great contribution in the success of distance education program. However, except chalk, duster and tutors' note other media technologies were not seemed in both colleges' tutorial centers. It was learnt from the study neither ECSC nor ACDS have made effort to employ media technologies.

5.2 Conclusions

Based on the findings of the study; the following conclusion could be drawn.

- As to the back ground information of the learners, it was learnt that they were youngsters and adults whose age lied between 20 and 51.in addition to this more than two-third of the respondents were married and have families whom they support. The majority of the distance course participants are males.

Thus is also found out that because of the family burden, distance from the center and time and money constraint. They had no chance of getting to acquire different skills and upgrading their qualification except the distance program. However, females still couldn't be beneficiary from it.

- When it comes to face to face tutorial program, even if the program is conducted according to the colleges' time table, the large number of participants could not be beneficiary because of inconvenience of tutorial centers, time and money constraint, lack of transportation and learners expecting less out come from the tutorial program.

- With regard to material dispatching, both institutions follow the strategy of distributing all necessary materials at once. However, ACDS' learners sometimes were asked to come for unavailable course materials in the center store. In this regard ECSC learners appreciate their college, as they are not forced to visit their centers again and again to collect materials.
- In the regard of communication, distance learners employ all possible means of communication, but more dominantly telephone to get service from their center and tutors.

However; concern or dedication is not seen in both colleges to give them immediate responses for their requests.

- Assignments are one of the possible ways which learners use with their tutors. EMA (2000) in Fisseha (2006:58) shows that the practice of providing feedback on learners' assignment and give them back sooner has pedagogical advantage because it encourages learners for further study. However, it was found out that both institutions were not giving back with appropriate feedback on time and also the provided explanation for unanswered questions were not enough to encourage them for further reading.

To make distance learning more effective it is advisable that different media be employed. The study found out that neither of the institutions shows much effort to employ portable tape recorder to listen lecture of their tutors where they want. This implies that both institutes' learners missed the opportunity of being beneficiary in this regard.

5.3 Recommendation

There is unbalanced sex distribution in the distance education program. It means that less number of females take part in the program. Therefore, institutions should encourage the females by providing them necessary supports.

Even if the distance materials are distributed to learners, learners should get their tutors guidance and advice on the given expressions, examples, questions, spelling errors or poor printing of the modules (distance materials).

- Besides course materials, distance learners need additional reference materials as they study for additional reference materials as they study for their examination or assignment. Lack of reference materials has prevented learners' from acquiring enough knowledge about the

subject matters. Therefore, institutions should pay due attention to the availability of reference materials at their respective centers.

- Attending face to face tutorial program plays a key role for learners' academic success. However, many learners could not be beneficiary from the tutorial program because of lack of transportation, money and time constraints, distance from the center and inconvenience of the centers. Therefore, institutions should facilitate the ways to conduct the face to face tutorial program at Woreda level.
- Availability of library with its necessary facilities at the tutorial centers help learners to get enough knowledge about their courses. Nevertheless, libraries haven't been seen in the tutorial centers. Hence, institutions should establish library with its facilities at tutorial centers.
- The study also reveals that distance learners' employ different means of communication to contact with concerned individuals. Therefore, the concerned bodies should give necessary responses on time as much as possible.
- Providing appropriate explanations and necessary feedbacks help learners for further reading on their subject areas. Therefore, center coordinators and tutors should play role in giving back learners' assignments with sufficient explanations and feedbacks on time. Employing different media technologies helps, to disseminate education from one part of the country to another without geographical constraint. And also it creates the opportunity of exchanging idea between learners and tutors. As a result, both institutions should made effort to employ media technology in the distance program.
- Ethiopian Education Strategy (1994) indicates the importance of distance education in producing skilled manpower. Therefore, the government has to provide necessary supports for institutions so as to enable them evaluate their services and contribute to the development of quality education through distance mode of teaching.

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Appendix A

Addis Ababa University, School of Graduate Studies, Faculty of Education

Department of Curriculum and Instruction

Questionnaire to be filled by the distance program participants (3rd and 4th years)

(Year 2007)

Objectives

The main objective of this questionnaire is to gather information on the challenges of implementing distance education program in case of government and private higher institutions. Thus, it is initiated to obtain necessary data from you, as a vital source of information in the teaching- learning process of the program and to point out the challenges of distance education programs with possible solution and recommendation. Therefore, I believe that you would to the questionnaire with honest and trustworthiness.

Direction: please indicate your response by putting a tick (√) mark against one choice where appropriate. For open ended type question(s), write your short response.

Dear respondent upon completing filling- in this questionnaire, you are kindly requested to return it to the concerned person immediately.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation

Part 1: Personal Detail

Writing your name is not necessary.

2.3 Year of entry in this program -----

2.4 Age (in years)

1) Below 20

4. 41- 50

2) 21- 30

5. above 50

3) 3. 31- 40

1.3 Sex: 1. Male 2. Female

1.4 Marital status

1. Single 2. Married 3. Divorced 4. Widowed

1.5 Place of residence

1. Urban 2. Rural

1.6 Distance of your residence from your study center (in kms).

1. Below 10 3. 21-30 5. 41-50
2. 10 -20 4. 31- 40 6. Above 60 specify -----

17. Job ----- place of work -----

18. Major and minor courses you are studying at distance

Major -----

Minor -----

Part 2: Admissions

2.1 Who finance your education?

1. Self-financing (fee- paying)

2. Fully government sponsored

3. Other specify -----

2.2 One major reason for which you wanted admission into the distance mode was:

1. To improve qualification so as to earn high pay

2. To acquire skill

3. To seek other job

4. For promotion

5. Academic interest

6. Others, specify -----

2.3 Why have you chosen 'Distance mode' for your study?

- 1. Could not get admission in a regular college
- 2. Full time employee, hence, not possible to join the conventional college program
- 3. Financially less expensive

Part 3: Course Material

3.1 Do you receive the course materials on time?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

3.2 To what extent do you find the course material(s) useful?

- 1. Highly appropriate
- 2. Appropriate
- 3. Medium
- 4. Inappropriate

3.3 To what extent do you think the course material(s) are easily to understand?

- 1. Very easy understand
- 2. Understandable
- 3. Medium
- 4. Understandable
- 5. Very difficult to understand

3.4 The quality of distance materials of the various courses

	Very good	Good	Medium	Poor	Very poor
Paper					
Content					
Structure					
In text question					
Up to date ness					

Part 4: Tutorial Classes

4.1 Do you attend your tutorials regularly?

1. Yes 2. No

4.2 If your answer is Yes for question 4.1 how often?

1. Regularly
2. Sometimes
3. Rarely

4.3 If your response is question no 4.1, what are the major reasons?

1. Study center is very far away from my residence
2. Lack of time
3. Due to financial constraints
4. Felt it not much necessary
5. Any other reason specify it please-----

4.4 How do you evaluate the usefulness of face-to-face contact classes?

1. Very useful 4. Not useful
2. Useful 5. Extremely useless
3. Medium

4.5 To what extent are your doubts clarified by counselors (tutors)?

1. Well clarified 4. Not clarified
2. Clarified 5. Undecided
3. Medium

4.6 Frequency of contact with counselors (tutors) at the tutorial center

1. More than enough 4. Not enough
2. Enough 5. Extremely not enough
3. Medium

4.7 Do you have contacts outside out side of the center with you're...

- 1. Your tutor outside the general face to face program? 1. Yes 2. No
- 2. The coordinator of the tutorial center? 1. Yes 2. No
- 3. Your peers (other distance course learners)? 1. Yes 2. No

4.8 What means of communication do you prefer to contact with your tutor/ center coordinator?

- 1. Telephone
- 2. Through written message (postal service)
- 3. In person/ face- to- face
- 4. If other please specify -----

5.1. Are there library facilities at your tutorial center that are accessible to students?

- 1. Yes 2. No

5.2. Which of the following media services did you use most in your distance courses? You may tick more than one box

- 1. Radio 4. All accordingly
- 2. Audio cassettes 5. None
- 3. Video

Part 6: Other information

6.1. To what extent is the program management effective distance mode of education?

- 1. Highly effective 4. Ineffective
- 2. Effective 5. Highly ineffective
- 3. Medium

6.2 Which of the following could be the major reasons that hinder (affects) learners academic achievement?

Degree of the problem

	Problems	Very much	Much	Medium	Less	Not at all
1	Difficulties of course material					
2	Lack of study skills					
3	Delay of teaching materials					
4	Delay of assignment feedback					
5	Inconsistence of tutorial schedules					
6	Unavailability of means of transportation					
7	Lack of communication with college staffs					

6.3 To what extent do you think the following factors would be hindrances for the completion of your distance study?

No	Problems	Degree of hindrance for expectation					
		Very high	High	Medium	Less	Least	Not at all
1	Your clarity in your learning objective NC						
2	Your commitment in self learning						
3	Your efficiency in writing and preparing your assignment						
4	Efficiency in preparing yourself for exam						

7. Effectiveness of the instructional (delivery) system

7.1. To what extent do explanations on left help you to achieve the expected results?

- | | | | |
|------------------|--------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. A lot of help | <input type="checkbox"/> | 4. Less help | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. Enough help | <input type="checkbox"/> | 5. Extremely no help | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. Medium | <input type="checkbox"/> | | |

7.2. To what extent did you get assistance or help from your tutor in writing your assignment for submission?

- | | | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Much assistance | <input type="checkbox"/> | 4. Negligible assistance | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. Average assistance | <input type="checkbox"/> | 5. Not at all | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. Some assistance | <input type="checkbox"/> | | |

7.3. Would you please, write down the lists of assistance you wanted but due to some reasons you didn't get while you are working on your assignment or study?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____

7.4 How often does your tutor give explanation and guidance concerning questions you failed to have answer in your assignments?

- | | | | |
|---------------------|--------------------------|---------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Always | <input type="checkbox"/> | 4. Rarely | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. Most of the time | <input type="checkbox"/> | 5. Not at all | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. some times | <input type="checkbox"/> | | |

7.5 How would you rate the adequacy of the face to face tutorial sessions in your distance program?

- | | | | |
|--------------------|--------------------------|------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Most adequate | <input type="checkbox"/> | 4. Less adequate | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. Adequate | <input type="checkbox"/> | 5. Not adequate | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. Fairly adequate | <input type="checkbox"/> | | |

7.6 How do you evaluate the comments given by your tutor for your work in the previous semesters?

- | | | | |
|---------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Most encouraging | <input type="checkbox"/> | 4. Least encouraging | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. Encouraging | <input type="checkbox"/> | 5. Not encouraging at all | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. Less encouraging | <input type="checkbox"/> | | |

7.7 How do you evaluate the commitment of your college administration for success of the distance education program?

- | | | | |
|-------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Very effective | <input type="checkbox"/> | 4. Not effective at all | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. Effective | <input type="checkbox"/> | 5. Not decided | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. Less effective | <input type="checkbox"/> | | |

በተማሪዎች የሚሞላ ቃለ መጠይቅ መመሪያ

ዓላማዎች

የዚህ ቃለመጠይቅ ዋና ዓላማ የርቀት ትምህርት ኘሮግራምን ውጤታማ ለማድረግ በሚደረገው ጥረት ውስጥ ሊያጋጥሙ የሚችሉትን ችግሮች በዝርዝር ለማጥናት ለችግሩም መፍትሔ ለመፈለግ የተዘጋጀ ቃለ መጠይቅ ነው። በዚህ ቃለመጠይቅ ላይ ተሳታፊ የሚሆኑት የመንግስትና የግል ክፍተኛ ትምህርት ተቋማት የሶስተኛ ዓመት ተማሪዎች ናቸው።

ውድ ተማሪዎች በህላማው ላይ እንደተጠቀሰው የችግሩን መፍትሔ ለማግኘት የእናንተን ቀና ተሳትፎ ችግሩ ጎልቶ እንዲወጣና የሀገራችንን የርቀት ትምህርት ጥራት ለማሳደግ ክፍተኛ ሚና ይጫወታል ብሎ አምናለሁ።

የግል ታሪክ

ዕድሜ _____ የጋብቻ ሁኔታ _____
ሥራ _____ የቤተሰብ ብዛት _____
የሚሰሩበት መሥሪያ ቤት _____

1. ከሥራ ላይ ስልጠና ለክረምት ትምህርት ኘሮግራም ከአድቫንስ ስታንዲንግ የርቀት ትምህርትን ኘሮግራምን ለመከታተል የመረጡበት ዋና ዋና ምክንያቶች ምን እንደሆኑ ሊልፁልኝ ይችላሉ?
2. የዚህ የርቀት ትምህርት ኘሮግራምን ለመከታተል ከመመዘገብዎ በፊት የተሰጠዎት ኦሬንቴሽን ወይም ምክር አለ? መልስዎ አዎን ከሆነ ሁኔታውን በዝርዝር ሊያስረዱን ይችላሉ?
3. የርቀት ትምህርትዎን ሲከታተሉ በትምህርት ላይ ያጋጠመዎት ችግር ካለ በዝርዝር ሊያስረዱን ይችላሉ? ችግሩ መኖሩን ካረጋገጡ ችግሩን እንዴት እንደተወጡት ልምድዎትን ሊያካፍሉን ይችላሉ?

ቱቶርን በተመለከተ

4. የገጽ ለገጽ ማሟያ ኘሮግራም በሴሚስተር ስንት ጊዜ ይሰጣል?
5. በዚህ በገጽ ለገጽ የማሟያ መረሃ ግብር ላይ ሙሉ በሙሉ ይሳተፋሉ? መልሶ አይደለም ከሆነ ምክንያቶቹን ቢጠቅሱልን?

6. በገጽ ለገጽ ቱቶር ወቅት ዋና ዋና ችግሮች ምንድን ናቸው? በዝርዝር ቢያስረዱን?

7. በዚህ በገጽ ለገጽ የቱቶር ወቅት ከመምህሩ በቂ ድጋፍ አግኝቻለሁ ብለው ያምናሉ?

ሀ/ በቂ አይደለም የሚሉ ከሆነ ምክንያቶቹን ቢያስረዱን

ለ/ ከገጽ ለገጽ ከመምህሩ የሚገኙት ገለጻ ወይም ድጋፍ ምን ያህል ጠቃሚ ነው ብለው ያምናሉ? ለምን?

8. በገጽ ለገጽ የቱቶር ማሟያ መርሃ ግብር መልስዎ አይደለም ከሆነ ለምን?

9. የርቀት ትምህርቶን በሚከታተሉበት ወቅት ከጣቢያው አስተባባሪ፣ ከመምህሩ ጋር እና ትምህርቱን ከሚከታተሉ ጓደኞችዎ ቶሎ ቶሎ የመገናኘት አጋጣሚዎች አሉ?

ሀ/ መልስዎ አዎን ከሆነ የትኛውን የመገናኛ ዘዴዎች ይጠቀማሉ?

1. በአካል

2. በስልክ

3. በደብዳቤ

4. ሌላ ዘዴ ካለ በዝርዝር ሊጠቅሱልኝ ይችላሉ?

10. በትምህርትዎ ወቅት ከጣቢያው አስተባባሪና ከመምህርዎ ምን አይነት ድጋፍ ይሻሉ?

11. ከመምህርዎ ወይም ከርስዎ የጣቢያ ሀላፊ ስለ ትምህርትዎ ጉዳይ ድጋፍ ፈልገው ግን ድጋፍን ያጡበት ጊዜ አለ? ከአለ ከዚህ ሁኔታ በመነሣት በርስዎ የትምህርት ውጤት ላይ ያጋጠመዎ ችግር ካለ ቢያስረዱን?

12. በመረሃ ግብር መሠረት ሳይሰጥ የቀረ ኮርስ አጋጥሞት ያውቃል? መልስዎ አዎን ከሆነ ምክንያቱን ቢያስረዱን?

13. በተቋሙ የሚሰጠው የገጽ ለገጽ ትምህርት በቂ ነው ብለው ያምናሉ? ሀ/ መልስዎ አዎን ከሆነ ለምን?

ለ/ መልስዎ አይደለም ከሆነ ለምን

14. መምህርዎ በገጽ ለገጽ ወቅት በቂ ዝግጅት ያደረገና ተማሪዎችን ለመርዳት ዝግጁ ነው ብለው ያምናሉ? መልስዎ አይደለም ከሆነ ምክንያቱ ምን ይመስልዎታል?

15. የርቀት ትምህርትን ማቴሪያሎችን ሥርጭት በተፈለገ ወቅት ማግኘትን የተመለከተ ምን አስተያየት አሎት? በጣም ዘግይቶ የደረሰዎ አጋጣሚ ያስታውሱታል?

16. የርቀት ትምህርት መረሃ ግብር የሚዘጋጁ የመማሪያ ማቴሪያሎች ጥራትና ጉድለታቸውን እንዴት ያዩታል?

17. በርቀት የትምህርት የመማሪያ ማቴሪያሎች ውስጥ ጉድለት ቢያጋጥሞት በዚህ ጉዳይ ከሚመለከታቸው አካላት ጋር የመነጋገር ሁኔታ አልዎት?

18. በአጠቃላይ የርቀት ትምህርት መማሪያ ቁሳቁሶችን እንዴት ይገመግሙታል?

ሀ/ ከመጣጣም አኳያ (in appropriate)

ለ/ ከዝግጅት አኳያ

ሐ/ የርቀት ትምህርትን ከማሳደግ አኳያ ያለው ሚና?

መ/ ከዚህ ውጪ ሌላ የሚጠቅሱት ነገር ካለ?-----

የተማሪዎችን ምዘናን ፈተና በተመለከተ

19. የርቀት ትምህርት የሚከታተሉ ተማሪዎችን በመንፈቀ ዓመት ስንት ጊዜ ፈተና ይመስዳሉ?

20. ለርቀት ተማሪዎች የሚዘጋጀው ፈተና ለማስተማሪያ ከተሰራጩ ማቴሪያሎች ጋር ተያያዥነት አለው?

21. ፈተኞቹ በፈተና ወቅት ተማሪዎቹን በአግባቡ የመቆጣጠሩ ሁኔታ እንዴት ነው?

ሀ/ ችግር የነበረባቸው ወቅቶች ካሉ በዝርዝር ቢገልፁልን?

ለ/ ለተፈጠሩ ችግሮች በፈታኝ መምህራንህ ጉዳዩ ከሚመለከታቸው ግለሰቦች የተወሰደ የእርምጃ እርምጃ ምንድን ነው?

22. እንስቲቱሽኑ የሚጠይቀው የተማሪዎችን ችሎታ መመዘኛ ዘዴዎችን እንዴት ይገመግሙታል?

23. ተገቢ ያልሆነ የፈተና አዘገጃጀት ዘዴ በተማሪዎች ላይ ምን ጉዳት ያስከትላል ብለው ያምናሉ?

24. አግባብ ያልሆነ የፈተና ዘዴዎች የርቀት ትምህርትን መርሃ ግብር መተግበር ችግር ላይ ይጥላል ብለው ያምናሉ? መልሶ አዎን ከሆነ እንዴት? በዝርዝር ቢያስረዱን?

25. ስለ መልመጃ አሰጣጥ አጠቃላይ አስተያየትዎ ጠንካራና ደካማ ጎን ምንድን ነው?

26. የኮሌጁ የርቀት ትምህርት ውጤት አሰጣጥን በተመለከተ ያለዎት አስተያየት?

ሌሎች

27. የርቀት ትምህርትን ውጤታማነት ሊፈታተኑ የሚችሉ ችግሮች ምንድናቸው ብለው ያምናሉ?

28. በርስዎ እምነት ማኔጅመንቱ የርቀት ትምህርትን ውጤታማነትን የሚፈታተኑትን ችግሮች ለማስወገድ በቂ ችሎታ አለው ብለው ያምናሉ? እንዴት?

29. ተቋሙ ለርቀት ተማሪዎች የሚጠውን አገልግሎት ጠንካራና ደካማ ጎኖች እንዴት ይገመግሙታል?

30. ተቋሙ እንደተቋም የርቀት ትምህርት ውጤታማ ለማድረግ ማሻሻል አለበት የሚሉት ነገር ምንድን ነው?

31. ሌላ አስተያየት ካለዎት?

Appendix B

Interview guides- with the learners

The objective of the study is to find out the challenges for implementing distance education in government and private higher institutions. Thus, a distance learner, your genuine responses to the questions set are paramount for the successes of study.

Your back ground

Age -----

marital status -----

Job-----

family size -----

Why do you like to continue your education on distance education program while there are other alternatives for example advance standing or summer in services program; etc

Had you been given any orientation or advice before you began the distance education program? If your answer is 'yes' what where you told you need to note?

What problem do you face during your course?

1. Tutoring

4. How often are face to face tutorial classes given per semester?

5. What are the challenge faces during face to face tutorial class given?

6. Do you think it's enough to have the necessary assistance course with the program?

7. Do you attend all the face to face tutorial programs scheduled for you/ if no why?

8. When you come to the face to face tutorial classes, what do you expect your fetors do?

Did they do the way you expected them?

How much helpful are tutorial classes for you.

9. Do you like your face to face tutorial program? If your answer is 'No' explain the reasons, pleas

10. Do you make frequent contacts with your tutors, peers, or coordinators of the center? And how often and for what purpose do you meet them? What means of communication do you prefer to contact them?

1. Person

2. Telephone

3. Letter or postal service

11. What kind of assistances do you expect from your tutors, or/ and center- coordinators

12. What assistances do you expected from your tutors, and/or center- coordinators for the success of the program?

13. Do your tutor(s) attend the center on time?

14. Is there the assistance you expected but not provided?

15. Are there courses that were scheduled but not given?

16. Do you think that the method of teaching or counseling by the tutor was satisfactory? If 'No' why?

17. Do you think your tutors coming well prepared and willing to help you?

If 'No' why?

18. What do you think about the

1. Effectiveness or draw back of tutorial program?

2. Material dispatch

19. Do you collect your material(s) from the center on time?

20. Have you come across distance materials delay?

What do you fee/ when material delayed?

What kind of academic problem faced?

Do you think materials delay highly hinder?

Learners' academic achievement?

The progress of distance education program?

Materials

21. Do you find any problems with distance materials when you deal with them? If so

Do you have the opportunity to comment on the packages?

What strong weak points do you find in the packages?

Do you get the chance to discuss these with center- coordinator, or concerned bodies?

How do you evaluate distance teaching materials?

Do you think in appropriate poorly prepared and unrevised distance materials affect the progresses of distance education program?

Evaluation

22 How often do you take examination in a semester?

23. Do the exam prepared according to the distributed materials?

24. Do the invigilators carefully supervised while the exam conducted?

25. Can you tell me please, the faced problems in while the exam conducted? What was cause of the problem?

What kinds of measure(s) are taken by invigilator?

26. How do you evaluate the evaluation techniques of the institution?

27. Do inappropriate evaluation techniques affect students' academic achievement?

Do poor evaluation techniques affect the implementation of distance education program?

Others

28. What is/are the challenges distance education program?

29. Do the management efficient enough to solve the faced problem during the program conducted?

30. Do the evaluation, tutor program conducted according to time table?

31. How do you evaluate over all service you are provided by the institute?

What/ which areas are appreciable?

What/ which areas you think need improved?

Appendix C

Interview guides-with Center Coordinator

As center coordinator, would you tell me your and your colleagues' major roles and responsibilities in implementing distance program?

Do you think the number of your staff is sufficient with a number of students to provide them sufficient services?

What are the criteria set by your institution to recruit a tutor?

How do your distance learners can communicate with center coordinator, tutor or with your staffs to obtain information? (Telephone, letter, fax, in person or multiple ways)

Do you think the program is effectively implemented in your center?

How does your center dispatch learning materials?

What problems do you face?

How do you solve the problems you faced?

Do the learners complain about the quality of distance learning materials in terms of its paper, content, structure, activities and up to date ness?

Would you explain how face to face tutorial program is carried out?

Could you brief me the number of learners who frequently attending in face to face tutorial program?

What kind of problems do you observe?

Were the courses that were not given that day due to some problems? If, so what measures do you take then?

Examination

Do the invigilators carefully supervise while the examination is conducted?

Please, could you mention irregularities you observe during examination?

Do the learners attend on time in the exam room on the exam day?

Do the exams conduct according to the schedule?

What others problems did you observe regarding the exam?

Assignments

Do all students in your centre submit their assignments in time schedule? If not what measure did you take?

Did their assignments check (correct) and back with out delay?

Do the learners collect their checked assignments as soon as possible?

What other problems did you observe regarding assignments?

General question

How do you evaluate the overall system of distance education program?

Which strong side of the program do you appreciate?

Which areas need improvement to conduct the program effectively through out the nation?

Does your college make any attempt to share experiences with other institutions?

Appendix D

Interview guides-with Tutors

Would you tell me your qualification and experience, please?

How often do you give face to face tutorial program? Which method of teaching do you prefer (discussion, lecture group work, pair work or all).Why?

Do you get clear orientation about your roles and responsibilities?

Do you think the time allotted for your course enables you to cover all important points of the modules?

Have you faced any challenging problems while you are conducting face to face tutorial program?

Do your students have a chance to contact with you other than face to face tutorial classes?

Would you mention some techniques how you could evaluate the originality of your learners' assignments?

How do you evaluate the over all delivery of distance education program?

a)Would you mention its strong sides, please?

b) Which areas need improvement to make the program more effective?

Appendix E

Program observation checklist

Location -----

Notice board ready -----

Time scheduled for the tuition/ examination -----

Learners Punctuality -----

 Tutors -----

 Coordinators -----

Necessary help to learners -----

Directing them to the classes they are assigned -----

Are there courses that are not given that day -----?

General comments _____

Things to be improved _____

Appendix F

Tutorial Session Observation Class Room Activities Checklists

Location -----

Name of the center -----

Subject observed -----

Name of the tutor (teacher) -----

Date of observation ----- Time -----

1. Classroom Situation:

No of students ----- male ----- female ----- Total -----

Necessary facilities -----

Overall classroom situation -----

Large enough -----

Let's light -----

Has a facility -----

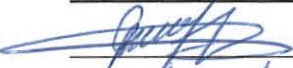
Noise protected -----

2. Classroom performance

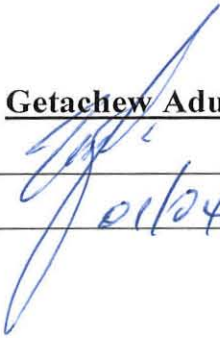
Tutoring method (method applied)	Degree of performance				
	Very Low	Low	Medium	High	Very high
Lecture					
Discussion Group Pair					
Eliciting					
Q and A					
Role playing					
Others					
Tutors proper use of time					
Available of support material					
Learners satisfaction about factoring					

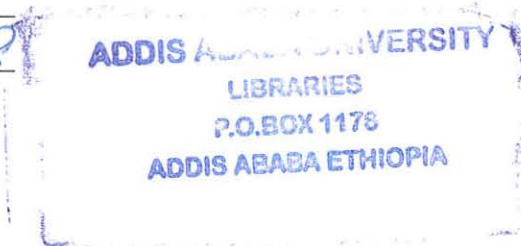
Declaration

I, the undersigned, declare that this thesis is my original work and has not been presented for any other degree and that all sources of materials used for the thesis have been duly acknowledged:

Name: **Tadesse Hundie**
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Date: 01/04/08

The thesis has been submitted for examination with my approval as a university advisor.

Name: **Getachew Adugna (Ato)**
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Date: 01/04/08



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