ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSTY
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES

THE IMPLEMENTATION OF DIPLOMA LEVEL DISTANCE EDUCATION IN PRIVATE HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS OF ADDIS ABABA CITY ADMINSTRATION

BY: KETEMA HAILE SELLASSIE

JULY, 2007
ADDIS ABABA

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APPROVAL BY BOARD OF EXAMINERS

Yekunzamlak Alemu (Dr)	
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Advisor	**Signature**
Zenebe Baraki (Dr)	
Internal examiner	**Signature**
Mulugeta Semru (Dr.)	
External examiner	**Signature**

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List of Abbreviations/Acronyms

EMA: Educational Media Agency.

MOE: Ministry Of Education.

TV : Television

AV : Audio Video

UNISCO: United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization.

TMA: Tutor Marked Assignment

SAQ: Self Assessment Questions

ABSTRACT

The main purpose of this study was to identify, examine and describe the current implementation status of diploma level distance education programs in private distance institution of Addis Ababa city administration so as to forward the problems they face and to suggest possible recommendations which will help them to provide better educational services to the public. To this end answers to the basic questions pertaining to the manner of course material designing, preparation and distribution, tutorial and exam administration, manner of student support services and medias used to deliver the course sought for.

The research methodology employed in this study was descriptive survey. The data were collected through questionnaire and interview. The obtained data were analyzed by using percentage, mean value and in some cases one way-ANOVA. The qualitative data obtained from open-ended question and interviews were presented as given by the respondents.

The findings of the study revealed that, most private higher distance education institutions of Addis Ababa were preparing course materials which were relevant and self instructional, in the form of print materials (module).The courses given were supported with tutor marked assessment which learners submit for each courses. However, the study also found out problems related to learner support services, tutorial sessions and exam administration. The study further revealed that distance education institutions were not in a position to use the new information communication technologies in their system. In this age of technological advancement, they still depend only print materials which are an age old practice. The availability of student support services also almost non-existence which needs due attention from all concerned parties.

Finally, on the basis of the findings, it was recommended that, distance education providers should have given due attention on the implementation of the program specifically in supporting the course with new information technologies ,giving sufficient advise and counseling services and make the face-to-face tutorial sessions helpful to the learners among all others.

CHAPTER ONE

1. Introduction

This chapter includes background of the study, statement of the problem, significance of the study, delimitation of the study, research methodology and procedure, definition of terms and organization of the study.

1.1 Background of the Study

Education is necessity in human endeavor for the development of a nation. As MOE (1994:1) states, education helps to strengthen the problem solving capacity, ability and culture of individuals and the society. People equip themselves with the necessary skills, knowledge and attitude to alleviate social problems like poverty, diseases and ignorance through training and education. Besides, education has an immense contribution to new discoveries and the social, political, economic and cultural advancement of a given society. Because of this, societal demand for education increases from time to time, which in turn, requires a continuous expansion of educational services all over the world. Making education accessible to all citizens is not an easy task for the governments of developing countries. This is because; the financial, material and human resources which the education sector requires are beyond the economic capacity of such countries.

The development in science and technology also plays a significant role in stimulating the interest of the people in demand for education which requires the expansion of more and more schools. In addition to cope up with the current growth and development, new systems of training and upgrading the human resource is quite necessary. However, as it indicated above, the cost of expanding schools and facilitating them with the necessary equipment is quite difficult. In relation to this, Bishop (1994:155) suggests that: No matter how long the time period, no developing country can hope to make education universally available or to train number of qualified teachers who are needed to satisfy the growing demands of the society for education, using traditional methods alone. Similarly, Shrestha (2000:4) further states that the existing traditional means of providing education are weak to accommodate the growing needs

and aspiration of the society. This shows that the available traditional classroom teaching lacks the capability to satisfy the growing demand of education. Hence, the incapability of the conventional schools to satisfy the increasing demand for education and the scarcity of available resources led many developed and developing countries to find an alternative form of delivering education which can accommodate a large number of students at a time. That is called 'distance learning' or 'distance education'. Distance education is a mode of imparting and acquiring knowledge, developing skills and attitudes for people who live far away at a distance. It differs from the formal conventional education in that students who are enrolled in distance education are far from the teacher and the institution. Besides, they cover most of their study by their own at their own pace. Many writers treat distance education in various ways. Among these, Keegan (2004: 103) defined it as "Distance education is individualized and media assisted teaching with limited teacher student interaction; the student is separated from the teacher in time and space and therefore learns autonomously"

Holm berg (1990:3) also describes Distance education as follows.

> *The term distance education covers the various forms of study at all levels, which are not under the continuous, immediate supervision of tutor present with their students. In the system of education, the student learns through non contiguous communications, except for a very few face to face instructional programs.*

Moore (1990: xx) in Keegan (1996: 43) defines distance education as " Distance education is all arrangements for providing instruction through print or electronic communications media to persons engaged in planed learning in a place or time different from that of the instructor (instructors*)"*

One can easily notice from the above definitions that, distance education is a way of teaching learning processes (interaction) in which learners learn without frequent contact and assistance of teachers instead, by themselves. This does not mean, however, that there is not any contact or communication among them. As an alternative means of delivering education, associated with its potential benefits distance education has grown in number of students and institutions in the last thirty years. Distance education has got a new status and public recognition right in 1969 after

the establishment of Open University in Britain. Later on it extended to over 25 countries throughout the world. Now, distance education is a well established education system and constitutes an important part in educational policy and planning of most developed and developing countries like: United States, Asia, Europe, Latin America, and Africa. (Teshome 2001:3).

In 1960s, African countries launched distance education program after realizing its significance in giving wide access to the public. After independence, various correspondence schools were established in many African Countries for the purpose of producing middle level manpower who could replace the expertise (Kabwass abd Kauda (1973:3). Teshome (2001:16) added on that, many universities like University of Nairobi, University of Addis Ababa developed correspondence units to serve off-campus students. Some other universities like Ibadan, lagos, Accra and Khartoum have introduced non-degree distance education programs within their part time education offerings. Addis Ababa University and University of Tanzania have also incorporated post- graduate distance education as part of their program.

In Ethiopia, distance education has been in practice for more than three decades. It was first started in 1967 at the opening of distance education unit in Addis Ababa University. The University continued this program until 1976. Later on the MOE took over the responsibility and run the program under the department of adult and continuing education for about eighteen years. Then, the MOE gave the responsibility to EMA (Ethiopia Mass Media Agency). In 1994, EMA introduced the radio supported correspondence course for senior secondary level which was targeted to working adults in various ministries, factories and teaching force (MOE :1985).

Like other developing countries in Ethiopia, the traditional (conventional) education systems are unable to accommodate all secondary school leavers. Hence, for the above and other several reasons distance education attracts the attention of the government and private institutions. Regarding this, Teshome (2001:22-25) states that; distance education in Ethiopia was needed for improving access, quality, reducing educational cost and capacity building. As a result, in our situation many private institutions allocate their human, material and financial resources to provide education in a distance mode for the public.

Distance education and distance learners have their own unique characteristics as compared to that of conventional classroom settings. In choosing distance education as a mode of delivery for education, great attentions should be given on these unique characteristics. As keegan (1996:154-158) points out that among other things, student support services which include; face-to-face tutorials, use of TMA and interactive teaching through communication media and correspondence tuitions are key component part of distance education program which need different handling and implementing strategies. In order to provide appropriate education for distance learners, institutions must be cautious for their student support services.

Moreover, distance education requires the use of different modern technologies like radio, TV, internet, computer etc. as a means of delivering the program so as to make learning at a distance easy for learners. The effectiveness of the distance education program however, is contingent upon many factors of which course material preparation, student support services, tutorial related issues, exams and grading are the major ones. As an alternative mode of delivery, distance education need well designed self instructional course materials and employee a multimedia approach including human contact through tutor marked assignment (TMA), tutorial session and counseling. The availability of strong student support services ensures the effectiveness and efficiency of the program by motivating Learners, keeping them on the right truck and encouraging them to make use of the facilities provided and above all to facilitate their learning,

Hence, it is of paramount importance to assess the implementation of private distance education programs since it provides empirical data and information for the development of the system. Therefore, the researcher was very much interested to commence the study on course material design and preparation, learner support service, tutorial and tutor related issues and exam administration of diploma level distance education programs in private institutions of Addis Ababa city administration.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Even though provision of free education to citizens is the main responsibility of the government, because of scarcity of resources available that kind of service is practically impossible for most of the developing nations. Accordingly, governments have adopted various strategies for making education accessible to their citizens. Distance education is one of the strategies supported by countries. In response to the question as to why governments and their Ministries of Education seeks to implement and permit other private educational institutions to give education at a distance mode, Rumble (1992:37) forwarded three main reasons. These are;

- To make education accessible to reach wide numbers of students who cannot get collage education.
- To lend educational institutions to part-time education so that students are not taken out of the work force in order to study.
- To allow economies in part by avoiding the need for new buildings including housing for students.

Gough (1980) in Teshome (2001:4) discussed the basic reasons for implementing distance education as;

- ➢ It allows students who would otherwise be denied educational opportunities to gain access to courses,
- ➢ To give an equivalent education with the same integrity as those earned through the conventional mode, and
- ➢ To respond to the question of excellence in quality of learning materials, teaching support services, academic and administrative systems or professional development of the staff.

Since distance education is a new strategy to create access for people, by its very nature, it has the potential to serve all the public with different social economical backgrounds. Accordingly, Distance education can be used and applied to rich and poor countries, to experienced and inexperienced citizen, at any level (primary, secondary, and tertiary), to provide either a general education and/or specific areas of training , to overcome a short term crises and also to

serve as part of a regular system of continuing education. This shows that, distance education can be practical in any situation or have a variety of uses in imparting education to all citizens with different economic, social and political environment.

Writers in the field, like Rumble(1992:95) Keegan (1996:26) and Stride (1999:40) approved that as compared to the traditional conventional education system, distance education has the following advantages;

- It is comparatively low in cost.
- It can fulfill plurality of needs and interests of individuals in the society by offering diversified programs and courses and reaching a large segment of the population, even those in the remotest area of a country.
- Increases access to education, and provides freedom to study when and where learners wish to study.
- It is also as effective as the conventional mode of delivery.

In Ethiopia, there is a tremendous shortage of schools, qualified teachers and instructional materials which are the main reasons for the incapability of the regular education program to absorb the increasing educational demand of most of the citizens. However, most people find all other means and make the necessary endeavor to improve their way of life through education. In this case, Distance education is the best method to solve this problem and to contribute to the national development by providing economically feasible educational opportunities to the learners. Because of this, currently, few private institutions are opened to offer different teaching and business related courses through distance education in the country.

In provision of distance education program, course development, production and distribution, student support service, mode of delivery, tutor and tutorial related issues, exam administrations should require due attention. Therefore, since private institutions contribute much in satisfying the educational need of the citizen, studying the implementation status of private distance education institutions may help in strengthen their efforts and also to identify some of the existing problems.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

1.3.1 General Objective

The main purpose of this study is, therefore, to identify, examine and describe the current implementation of the diploma level distance education programs and associated problems and then suggest possible solutions which will help them to provide better educational services to the public.

1.3.2 Specific Objectives

The study focuses to achieve the following specific objectives:

- To assess the current implementation procedure of distance education program in private higher institutions of Addis Ababa.
- To investigate the conditions of the course materials in private distance education institutions.
- To examine the mechanisms employed in providing support services for learners.
- To investigate the means of delivery employed in the provision of education in a distance mode.
- To analyze the application of tutorial sessions and related issues.
- To identify different factors those affect the provision of distance education programs.

In order to realize these objectives, an attempt was made to give responses to the following basic questions;

1. How do private distance education institutions design, produce and distribute course materials to their learners?
2. What are the available media which private distance education institutions of Addis Ababa use to deliver the courses/programs?
3. What is the status of the student support services in private distance education institutions in Addis Ababa?

4. How do the institutions administer exams, tutorials and related issues?
5. What are the problems faced by the learners, tutors, and administrators in implementing distance education programs?
6. What could be done to make distance education programs more successful?

Thus, this study describes the current implementation conditions of distance education programs in private institution in Addis Ababa city administration and attempts come up with certain solutions by answering the above questions to minimize major problems observed in the institutions.

1.4 Significance of the Study

Education plays a significant role in the life of an individual as well as the social, political and economic development of the country. Adults are the main citizens who are expected to shoulder different responsibilities in their family and their work places. In order to be capable enough to effectively execute these responsibilities, they have to learn in more convenient location and often at more convenient times. This can possible without attending the regular school systems. Hence, distance education is the best way to make educational opportunities available to these groups without the limitation of time and location. In order to offer a smooth running of distance education program, the availability of well designed course material, better student service, well organized tutorial services in distance education institutions are mandatory.

Thus, the study has the following significant points,

- It shows the current implementation practice of course material preparation and distribution, learner support system and exam administration in distance education program and pinpoints the strengths and weakness of these components in private institutions in Addis Ababa.
- By addressing the current methods and means of delivering the program, the study can suggest other possible methods which can help to strengthen the program.

- It recognizes the successful achievements of the program and identifies areas and strategies which will need improvement and also find out crucial factors which negatively affect the program.
- The research output may make distance education providing institutions aware of the problems and also give them clues about factors they should consider.
- It may pose issues that may initiate other researchers to fill the gaps in the area.
- The paper will serve as reference materials for beginners in the field.

1.5 Delimitation of the Study

Nowadays, in Ethiopia, several private institutions are conducting distance education program in various fields. Although the main objectives of the study is identifying and describing the current implementation practice of diploma level distance education programs in private distance education institutions of Addis Ababa city administration, the study focuses only on course designing and development, mode of delivering a program, learner support service, tutor and tutorial services, exam administration and problems or factors influencing the program. Regarding colleges, there are sixty eight private colleges in Addis Ababa city administration. Among these only five colleges are offering distance education program. The study will focus on all these colleges which give distance education in the city administration

1.6 Definition of Terms

Correspondence Education: - Education based on correspondence Course/Courses. The term is often used synonymously with distance education, particularly where it is based largely on printed materials

.

Distance Education: refers to teaching and situations in which the instructor and the learner or learners are geographically separated, and therefore, rely on electronic device and print materials for instructional delivery (Portway and Lane 1994:295)

Distance Learning: Education for students working at home, with little or no face-to-face contact with teachers and with material provided remotely, e.g. by e-mail, television, or correspondence

Tutor: A professional teacher who works in full time or part time by the distance education giving institutions to assist distance learners in the form of face-to-face and correspondence tuition.

Face-to-Face Instruction: it is the teaching learning processes arranged ones or twice per a course for distance learners so as to give them clarification on difficult ideas and concepts by the tutor

Conventional: well-established methods or styles of giving education with the construction of schools and other facilities.

Administrator: in this study administrator refers to those personnel who run the distance programs indifferent private institutions.

1.7 Limitation of the Study

The major limitation the researcher faced in conducting this study is mainly on the time of data collection from tutors, and learners. First, making a contact with them was very difficult. In most cases, they were so hurry and not that much willing to fill the questionnaires. Times to get learner respondents were not also easy. Besides financial problems and reference materials were not easily accessible to support the study which may create a problem in getting sufficient and relevant information for the study.

1.8 Research Methodology

This part of the study comprises the methodology used, in selecting sources of data, sampling techniques and instruments and procedures of data collection and methods of data analysis.

1.8.1 Methodology

The purpose of this study is to investigate the practices and problems of the implementation of diploma level distance education programs in private higher institution of Addis Ababa city administration; therefore; the descriptive survey method was employed. This is because the method is more appropriate to gather and obtain an accurate and several kinds of data related. to the study.

1.8.2. Sources of Data

- **Primary Sources**

The primary sources of the study were collected from five private distance education providing institutions: Alpha University College, St. Marry University College, Unity University College, Admass University College and Yardstick Distance Education Institution which were the sample of the study. Learners who were attending the diploma level in these institutes, administrative staff and tutors were among the primary sources of data for the study. The data from the primary sources were collected through questionnaire and interviews

- **Secondary Source**

The data for this study was also collected from secondary sources. These data were obtained from journals, books, proceedings and other documents. Subsequently, observation and documentary analysis were conducted in the institutions. Relevant books, journals, legal documents, websites from internet were also reviewed in the study.

1.8.3. Population of the Study

According to the document obtained from Addis Ababa city administration, there are about sixty eight privately owned colleges which provide education to the citizen either in regular bases, in a distance mode or with the combination of the two. Among these only five colleges provide diploma level distance education in different training areas. The study population of this research therefore; includes the different experts, members departments (registrar, student support and examination, material development and production), tutors, and distance learners (tutees) of these five distance education institutions. This is because; the contribution of all these units of the institutions makes the program effective.

1.8.4. Study Sample and Sampling Technique

Depending on their fewness and manageable size of the institutions, all five institutions were studied using availability sampling technique. Thus, Alpha University College, St. Marry University College, Unity University College, Admass University College and Yardstick Distance Education Institution are included in the study.

From the above five institution, heads of different departments, team leaders and experts were taken by purposive sampling technique. Because they are few and have direct relation with the issue understudy. Thus, the department heads of the five institutions have contributed in the study. Besides, random sampling technique was employed to select tutor respondents from the total tutors of each institution. There were 102 tutors and 3380 diploma level learners in the institutions under study .Of the total population of 102 tutors 52 were selected using simple random sampling technique and out

of the 3380 distance learners 300 were randomly selected using simple random sampling technique to complete the questionnaire during their visit to exams and attend tutorial sessions.

1.8.5 Instruments and Procedure of Data Collection

In this study, to collect the necessary and pertinent data both quantitative and qualitative data were collected using questionnaires, structured interviews and documentary analyses. Questionnaires were used to obtain information from a large number of respondents whereas the interview was used to collect data from coordinators of distance education institutions so as to strengthen the information obtained through questionnaires. Thus, in light of the basic question of the study and the review of related literature, two sets of questionnaires were designed and administered for tutor and learner respondents. In all cases, bio-data of the respondents and general information were included. In most cases, the items in the questionnaire were close ended so as to allow the respondents to give more details about the problems. But some open ended questions were also included for obtaining free responses from the respondents. An observation was made on the available documents when necessary.

As stated in the previous discussion, first, open-ended and close-end questionnaire and structured interviews were set. Then the questionnaires were given to two experts for overall checking. Finally, after incorporating the entire comments of the experts the questionnaires were pilot tested on 15 potential respondents to make the instruments objective, relevant and suitable to collect the required data. In addition to this, the reliability and validity of the instruments were tested. Further more, Colleagues of the researcher were checked the content validity of the questionnaire and interview questions. Based on the feed back obtained from the potential respondents and comments from colleagues, the instruments were corrected and amended.

The final questionnaires were distributed and administered to both learners and tutors during the tutorial sessions where by most of the respondents were available for face-to-face tutorial program. The questionnaires which were distributed to the distance learners and tutors were translated to Amharic so as to make them more understandable. The interviews were conducted at different times depending on the situation of each respondent.

Finally, the administered questionnaires were collected and organized. Editing was made for the completeness, accuracy and uniformity on how the respondents followed the instruction.

1.8.6 Method of Data Analysis

The data collected from the respondents were organized and statistical computations were made to find out the implementation status of distance education program. For the most part the collected data were categorized and frequency distribution made from which percentages, weighed means, t-test values were computed and inherent relationships analyzed and interpreted. In addition, descriptive statistics were used to analyze the tabulated data based on the frequency distribution. In some cases the t-test or ANOVA were employed to check weather there is perceptual difference in their opinion between respondents on the issues under consideration

1.9. Organization of the Study

The study is presented in four chapters. The first chapter consists of the problem and its approach (background of the study, Statement of the problem, significance of the study, delimitation of the study, definitions of terms procedures and sources of data and organization of the study). Chapter two gives a brief review of related literature to the topic. In chapter three the collected data, their presentation, analysis and interpretations were presented. And finally, chapter four consists of the summary, conclusions and recommendations on the basis of the total study.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITRATURE

2.1 Concepts of Distance Education

Education is considered as the most important instrument for the development of a country. In ancient times, education was mainly used to transmit cultural heritages from generation to generation. Now a day, education is not only used for transmitting cultural heritage but also, it has become a question of survival. In this globalization era, the world is under a continuous change. In order to cope-up with this tremendous change, one has to learn all his/her life. At the same time a country also progresses forward with the existing changing conditions if it educates its people properly.

Regarding this, Srivastava, (1997: viii) revealed that "the pace of the development of any country is based upon its ability to develop and utilize the innate capacities and capabilities of its people." this indicates that the knowledge, skills and attitude of the people had a great role in the development of a country. These innate capacities and capabilities of the people can be realized and used for the country's development through the quality of education they received.

Education as it believed by Perraton and Lentell (2002:9) is seen increasingly as a pre-requisite for prosperity and economic growth as well as a means of personal empowerment. From this one can easily understand that, it is through education that people in the world came to modernization. This is because, education enhances individuals' competencies and skills to manage new tasks and create new ways of doing things. In order to bring sustainable development and improving the capacity of people to cope up with the new environment and modern technologies, the expansion of education is significantly important. (UNESCO: 2002:17). Besides, the creation of new demands for work and the need to cope-up with new technologies and the increasing number of enrollments at different educational level in both developing and developed countries, forced many countries to expand their education system.

While resources are scarce and expansion of education requires a huge amount of investments countries were looking for another ways of delivering education. Hence, government, departments and private organizations have established distance education system to deal with these increasing educational demands which are unable to cover or met with only traditional school system.

2.2. Definitions of Distance Education

Distance education has traditionally been defined as instruction through print or electronic media to persons engaged in planned learning in a place or time different from that of the instructor or instructors. This traditional definition of distance education is now slowly being eroded as new technological development challenge to educators to re-conceptualize the idea of schooling and life long learning.

Many authors have defined distance education in different ways. According to Rumble (1992) distance education is a process in which there must be a teacher, one or more students, a course or curriculum that teacher is capable of teaching and the students are trying to learn; and a contact, implicit or explicit, between the students and the teacher or the institution employing the teacher, which acknowledges their respective teaching learning role. This shows that, like a traditional conventional education, distance education incorporates the teacher, learner, curriculum, and the institution. It is also used as a mode of imparting and acquiring knowledge, developing skills, attitudes and insights. The main difference which can easily see is, the learners and teachers are separated in time and space for most of the study time. (Keegan: 1986)

Distance education is a system and a process of providing instruction at a distance. It occurs when a teacher and student(s) are physically separated, an educational institute is involved in the planning of curricula and the provision of students support services, and educational media (video, voice, data or print) are used to unite teacher and student and to carry course content across the instructional gap. Distance education includes Distance teaching, the teachers' role in the process, and distance learning, the student's role in the process and the desired outcome of

distance education. (Verduim and Clark, 1991, Willis, 1993).This definition gives emphasis on the role of the partners in distance education.

Holmberg (1995:1) defines distance education as a mode of delivering education which are now practiced in all parts of the world to provide study opportunities for those with several reasons cannot or do not want to attend a formal classroom teaching. It is the teaching learning systems which include specially prepared study materials and regular mediated contacts between students and tutors, individually or in groups. He further elaborates that distance education is special in its type and dependent on and influenced by values, experience and external conditions like all types of education. It is differing from the conventional face-to-face schooling in that there is a separation between student and their tutor. This implies that the majority of the instruction process occurs where the learner and instructor are not in the same place and are often separated by time.

According to Moor (1973:666) Projects consider distance education as an instructional delivery system which connects learners with educational resources. It also provides access to learners not enrolled in educational institutions and can augment the learning opportunities of current students.

All these and other definitions given by different authors have one common element in them that; there is a gap or physical separation between teachers and learner during the processes of learning. As it has been understood from the definitions given above; the main concern in distance education is the separation of the learners and teachers in time and space in most of their study time. All definitions also give emphasis in bridging the gap between the students and their teacher.

After analyzing a number of definitions Keegan (2000:44) comes up with six basic elements of distance education. These are;

- The separation of teachers and learner, which distinguishes it from face-to-face learning.

- The influence of an educational organization, which distinguishes it from private study.
- The use of technical media, usually printed, to unite teacher and learner and carry the educational content of the course.
- The provision of two way communication so that the student s may benefit from or even initiate dialogue, which distinguishes it from other use of educational technology.
- The teaching of students as individuals and rarely in groups, with the possibility of occasional meeting for both didactic and socialization purposes, and
- The participation in a more industrialized form of education which is accepted contains the type of radical separation of distance education from other forms within the educational spectrum.

2.3. Distance Education Verses Conventional Education

Distance education is a recent system developed as a result of the innovation of information communication technologies which are used for giving education at a distance. There is no need of frequent personal contact between and among tutors and students. Whereas, in traditional schooling teaching learning processes takes place in a face-to-face bases within a four walls of classroom setting. This means, its modes of delivery vary in respect of their purposes, size, technologies used choice and underlying philosophy and efficiency. Besides, they vary significantly in their structure. (Rumble: 1992:19).

Regarding the concept of distance education and conventional education, Zenebe (2005:68), reveals that, conventional education is based on classroom lecturing with the chromatically graded and hierarchically structured educational program whereas, distance education is a wider concept which is flexible and gives learners educational access at a distance than traditional education system. Thus, Kaye and Rumble (1979:22) explained about the two forms of delivering education as:

> Distance education is neither a supplement nor a mere alternative to the 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.

This shows that, distance education has come to exist in order to solve problems that people face in getting accesses to education by conventional or traditional ways. Vertecchi (1993:155) points out that, even if distance education varies from conventional education, it shares some of the characteristics of traditional face to face education such as: Uniformity of educational contents, Definition of the role of tutors and learners, Authorization of certification and so on

As Gareison and Shale (1987) and EMA (1999:1) stated that distance education

- Implies, the majority of educational communication between teachers and student occurs non- contiguously.
- Involves, two-way communication between teacher and student for the purpose of facilitating and supporting the educational process.
- Uses technology to mediate the necessary two- way communication.

Besides, it emphasize that, with this globalization and modern technological era, having time to join and educate oneself seems very difficult because of different responsibilities that one has. Hence, distance education is an alternative means for those who have such problems. Regarding its effectiveness, Moor and Thmpson (1990) and Verduim and Clark (1991) show that teaching and studying at a distance can be effective as conventional/ traditional learning as far as:

- The methods and technologies used are appropriate to the institutional task;
- There are student teacher interaction in tutorial and counseling sessions and
- There is a timely feed back from teachers to students through assignments and other quires.

Compared to formal traditional schooling, Rumble (1992) states that, distance education provides a much more flexible and more individualized educational experience for most of the people; Who are living in remote areas; to the temporarily or otherwise, Who are disabled ,Who are School dropout And Who are adults who wish to continue learning.

This indicates that, distance education is appropriate for those who for a various reasons, cannot attend on a traditional schools. The reasons may vary from individual to individual and also from country to country. To site some, because of the remoteness of their residential areas which cannot easily provide conventional education, those who have physical disability or long term illness, those who move from place to place frequently.

Taking this into consideration, Rumble (1992:20) said, distance education is useful to meet the needs of those who are out of school, college or university age, but unable to attend these institutions for initial education. He further elaborates that distance education is well suited to the needs of adults who for social, economic or health reasons missed out on the opportunities available through initial education or who wish to retrain or update themselves, or study to satisfy personal interest and to get employments. This means that, distance education is more convenient for adults who have no opportunities for taking course locally, or their work situation is tight and not convenient.

2.4. Benefits of Distance Education

Distance Education offers a variety of benefits to both the students and the institutions. Some of these benefits as Brown (1997: 3) indicate:

1. **It is convenient:** for both students and instructors, technologies provide convenient locations. Many of the technologies, such as the internet, videotape, and telephone are make the teaching learning process easily accessible to home. Other technologies like desktop, videoconferencing can be broadcasting from a single point to multiple remote sites (such as schools).
2. **It is flexible:** many forms of distance education provide students the option to participate whenever they wish, on the individualized bases. Students have chances to choose the time they study, the type of course they take, and even the place which they want to take the course.
3. **It is effective:** distance education, as several research studies have found, is equally or more effective than traditional instruction as far as the method and technologies used are appropriate to the instructional tasks, when there is interaction between students and where there is timely teacher student feedback.

4. **It is affordable:** most forms of distance education do not require additional cost. A student can attend his or her education through radio, television, videotape. All these technological instruments are available to most of the people. Therefore they can use either one or many of these technological materials to pursue their education.

In relation to this Saint (1999:21-22) cites, distance education offers a number of advantages for both learners and providers of opportunities for learning. Some of these advantages are: overcoming physical distance, solving time or scheduling problems, expanding and effectively using the limited time available, accommodating low or dispersed enrollments, making best use of the limited number of teachers available and delay with cultural, religious and political considerations, Similarly, Potential advantages of distance education programs as, Drobot, (2002) in Mudryi, kukharenko and konotopsev listed are : Flexible study time, student -centered approach, easy multiplication of the training provision, increased speed in implementing changes, unified content distribution, smaller logistic costs and ICT congruent.

2.5. Kinds of Distance Learning Institutions

Different writers give different names for the kind or types of distance educations based on their view. Some categorize the institutions based on the media they use, others see the types of distance program the institutions offer, and still others categorized in relation to the structure of the institutes which offer distance education programs. One and very important classification of distance education program given by Mugridge (1992:154) and Saint (1993: 31) indicates that distance education is categorized in to three in terms of the structure of institutions used.

2.5.1. Single- Mode Institutions

Single mode institutions are fully dedicated to offer education only on a distance programs with some optional face-to-face interaction such institution mediate the teaching learning process using print, audio, video and computer medias. Institutions, like Indragandhi National Open University (IGNOU), United Kingdom Open University are single mode institutions.

2.5.2 Dual -Mode Institutions

Dual mode institutions offer both conventional and distance education programs using the traditional classroom facilities, existing academic community and research capacity. Such institutions offer the same course in both methods even with common examinations. Open learning institution of Charles Stort University, The University of Nairobi, the University of Botswana and the University of Zimbabwe are example of dual mode institutions.

2.5.3 Mixed- Mode Institutions

Mixed mod institutions are which offer learners a wide choice of modes of study like, independent, group-based or some other combination. Such institutions maximize flexibility of place and pace of study. Deakin University and Murdoch universities, both in Australia provide the teaching learning process in a mixed mode.

2.6 Historical Development of Distance Education

Here in this part of the study, efforts were made to see the historical developments of distance education from two perspectives. In the first part the paper tries to see the developments of distance education worldwide, likewise, after observing global perspectives, endeavor was made to see the development of distance education in Ethiopia.

2.6.1 Global Perspective

Distance education traces its origins from mid-19th century in Europe and the United States. It started as a correspondence study by Isaac Pitman who was the pioneer of distance learning. He began teaching short hand by correspondence in Bath, England in 1840. In his teaching, he sent a short passage from the Bible to his students to copy and return to him for grading via the new penny post system. Postal system was the best technology of that day which played a great role to open educational opportunities to people who had interest to learn but was not able to attend conventional schools (Holmberg 1981).Sarah (1993:3) clears that the advent of printing

and publishing industry and the development of postal service boosted the provision of education through correspondence.

In 1874, a university level distance education began in America which was called Illinois Wesleyan University. Later on, in 1900 the teaching of academic and vocational courses by correspondences became quite popular. The establishment of the International Council for Correspondence Education in 1930's moves the correspondence education forwards to extend its root to several countries in the world. Manjulika and Reddy (1996:166). As Dinsdale, 1953 in Tilak and Esirgene (1983:3) indicates, providing education through correspondence mode spread in many forms in the USA, Australia, Western Europe and Canada in the late Nineteenth and early Twentieth Centuries. Besides, the invention of educational radio in the 1920's and the advent of television in 1940's created important new forms of communication for use in correspondence education.

In 1982, distance education had got formal recognition when the International Council for Correspondence Education changed its name to the International Council for Distance Education (ICDE).As it stated in Criscito (1999:2) from 1890 to 1960's about 10 million Americans have taken radio courses at a distance in Colombia and other colleges. In 1970, the first exclusively distance degree program was founded by the University of the State of New York. Distance education is coming of age in the days of microchips and communication satellites. But while new technology is bringing glamour to this field, radio and correspondence courses still form the backbone of distance teaching methods in Asia and the Pacific. The reasons in developing distance education program are different from country to country. For example, in Pakistan, Srilanka and Nepal a major reason for beginning distance education has been for training teachers. In New Zealand distance education has been available to children in remote areas through the New Zealand Correspondence School. In Philippines, India and Indonesia, distance education is being developed at the secondary level to King Primary School graduates who had no opportunity to go to high school back into the educational mainstream.(UNESCO, 1985:37).

When we see, the cases in the Republic of Korea the program was designed for those who failed to pass the university entrance examination. The desire of those people to join higher education resulted in the birth of the Korea Junior College of Correspondence in 1972. Similarly, different African countries, uses distance education because of different reasons. When we see the case of Zimbabwe, increasing educational access to nation was the driving force to establish the first Zimbabwe distance education college in 1980.

Dewal in Ortner (1992:246) summarizes the reasons of the beginning of distance education in two folds. The first one is to bring down the unit cost of education at the tertiary level and the second one is to offer an alternative channel that would relive universities and colleges of student pressure, which is to absorb the overflow of students at the level of higher education. In Africa, the University of South Africa (UNISA) was the first full-fledged autonomous distance teaching university, which started giving education through correspondence university. Many other countries also incorporate distance education in their education system. According to John (1996:50-57) Botswana, Kenya, Malawi and Zimbabwe have used distance education for teacher training program since 1960s. Murphy and Zhiri (1992:70) states that by 1985, the Anglophone countries of Africa contained 250 state-funded distance education institution. Besides, in Brazil Marien Ngouabi University offered correspondence courses in 1970. Similarly, in Benin, Burkina Faso Burundi, Cameroon, Central Africa Republic, Cot-devoir, Mali, Togo and other African countries used distance education program to upgrading teachers during 1980s and 1990s. (Saint 1999:12). In general, as many research work shows, now a days, distance education programs are employed by several African countries mainly for the purpose of capacity building of their citizen.

2.6.2 Distance Education in Ethiopia

The introduction of Distance Education in Ethiopia goes back to the onset of 19th century with the very reason of overcoming the shortage of teachers in the education system. At that time the government was challenged by the increasing demand of trained teachers. However, the available training system was not sufficient to satisfy these increasing needs. This demand forced the government to find and introduce another way of getting trained teachers, in 1967

which was called "Directed study for teacher." This was the time when distance education program was introduced in the country. (Yalew 2004; Ayalew, 2003; Getachew and others, 1991).

As IIT, WBLN and IGNOV (2000:72) shows, Ethiopia started distance education program in the early 1960's in the form of correspondence education under the extension division of the A.A.U, in order to solve the existing problem of well-trained and qualified teachers. The program was designed to solve the shortage of trained teacher and upgrade the quality and skills of unqualified teachers through distance learning while they were working. Soon the program had discontinued before it was realistic because of lack of resources and expertise in the program (Solomon, 1992:13).

Getachew and others (1998: 79) revealed that the program was launched jointly by Ethiopia and U.S with the name of Ethiopian US Cooperative Education Program. The program used self contained print materials (modules), exercises, key answers and study guides, to deliver the program. However, after two years , in 1972, the program ceased its services because of the termination of the cooperation of the two countries.

In 1967, the MOE and the A.A.U signed an agreement to establish a correspondence study unit under the extension division of Addis Ababa University for the propose of developing a senior secondary correspondence course for adults working in various ministries, factories and military organizations in general and teachers in particular (MOE, 1985). As Teshome (2001:1) indicates that in 1976, the MOE took the program from the A.A.U and controlled the leading and organizing role of the distance education program under its adult and continuing education department. This program later was transferred to EMA and continues providing certificate course by correspondence to individuals who were unable to complete their secondary education because of different reasons.

Different documents show that the British Tutorial Collage was the first private distance education institution which provided correspondence education courses in Ethiopia. Besides, international correspondence school (1972) and Trans World Tutorial College (1980) were

opened and offered vocational and other courses by correspondence. Different written documents show that all the above three external private institutions discontinued offering courses in correspondence because of the problem of accreditations.

Regarding this, Getachew and others (1998) stated that International Correspondence School, Trans World Tutorial College (TUTC) and Century University (CU) were some of the private institution which offered Correspondence Education in Ethiopia. According to Getachew, although, it was difficult to find evidences which shows the areas and levels of education such institutions offered, they played significant role in providing educational access for considerable number of Ethiopians.

In 1990s, Ethiopia renewed its pledge to deliver education using distance mode. The purpose or aim of distance education during that period raised student enrollment to cover both primary and tertiary levels of education. Currently, in Ethiopia, there are public and private institutions which provide education at distance program. The Ethiopian Civil Service College and the Oromia Public Service College provide territory level distance education program to upgrade the qualification of the civil servants in the country. In addition, the summer programs being offered by MOE to upgrade teacher qualification to a degree level in different universities of the country are supplemented by distance education courses and tutorials.

Regarding private institutions in the country, there are privately owned institutions which offer distance education programs in diploma, degree or secondary education level through out the country. (MOE: 2004; Yalew: 2004). Admass University College, Alpha University College, St. Marry University College, Unity University College are among the territory distance education providing institutions in the country. There are also few foreign institutions that are offering education through distance mode. Some of these are: United Kingdom Open University(OUUK), The African Virtual University with Collaboration of A.A.U. the Indra Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) with collaboration of the UNESCO, International Institute for Capacity Building for Africa (IICBA) provide tertiary level distance education in Ethiopia.

In Ethiopia, as the UNESCO (2004:122) document indicates Interactive Radio Distance Program for primary school students, distance secondary education, distance post graduate higher education) second cycle primary education (5 to 8) and distance post- secondary education for civil servants are the major types of distance education program given in Ethiopia.

2.7. The Need for Distance Education

Providing education with distance mode is not a new phenomenon. As discussed above, because of several reasons education was given in a distance mode to different parts of the society. At this stage of the paper, the writer feels that raising issues that deals with distance education seems plausible.

Studies show that distance education is needed strongly because of its benefits. Its growth was quick and gained acceptance from time to time because it has clear and demonstrable benefits. Belanger and Jordan (2000:4) cite several reasons for the growth of distance education. First, it provides new opportunities for those who are excluded from participating in the formal learning process. Second, it allows institutions to educate a large number of students with relatively few instructions. Third, learners have the opportunity to pursue life long learning after graduation regardless of their life style or location. These same writers conclude that distance education program is beneficial for learners, instructor and institutions as well. Mchrotra, Hollister and McGahey (2001 in Zenebe, 2005: 79) argue that apart from the advancement in communication technology;

- increased requirements for higher education for career advancement,
- demand for flexible schedule to learn,
- growing market for personal fulfillment in life long learning,
- Growing requirements in many professionals for renewal of licenses through enrichment of their existing knowledge and skills,

- Need for democratization and individualization of education so that this develops learner autonomy allowing learner- centered approach rather than teacher-cantered approach,
- It is one means of considering individual difference that fits to the needs of individual learner's style of learning. It may cater for persons of disabilities, cultural difference, and dislike for classroom interaction.
- It allows maximum utilization of scarce resources in collaboration with the existing public institutions, which is the need of governments especially in the context of developing countries

are some of the factors which contribute to the expansion and development of distance education.

In relation to this, Saint, (1999:23) cited that both developing and developed countries use distance education extensively for various purposes like:

- For primary school level, to improve the quality of education mainly through the use of educational radio and TV
- For secondary level to deliver part of the curriculum and/or improve the quality of the experience in the classroom so as to increase opportunities for access to higher education
- To provide an alternative secondary school experience to out of school youths and adults.
- To train new teacher and upgrade under-qualified teachers.
- To provide opportunities for advanced professional qualifications and training for those who are at work.
- To provide lower level technical and vocational education and training.

After analyzing different documentary sources, Teshome (2001:22) summarizes the need or reasons why distance education program is essential to Ethiopia as for increasing access, quality, reducing educational cost, and capacity building.

Increasing Access to Education: as the information given by ESDP III (2004:12) the country gross enrollment ratio (GER) for territory level education is 1.5 % which is very low compared to other sub-Saharan standard. This shows that, the enrolment rate for territory level education increased to a large degree compared to the previous year. This calls for the attention of the government and other potential institutions to start distance education program widely.

Improved Education Quality: by its feature (i.e. the separation of teacher and students) distance education program foster educational quality and relevance in several ways. According to Saint (1999:18) the curriculum designed for distance education program requires clarity of communication, coherent logic and good organization in its presentation so as to bridge the gap created by the distance (separation) which in turn improves the quality of education given. In addition to this, since distance education program can be supported by new information technologies, it has the capacity to provide quality education.

Efficient Use of Limited Resources: Saint (1999:21-22) indicates the cost effectiveness of distance education as; it lowers the cost of territory education for students because learners were not forced to pay residential fees; since it operates at more efficient and available staff, it reduce institutional budget which minimize per student cost. In addition distance education uses the existing staff and facilities instead of building new classrooms, campuses, new staff recruitments and the like.

2.8. Key Players In Distance Education

To make distance education program effective, there are so many things which need a great consideration: the course should be prepared, tutor must be selected and prepared and there must be well organized student support service which focuses on the needs of the students and selection of appropriate technology, and careful planning are some among others. The fulfillment or existences of the above conditions doesn't guarantee the effectiveness of the program. Instead, the hardworking behavior, dedicated efforts of the students, the tutor and all staff members of the institution must be geared in accordance to with the above conditions. In

implementing distance program the main key players are:-learners, tutors, faculty (institutions). Now in this section observing the different important roles of the above key players of distance education become very important.

2.8.1 The Role of the Student

Distance education is mainly based on the personal work of individual students. Students in distance education work more or less independently by their own with the direct guidance of their tutors. (Holmberg 1982:26)

Students prefer to study by themselves in distance education, because of several reasons like; to remain in employment, at home, or with their families. .distance education programs are mostly designed to offer educational opportunities to any person, be it poor, geographically isolated, socially disadvantaged, ill and the like In a proper manner of teaching learning process students are the major part of the program who have a great role, that is learning. Learning as it were expounded by Verduin (1991:142) takes place between and among teachers and students in both forms of giving education. (Conventional, distance education). Holemberg (1982: 26) suggested that distance education is mainly based on the personal work of individual students and more or less by their independent work with the direct guide of tutor's, they have a decisive role in selection and make a decision on the content they learn, the place where they will learn and means of communication they use. Therefore, by its very nature distance education program is designed to meet the interest of the students. Keegan (1993:76) pronounces that learners join the distance education program after selecting a program which fits with the type of knowledge they need and which prepare them for various forms of certification. Since, the learners are the main figure for accepting or rejecting what is to be learned and taught, the efforts of the program should be geared to their need. This intern determines the success or failure of the program.

2.8.2 The Role of the Faculty or Institutions

As a student, the faculty or the institutions are equally important for the success or failure of the program. Distance education institutions have a role in assembling course content, developing and understanding of the student's need and share or solve special challenges that confront

students learning at a distance (Willis, 1993). In his explanation Willis raised the major role of distance education institutions as:

- Developing an understanding of the characteristics and needs of distant students with little first hand experience and limited face-to-face contact, if any.
- Adapt teaching styles taking into consideration the needs and expectations of multiple, often diverse audience.
- Develop a working understanding of delivery technology, while remaining focused on their teaching role.
- Function effectively as a skilled facilitator as well as content provider.

In addition to this, Verduim (1991:176) give emphasis on that any distance education unit in addition to all administrative staff, it must contain clearly defined faculties, counselors and tutors. In distance mode of delivering education, institutes should fulfill the entire above mentioned role to be successful in their program. Besides, they should be committed to designing the curriculum implementation, disseminating teaching approaches and support services , monitoring and evaluating student performance and certification so as to offered quality education to their students. Executing the above role highly determines the success or failure of the institutions, if its implementation is effective; the institution is on the way to success. If not the success of the institution become under question.

2.8.3 The Role of the Tutor/ Facilitator

In distance education program, tutors are used as bridges between the learner and the institutions. Lock wood (1995) indicates that the essence of the tutors' role is perhaps to ensure that students absorb and understand the knowledge and the theory and practical component of the course. To affirm this, Garrison (1990:29) says that, the teacher (tutor) is the most important person to play key role in distance education program. He further elaborates that some of the roles of the teacher are giving guidance and direction for which he or she can assist his or her students to achieve their goals and develop control of the educational processes. According to him, tutors execute this role/responsibility by assessing assignments, giving

feedbacks, clarifying vague and difficult issues in learning the course material, and running occasional tutorials.

Most of the tutors in the institutions which offer distance education program are a part-time employees. They work their full time in other institutions. From the experience of many distance education universities like Open University, there are observable problems created due to the part time employment of tutors. Related to this, Paul, (1990: 113) points out some of the difficulties which exist because of part time tutor as:-

- They are usually on short term or annual contracts and their overall commitments to the institution may not be as strong as that of full time permanent staff.
- They do not have the regular face-to-face contact with their colleagues or their superiors but tend to work in isolation from their homes.
- Their roles are frequently diffusing and are not very well defined.
- They lack the usual authority of academic in the classroom. Because they are bound by course designed by another staff and under the justification of a central academic

As it indicated above, tutors, if they are part timers, face some difficulties to execute their role and make necessary efforts in developing the needed skills in the part of the learner.

Dillon, Gunawardena and Parter (1992) observe that distance learners have the view that teachers are important in their learning to solve significant barriers in their learning experience too. The author put this by saying that in distance learning, the teacher can either make or break the interactive distance learning system. This shows that, tutors in distance learning needs to be knowledgeable about the learners: how top help them , the ways of making their subject sensible to them, able to know and solve difficulties they have and the kind of approaches they may find helpful for them. In relation to this Rowntree (2000:79) describes that tutors have to take initiatives to check whether learners have had any difficulties with the course and other administrative issues.

2.9. Mode of Delivering Distance Education

Distance education is a mode of delivering education for people at a distance. It serves people who in many reasons are unable to attend the conventional schooling system. Among various reasons, distance (geographical location) takes the major one. To narrow such separation between the learner and the program, distance education institutions used different educational media. To this point many writers pinpoint to various educational media that can be used used for distance education program.

Concerning methods of delivering education at a distance Sparks (1993) in Keegan(1999:135) illustrates that teaching at a distance means creating environment which involve the effective use of many media, including printed, video tapes, audio tapes, practical work, as well as occasional lecturing , classroom teaching and tutoring.) Rumble (1992: 27) suggested that, distance education has an increasingly wide range of media to draw upon, including print, correspondence tuition, radio, TV, tale text view data, audio and video- cassettes, video discus, telephone, video conferencing, teaching aid and computers. Verduin (1991) also point out that, audio cassette, Telephone, radio and other audio media such as TV, Tele-courses, Micro Waves, broadcast, satellite broadcast, computer, Interactive video disc and print materials are educational media used for methods of delivery distance education Program

The fast development of technology with the introduction of different sophisticated communication devices such as tale-text, video text, micro computer, cable satellite, tale-conference, electronic mail and others change the way of delivering distance education programs and create fast and wide access to students to communicate frequently with their tutor. Regarding the wide accessibility of media, Reddy (1996:229) revealed that, in this technological era the foundation of such new products help distance education programs to disseminate education from all of the world's best sources to all people who are in urgent need of education irrespective of age, sex, creed, and socio economic status, and crossing all geographic constraints.

As it is indicated by EMA (1999:64), educational media is "a channel of communication which is or can be used in an educational program." It is further discussed that educational media can be categorized in to three main groups: - printed, broadcast, and face-to face communication. In this part of the study, it seems logical to view the different types of educational media used for distance education program.

2.9.1 Print Materials

Print materials such as modules, paper books, study guides and bibliographies are the most common medium for learning at a distance. They were the first option in the origin of distance education program. All currently available delivery systems of distance education have evolved mainly from print materials. Rowntree (1992:105) advocates that, print has been the basis of distance learning from the time of invention of movable type by Johan Gutenberg in the 15th century. According to Tilak and Esirgen (1998: 1) Print materials may serve in two ways:-as the primary sources of instruction or as supplementary materials for primary sources. As it indicated by EMA (1999-64), printed media have different formats like correspondence courses, instructional booklets, work cards, programmed texts, posters, flipcharts, comic strips etc. Print material as the primary sources of instruction use modules which include SAQ, course syllabus and as a supplementary to instruction, it includes text materials in the form of worksheet or study guides that are used in conjunction with video or voice technologies. Print materials can be disseminated via regular mail, the fax machine or over the internet.

Desmond Keegan (1986: 141) cited the different medias used for teaching at a distance as; Audio and video tapes, and computer- aided learning. According to him printed texts are likely to remain the backbone of distance education for some time to come. In printed text a number of features are included to help learners to grasp the required knowledge and as well as to develop conceptual learning. Printed text, in distance education includes, exercises on the application of basic principles, explanation of different concepts expressed in different words, symbols and illustrations which help the learners to learn independently. This means, distance materials (modules) are self instructional which are prepared in such a way to build the teacher in it and try to make the learners feel free as a classroom situation. Writing or preparing a print

material for distance education is quite different from that of conventional learning system. Stride ,IGNOU- (2000: 8-9) shows that in preparation of learning materials (modules)the most vital point is to keep the learners in mind and assume that the writers are tutoring an individual learner. Hence, Individuals who prepare it always think of the learners first. He further elaborates that to make these practical distance materials / modules should

- Help the individual learners find their way into and around the subject by repeating content in different ways and at different stages.
- Tell learners what they need to do before going through the material and make clear what learners should be able to do on the completion of the material.
- Advise learners how to tackle the work (how much time to allow for different sections, how to plan for an assignment) by explaining the subject matter in such a way that the learners can relate it to what they already know.
- Encourage learners to make what ever effort is needed in coming to grips with the subject and doing exercises and activities that make them work with the subject matter-rather than merely read it;
- Give the learners feedback on these exercises and activities enabling them to judge for themselves whether they are learning successfully and to sum up their learning at the end of the unit.

Dodds (1983) points out the potential advantages and disadvantages of print materials as they target the learners on the time of their preparation as follows:-

- **Extremely portable**: the learners can use them at any locations wherever they are
- **High comfort level**: Most of distance learners feel very comfortable using print material to learn.
- **Permanence**: - the printed material can be used as references for future use.
- **It is cost effective**: the expenses of creating, duplicating and distributing of printing distance materials have little expense.

- **Readily available**: many of distance learning materials have an advantage of saving the time of finding another customs materials.

Although printed materials have the above advantages, they also have disadvantages or drawbacks. Some of these as it indicated by Dodds (1983) are:

- It lacks interaction: it does not generally provide or built in interactions by its own, rather, it has to be supported by additional technologies like E-mail.
- It is not appropriate for teaching languages and visual concepts.
- It requires reading and comprehending skill from the learner.
- Time delay: it needs some days or weeks to travel between the students and teacher.
- Goes out of date soon and mistakes can't easily be rectified once printed.

Rowntree, (1997: 11) discussed on that print materials prepared for distance education program should be self instructional which carry out all the function of a conventional teacher such as: guiding, motivating, stimulating, expounding, explaining, reminding, asking questions, discussing alternative answers and so on. This means since all these elements stimulate classroom situations, they help learners to feel like students in the conventional school system.

2.9.2 Broadcasting Media

Radio and TV are broadcasting Medias. One of the advantages of broadcasting media is it fastness to address the public. It covers a wide range of people. Radio is used for delivering education at a distance right from the time of its innovation. It is used to provide education for all learners at the same time even though they are in different locations. Radio is relatively cheap and is equivalent to good lecturing without a visual focus. It is easy for students to be distracted unless the learners take notes (keegan 1986:190).later; radio learning was enhanced by telephone conferences calls during or after the initial audio presentation. Both radio and telephone learning are usually incorporated with print material as part of the delivering system.

As it is cited by Manjulika (1996:111) radio is an effective tool in distance education as it is well suited for distance learners. It is a home based medium and also a widely owned medium in rural and remote areas. EMA (1999:13) shows that radio in distance education has enormous potential to cover very large audience and reach isolated spots. However, because of technical problems and by social factors like language, its range may be limited to in terms of area coverage. This same publication indicates that, radio has varied application in distance learning which include support to distance students, information for listening groups and information services of various kinds. Although radio has no permanency in its broadcast, it is a good means of conveying impression and enlightening topics readers are already familiar with. In distance education program tutorials can be disseminated for students in responses to commonly felt difficulties.

Well-made educational television program is also good for publicity. They are also excellent means for providing information and demonstrating skills because it is possible to show actions and places that can not be seen in any other way.The aim of production of educational TV, as Keegan (1986:145) thinks is generally to enable students to observe evidences, to analyze it to develop an argument from it and to draw conclusions from it. As it is more interesting and give options for audience, people often prefer TV than radio. Moreover, it gives possibility to see different natural places, geographical and science features.

Videotapes are much better educationally than broadcast TV. Because they can be stopped and replayed which allow time, for students to think and take notes. Video teaching may take forms of television program, video segments and interactive video. Since videotape bring pictures and audio together it has a paramount advantage such as: complex or abstract concepts can be illustrated through visual simulation. It can also preserve or capture events as they happen for a long time. If it is properly used, it is very effective for introducing, summarizing and reviewing concepts.

Audio refers to recorded sounds selected for teaching purpose which is mainly concerned about human voice. They are relevant to learning at a distance because sound can be a very powerful medium in distance learning. It may take the form of radio and audio cassettes. The audio cassettes are much useful and user-friendly in that it does not force learners to be sitting at a

fixed times like a radio transmission .It gives them an opportunity to listen whenever they like and as often as they need. (Rowntree 1992:107).

In distance learning as indicated by the above writers, there are three main ways of using audio in a distance learning which includes listening, listening and looking, and listening, looking and doing. The writer further elaborate that the different uses of audio-teaching as:-it gives learners a relief from reading, it gives means of learning while doing other things, it helps learners to practice different skills, it also gives chance for learners to say things that aren't so easily expressed in print.

2.9.3 Computer Teaching

Computers can contribute a lot for learning and teaching at a distance, mainly it gives access to other media like: interactive video, CD-Rom, and other data bases and storage media. In addition, they make it possible for learners to talk to one another and with their tutors using pre-programmed "course ware". They are also used to provide direct teaching (Rowntree 1992:113). According to Moor and kearsley (1996:85) computer based instruction (CBI) refers to instructional programs that the student uses alone on a personal computer. He further stated that, the program is usually provided on CD_ROMS, in multimedia format (graphics, text, sound, and video).

2.10 Student Support Service in Distance Education

Learning at a distance is more complex and challenging task which requires motivation, planning and the ability to analyze and apply the information being taught. As it is revealed by Sheets (1992) learning at a distance become complex and a challenge for several reasons like:

- Many of the students are adult, have jobs and families and other social responsibility. Coordinating all these different areas of life needs its own time which share their spare time and this in turn influences their studies.

- In addition, many of the distance learners register in distance program either to obtain a degree to qualify for a better job or to broaden their education without concentrating to the degree obtained.

- Communication between student and teacher may not be comfortable because of the inaccessibility of technical delivery system.

All these and other factors make the distance learning environment challenging. To make learners successful in their learning at a distance, the institution design and offer a well structured quality student support service so as to create two- way educational communication possible. As Ramanujam (2000:8) indicates, in distance education, learner support cover a wide range of functioning , starting from producing learning materials and making them available to distance learners up to arranging face-to-face contact and conducting examination and providing the final result. Garrison (1987) in TOJDE (2004) defined learner support as "The resources that learners can access in order to carry out the learning processes." In this same publication Garrison (1986) observes support in distance education is concerned with a range of human and non-human resources to guide and facilitate the educational transaction. According to him, these resources may include library facilities, various media and software programs, community leaders, or they could be various socio economic variables such as student's financial self-sufficiency and capacity to cope with their roles and responsibilities in the family and community.

Distance learners need different kinds of support from the institution in the courses that they are registered to learn. The reasons why they need such supports can be their newness for the program, or they may live alone where neither the teachers nor fellow students may not be physically present to clarify, discuss, or to help them. So they have no chance to raise issues which are difficult to them .To overcome such problems; distance learners need high support from their institution. Since learners came from different background the kind of support they need vary from individual to individual and from course to course. Regarding this, Thorpe(1988 :75) states that the student support system are designed to respond as far as possible to individual needs, and typically include the provision of support through tutors (Mentors), counselors (advisors, guidance and counselors) and center based staff (academics, librarians

,computer specialists and so on). In addition, the service should incorporate with in the self learning materials the learning system and assignment marking.

The objectives of students' support services, as the experience of Indra Gandhi National Open University shows, first, facilitate the provision of different services to learn so as to help them gainfully to utilize the learning package. Secondly, to enable learners to study effectively and to make their choices and decisions by providing them guidance and help through academic, administrative and information provision and thirdly, providing human element in distance education in order to reduce learners sense of isolation caused by lack of regular personal contact. (EMT; 1990:64). As Paul (1990:93) writes that an institutions commitment to strong learner support services is critical to the fundamental value of opening up accesses to a university education. .Similarly, Keegan (1989:78) shows, the provision of learner support services that distinguish distance education from private study and teach-yourself programs. The main objective of learner support services, therefore, motivates learners, keeping them on the right track and encouraging them to make use of the learning facilities.

Talbot (2003:58-66) categorized the kind of support which distance learner seeks in to; support from the tutor, from other students, from the course administration from family and friends and support from those at work. TOJDE in its October 2004 publication described the learner support system in to four aspects learner needs, content, institutional and the technology, it emphasized that the support that the distance learner obtain should focus in relation to these four aspects.

Hodgdsu (1986:56) in TOJDE gave high consideration to support system. He wrote "support systems contribute to the process of a course as do the learning materials." Molefi (2002) indicates that, the amount of support services an institution can offer largely depends on the capacity and resources available in the institution. However, he said, these can be categorized into two: (Academic and Administrative)

- Academic: which includes tutorial, advising and counseling services
- Administrative functions: such as enrolment admission and registration; record keeping information provision; and delivery of study materials.

In addition to this, (Internet (2) 1997) categorized, the support for distance learning in to logistic support, student support and faculty support. Tilak, R. and Ruhi Esrigen (1998:102) categorized learner support services in to three i.e. **instructional support** which includes activities like individual and group tutoring discussions, academic advising and library services, **counseling services** like career guidance, diagnosing testing and counseling , study technique. **Communication support** which refers to giving feed-back, make available a telephone contact and the like. From the above description given by different authors, it is convenient for this paper to categorize and discuss the different types of support to Administrative and academic support.

2.10.1 Administrative Support

As indicated in the above discussion, administrative support refers to supports related to the faculty or institution like: administrative processes, advisory and counseling services, student admission, record keeping, information provision and distribution of learning materials, preparation for tutorial, examination institutional regulations and other similar activities incorporate to the Administrative support given to the learner. In this kind of support, the management of the institution should prepare different standardize formats and send them to the learner on time which indicate the kind of support learners get from the institution starting from the time of learners application or admission from the office of the institutions in the form of information provision, distribution of materials, time-tabling for tutorial, examination and other related issues. Besides, change of center, probably courses or streams and the like are some of the support that distance learner get from their institutions. (Rumble: 1992) (Taboy; 2003)

The other forms of support which include in administrative support are advisory and counseling services. Support in counseling focuses on study and examination techniques, in doing exercises and TMA'S, in choosing what to study or quires for pre- application and course choices. Guidance on the other side focuses on the nature and ways of delivering the course, how they solve personal challenges and problems which are directly related to their study and make their learning difficult. In addition, the student should also get information about the benefit of the courses in relation to their carriers, interests and further studies (Rumble,

1992:63). To generalize, distance learners can get the administrative support from both their tutor and the faculties of the institutions. Most of the students would like to know about the course which may be given, dates of attendance at the institution for short courses, submission dates for assignments, format in which assignments must be submitted, way of contacting their tutors or other students, and so on. From the above discussion, one can understand that administrative supports are vital parts of the institutions which have to be ready to support learners from the time of application to the final graduation of learners enrolled in the institution.

2.10.2 Support from their Tutor

In delivering distance education programs students/ learners get support mainly from their tutors. As Talbet (2003:59) indicates that tutors in the distance education program are mostly course writers and experts in the field, they communicate with learners and interpret the ideas raised by learners related to the different aspects of the course, marking their assignments and ultimately deciding on a grade for learners work. Besides, they seek feedback from their learners at various stages of studying the module.

TOJDE (2004) also explains that, the most important part of support in an educational transaction is teachers' support. Tutors, through offering guidance and direction can assist their students to achieve their goals and develop control of the educational process. This means, students in distance learning can have a chance to get sufficient supports form their tutors.

2.10.3 Support from Other Students

Although distance learners live scattered in different places, they make contacts and discuss course related issues in their spare time with each other. The benefits of being in touch with other students help them to be able to talk and share issues, concerns and ideas with each other. This in turn brings the 'apply' part of the learning cycle or help them to learn. In expressing ones ideas which have been swimming around in ones mind to another create an excellent way of refining those ideas, especially when others are prepared to listen carefully and give

constructive ideas. It also creates an opportunity to become familiar in using academic language which is specific to the course or subject (Talbot, 2003:61). Support between and among students build confidence in study the course. Isolation in studying or learning can be very destructive. When the time of inability to grasp a particular concept, and when others have found difficulty on a particular unit of the course materials just as difficult as one has, there is a way likely to learn by listening to others discussing it.

In general, in group discussion or getting support from one another have a great input to make the course understandable.) Discussing with other students and peers motivate and push learners to get through the next unit of materials to be ready for discussion. In addition, making friends with others on the same course can be one of the most rewarding aspects of studying.

2.10.4. Support from Family and Friends

In addition to all the above support which is directly related to the course, Talbot (2003: 63) mentioned that support from family, and friends and from people at work plays a great role in distance studies. According to him, "the wise student is the one who cultivates mutual understanding about his studies with those with whom he lives and socializes. In addition to this, he also considers the support of other people at work places important. This may include, supports given by a colleague or line manger that provides a helpful ideas, information and also encouragement in what the learners is doing". In some cases, when the field of study that the learners chose are related to the work, getting help form whom the learner will need information or cooperation is critical , because they can support them in giving comments ideas and clarification on the assignments before learner hand them to their tutor

2.11. Face-to-Face Tutorials

Distance learners occasionally come to a selected center for tutorials where both the tutor and distance learners appear physically in a tutorial centers. Tutors, assist tutees in their learning by creating conducive environment which help learners to share insights and experiences with one another.

In any educational system, to complete the program successfully, the interaction between students and the instructor is vital. Unlike the conventional face-to-face classroom situation, the interaction between (tutors) teachers and learners is unique, in its nature. As it indicated by Holmberg (2000:106) there is a great variety between the conventional and distance education system in the way students interact with their instructors. Most of the time, because of their characteristically difference from the regular conventional learners, Distance Learners need help which strengthen their study skills and ability to learn. Among others, tutorial service is one of the ways in which learners get assistance such help and an interaction is made between the tutor and the learner. In distance education tutorial service refers to a process through which a student can get additional assistance with his/her course work from a professional.

There are many ways of giving tutorial service of distance learners. Some of these are using telephone, fax, electronic mail, by post and face-to-face tutorials. Since such mechanisms are highly depend on the availability of the infrastructure facilities, the face-to-face tutorial is common and widely applicable in most Distance Education providing institutes.

2.12. Assessment of Learners Performance in Distance Education

In most distance education systems assessment of student performance is done using combination of continuous assessment and Tutor Marked Assignments (TMA) and end course examination at the end of the courses and in some mid exams may also be given (Rumble, 1992) He further discussed that, continuous assessment in Distance Education is formative and usually determined by learners performance in written assignment. The percentage it accounts from the overall evaluation of a given course varies depending on the credit hour of the course and also on the philosophical out look of the system. (Rowntree 2000:70)

The final end course exams is conducted in some selected centers or examination halls which are considered some how as centers for localities for a group of learners. However, learners from very remote localities are forced to travel to some distance take exam. The institution should give due attention for the overall security such as guarding the exam paper in the time of invigilation. The answer sheets and genuinely marking of the answer sheets would apply prior to, during and the post time of the examination. (Rumble, 1992)

The common wealth of learning in its publication 'Tutoring in open and distance learning' (2003:81) states that, unlike conventional education in which assessment made in face-to-face learning which often includes participation in classroom interaction, assessment in Distance Learning is often based largely on assignments which learners do and send to their tutors. In addition, in a face-to-face classroom situation teachers can use their observation of learners in action as indicators of learners' strengths and weaknesses whereas; in Distance Learning system tutors rely on assignments or subtle messages in other communication with learners. The book further discusses the use and purpose of assessment and feedback in distance education as:-

- A guide to learners about the essential elements of the course.
- Indicators of learner progress and learner and tutor.
- A focal point of dialogue between learner and tutor.
- A means of verifying and validating learner achievements.
- Indicators of the strength and weaknesses of the course materials.
- Indicators to the educational institution of quality issues.

In general, Assessment of Learners Performance answers the questions 'How am I doing?' on the side of the learner. Because, distance Learners are at a distance from the learning context and lack the formal interaction that learners get in a face-to-face setting, and they rely on tutor feedback and comments on their assignment. On the side of the tutors, assessment of student assignment helps them to diagnose areas that need reinforcement or remedial help by identifying learners' strengths and weaknesses. Besides, it helps them to:

- Identify learners' areas of understanding.
- Assess study skills, such as academic skills, writing, analysis or technical skills in application of principles to practice.
- Pin point areas of difficulty related to lack of background or a weak skill area, and develop strategies to help the learner deal with his difficulties.
- Learn more about learners' interest and concerns.

To summarize, it is important and relevant to share these potential advantages, in doing assignment and getting feedback. The tutor give due attention on their feedback and comments because, on the content of the course learners except acknowledgement and confirmation,

thoroughness, opportunity for clarification, respect and timeliness. Prompt marking and reply is also expected from the side of the tutor (Rumble, 1992).

Moreover assessment, for learners can

- Show progress, indicating what has been achieved and what needs to be done.
- Provide an objective measurement that serves as point of reference for further work.
- Allow opportunities to ask tutors questions or raise content issues.
- Illuminate expected standards for assignments.
- Provide information on additional resources to address weak areas or to pursue topics in greater depth. (common wealth of learning:2000:82)

To summarize, to share such potential advantages from doing assignment and getting feedback, the tutor gives due attention on their feedback and comments. Because,, learners expect acknowledgement and confirmation on their work apart from the feedbacks which is directly related to the content of the course.

CHAPTER THREE

3. Presentation and Analysis of Data

This chapter deals with the presentation and analysis of the findings of the research. It focuses on the following major headings related to the basic questions of the study:

3.1 . Characteristics of the Respondents.

- 3.1.1 Learners' View on Learning at a Distance Mode
- 3.1.2 Training of Tutors for Being a Tutor For Distance Learners

3.2 . Means of Delivering the Program.

3.3 . Ways of Student Support Services.

3.4 . Tutor Marked Assignment and Tutorials.

3.5 . Exam Administration.

3.6 . Problems Related To Learning At A Distance

3.7 Recommended Solution For Making Distance Education Program Successful

To start the analysis the characteristics of respondents, in terms of sex, age, marital status, years of experience, program enrolled, monthly income, etc are discussed. Then the subsequent parts, that is issues under 3.2 through 3.7 deals with the analysis of the findings of the study on the basis of the reflections and opinion of the respondents of the study.

In doing the research, the data was collected from the respondents through questionnaires which comprised both close and open ended items. For analysis and discussion purposes, the collected data were organized into tables, and then frequencies and percentages were mainly computed based on each data entries. Moreover, to quantify, explore and describe differences and similarities between different groups of respondents, mean, standard deviation and one –way ANOVA test were employed.

3.1. Characteristics of the Study Population

As it was indicated in chapter one of this study, questionnaires and structured interviews were the two major data collection instruments used in the study. The questionnaires were distributed to 300 distance education learners and 52 tutors. Additionally five distance education coordinators and five experts from the sample institutions were interviewed. Out of these distributed questionnaires, 100 percent of the questionnaires from both tutors and distance learners were filled out and returned.

Accordingly, the characteristics of the study population in terms of sex, age, marital status, qualifications, employment conditions, experience, and monthly income were examined based on the responses obtained from the first section of the returned and valid questionnaires. Hence, table 1 and table 2 can give evidences to this goal.

Table 1: Frequencies and Percentage Responses of the Characteristics of Respondents

N. O	*Question Item*	*Response Item*	**Respondents**			
			Dist learner(N=300)		*Tutors (N=52)*	
			Freq	*%*	*Freq*	*%*
1.	Sex	A) Male	205	68.3	44	84.6
		B) Female	95	31.7	8	15.4
		Total	**300**	**100**	**52**	**100**
2.	Age	A) 20 – 30 years	74	24.7	13	25
		B) 31 – 40 years	136	45.3	33	63.5
		C) 41 – 50 years	86	28.7	6	11.5
		D) 51 and above	41	1.3	-	-
		Total	**300**	**100**	**52**	**100**
3.	Marital status	A) Married	200	66.7	17	32.7
		B) Single	88	29.3	35	67.3
		C) Divorced/ Widow	12	4.0	-	-
		Total	**300**	**100**	**52**	**100**
4.	Qualification	A) Diploma	-	-	-	-
		B) BA/BSC / B.Ed/LLM	-	-	38	73.1
		C) MA/MSC	-	-	14	26.9
		Total	-	-	**52**	**100**
5.	Employment status	A) Government	225	75.0	-	-
		B) Private	49	16.3	-	-
		C) Self-employed	18	6.0	-	-
		D) Unemployed	8	2.7	-	-
		Total	**300**	**100**	-	-

As it can be seen in the item one of the above table (table 1), 205 (68.3%) of learners and 44 (84.6%) of tutors were male respondents. The other 95 (31.7%) and 8 (15.1 %) of learners and tutors respectively were females. This shows that, most of the respondents included in the study were males which may mean that the participation rates of females are very low?

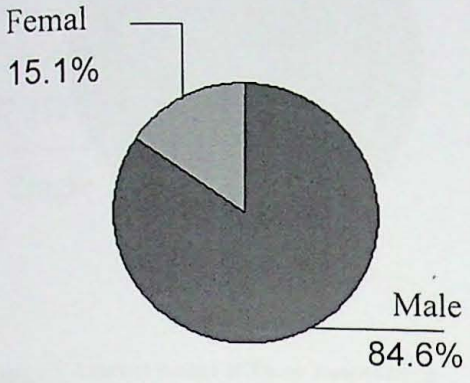

Figure 1. Sex Ratio of Tutor Respondents

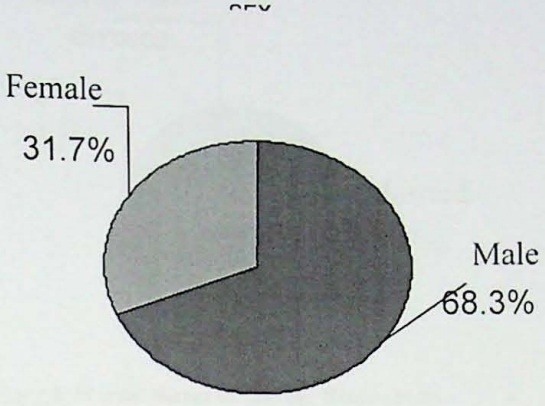

Figure 2. Sex Ratio Learner Respondents

When we observe ages of the respondents, item 2 in table 1 shows that the majority (45.3%) of learners and (63.5%) of tutors lie between 31 and 40 years. Among the remaining learner respondents some 24.7% and 28.7% were between 20-30 years and 41-50 years respectively. Likewise, 25% and 11.5% of tutors were between 20-30 and 41-50 years respectively.

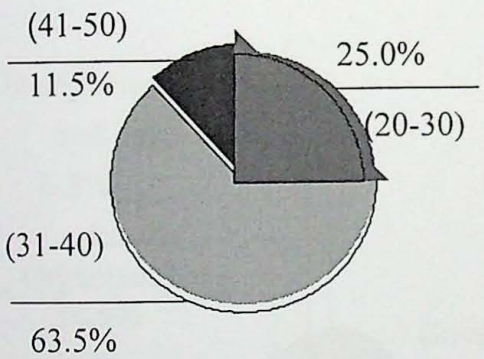

Figure 3. Age Category of Tutor Respondents

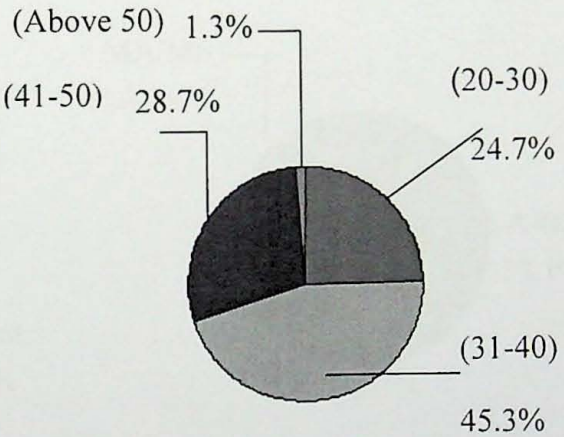

Figure 4. Age Category of Learner Respondents

The respondents were also asked about their marital status. As their responses in item 3 of table 1 were 66.7% and 32.7% of the learners and tutors were married whereas, 88 (29.3%) and 35(67.3%) of learners and tutors were single respectively. This can tells us that, the majority of

the learners and reasonable numbers of tutors have family commitment and responsibilities which could affect their learning and tutoring.

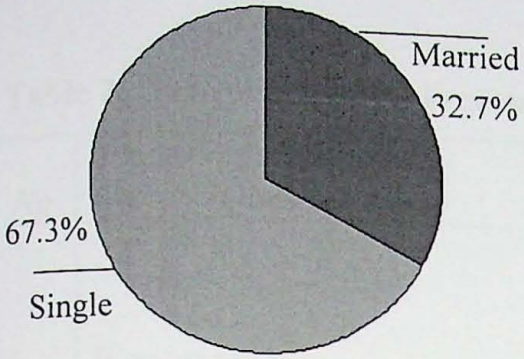

Figure 5. Marital Status of Tutor Respondents

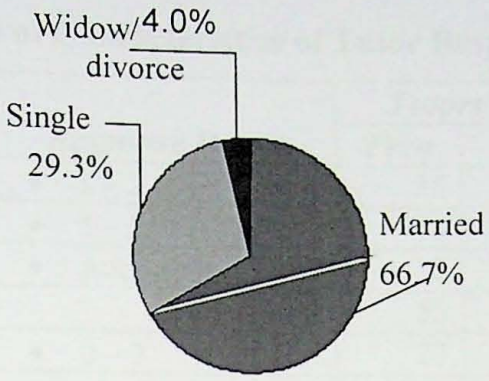

Figure 6. Marital Status of Learner Respondents

The table shows that, out of the total tutor respondents 38 (73.1%) and 14 (26.9%) have First Degree and MA/MSc degree respectively in their field of study. This shows that, the distance education institutions fulfill or meet the required qualification standards to teach diploma level learners. From this one can assume that, tutors who participate in the program have the necessary knowledge in the courses they tutor.

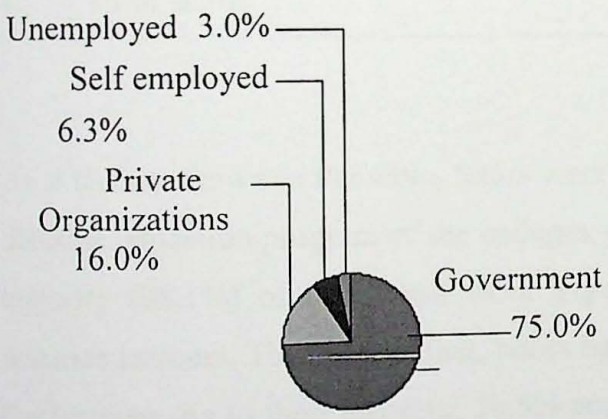

Figure 7. Employment Condition of Learner Respondent

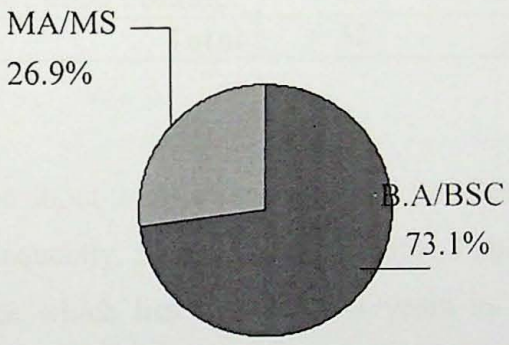

Figure 8. Tutors Qualification

In relation to the working situation of learners the majority (75%) of learners were government employees, On the other hand, 16.3% and 6% of learners were employed in private organization

and self employed respectively. This indicates that learners may face problems in getting permission for exam time and tutorial sessions. There were also few (2.7%) learners who reported had no work.

Table 2: Frequencies and Percentages of Characteristics of Tutor Respondents.

No	*Question items*	*Response Items*	*Tutors N =52*	
			Freq	*%*
1	Work experience	• 1 – 2	35	67.3
		• 3 – 5	16	30.8
		• Above 5	1	1.9
		Total	52	100
2.	Experience as a tutor (in years)	• 0 – 2	27	51.92
		• 3 – 4	10	19.23
		• 5 – 6	7	13.46
		• More than 6	8	15.38
		Total	52	100
3.	Monthly income	• 300 – 500	-	-
		• 501 – 1000	1	1.9
		• 1001 – 1500	19	36.5
		• 1501 – 2000	32	61.5
		• 2000 and above	-	-
		Total	52	100
4.	Tutor status	•Full time	16	30.7
		• Part time/ contract	36	69.3
		Total	52	100

As it clearly shown in the table, tutors were asked about their experiences as a tutor and in the distance education program of the colleges. Consequently, as item 1and 2 of table 2 shows, the majority (98.1%) of tutors had work experience which lies between 3-4 years in tutoring distance learners. This reveals that, tutors had enough experience which can help them to assist the learners. As to their incomes, 36.5% and 61.5% of tutor respondents earn monthly salaries which lie between 1001-1500 and 1501-2000 respectively. Item 4 of the above table revealed whether tutors were full time workers or part time (contract) employes. As the data indicates, out of 52 tutors only 16 (30.7%) of tutors were full time employee. All the rest of tutors which comprise 36 (69.3%) serve as part time or on contractual basis. From this, one can infer that,

most of the tutors come to the institution only at the time of tutorial sessions; this may minimize the support they give to distance learners..

3.1.1 Learners View on Learning in a Distance Mode

Learners were asked questions related to their views on learning in a Distance Education Program. Their responses for questions like: the reason why they were enrolled in a distance mode and their perception after joining the program. Their responses were summarized in the following table.

Table 3: Frequencies and Percentages of Learners' View on Distance Education

NO	*Question items*	*Response Items*	Learners =(300)	
			Freq	%
1	Reasons for Joining Distance Program	• Lack of other alternatives	25	8.33
		• To satisfy academic curiosity	87	29.0
		• It was the best option	54	18.0
		• Unavailability of courses in the near by collages	1	.3
		• Convenient to study on my own pace	133	44.33
		Total		
2	Suitability of learning at a distance mode	• Very suitable	197	65.7
		• Some what suitable	94	31.3
		• Not suitable	9	3.0
		Total		
3	If very suitable , in what sense	• Availability of appropriate time table	72	24.0
		• Help me to adjust my pace according to my speed	137	45.7
		• Have carefully prepared materials	77	25.7
		• Have good coordination	14	4.7
		Total		

Among other things, one of the benefits of learning at a distance mode is its convenience to learners to study in accordance to their time, and pace. Such an advantage of distance education were designated by 44.33% of them. Others (29.0%) said that they joined the distance mode to satisfy their academic curiosity. On the other hand, 18.0% of the respondents indicated that they joined the distance mode because it was the best option to continue their education. According to the responses of the respondents and different written materials indicated that distance education, in its very nature, is convenient to different kinds of learners, this is because, it gives

them chance to adjust the time and pace to study and complete the course. Because of such major benefits, most learners make distance education their preference.

In item 2 of table 3, respondents were asked about the suitability of the program to their study. About, 97.0% of learners expressed that learning at a distance mode is very suitable for them. Respondents, who said learning at a distance mode is very suitable, were asked, how or in what way it was suitable to them. Accordingly, as indicated in the table above, being able to determine ones own pace and time was the very reason indicated by 45.7% of respondents. One of the advantages of learning at a distance mode as Brown (1997:3) indicated is its flexibility in which learners have the opportunity of choosing the time and even sometimes the course according to once own interest. This means, everyone, in any situation can attend his/her learning through distance program.

3.1.2 Training of Tutors in Distance Learning

All professions in organization need their employees to have upgrading or refreshers training to ensure them become efficient in their performances. Organizations also places high emphasis for training so as to develop the potentials of its employees. Similarly, in distance education, tutors also need to have the necessary human skills to properly interact with learners and grasp the concepts related to distance education which help them to perform their tutoring. In this regard tutors were asked questions pertinent to the training areas in which they may have chances to participate. The following table portrays the summary of responses of tutors.

Table: 4 Frequencies and Percentages of Responses on participation to Areas of Training

NO	*Area of Training offered to you*	*Tutors (52)*			
		Yes		*No*	
		Freq	*%*	*Freq*	*%*
1	Pre- orientation	37	71.15	15	28.84
2	Concepts on distance education.	3	5.76	49	94.23
3	Characteristics of distance learners.	-	-	52	100
4	Effective teaching in distance education.	3	5.76	49	94.23
5	Face to face tuition.	-	--	52	100
6	Use of TMA and its handling mechanism.	-	-	52	100
7	Techniques of giving feedback.	-	-	52	100
8	Ways of handling distance learner.	3	5.76	49	94.23
9	Correspondence tuition.	-	-	52	100
10	Role of tutor in distance education.	-	-	52	100

Tutors in most cases are, teachers who are graduates from universities and colleges with the minimum qualification of first degree in the area they tutor and are a full time employees in regular schools. As it was indicated in chapter two of the study, the other settings and characteristics of learner were scattered in so many directions which need sufficient knowledge and training abilities on the side of tutors. However, as it can be seen from the table almost all the tutors in distance education institution had not taken any kind of training on issues like: the different concepts of distance education, characteristics of distance learner's and tutorial related issues which are more useful in tutoring distance learners.

Among the respondents 37 (71.15%) of them explain that the institutions gave them induction on the governing principles and working procedures when they begun to tutoring. One of the reason, which was indicated in literatures was almost all of tutors were part time employee for the institutions. The interviews held with the heads and experts of the institutions assert that institutions have not given training or workshops to tutors.

Serving as a tutor in distance education program, requires the knowledge of learners' characteristics in terms of his/her background knowledge, age category, working behavior and other related issues. To have such an overall understanding, tutors must be exposed to such information. Regarding this, item 3 of the table shows, the institutions did not provide them the necessary training. From this one can infer that tutors in distance education institutions lack the knowledge of their learners which may create problem in communicating with them. By the same token, item 5, 6 and 9 clearly shows that, almost all of the respondents assert that, they did not get any training on face to face tuition, use of TMA and its handling mechanisms and techniques of giving feedback. All this imply that lack of training on distance education may de-motivate tutors from giving sufficient support for learners. So learners may not get what they want from their tutors.

3.2. Course Material Designing and Distribution

In provision of distance education program, course material preparation takes the first main activity which needs to have sufficient information about the level and background of the learners. The course designers should make careful assessment of distance learners so as to make the materials self instructive that can match with the level of the learners and should include sufficient information, enough practical work, self assessment exercises and enough number of assignments for submission.

In this regard, among other factors that could be considered as important points in preparation of distance education modules, the major ones were presented to the respondents to be rated in a five point scale; (from strongly agree=5, agree=4, I am not sure=3 disagree=2 to strongly disagree=1). Hence, the expected mean value for each statement was 3.0. A response mean below 3.0 was considered to indicate level of disagreement with the statement and above 3.0 was considered to indicate level of agreement. For the ease of analysis, the average mean value of the data gathered from the respondents were classified as, < 2.5= complete disagreement, 2.5-3.00. Uncertainty and mean value greater than 3.00= complete agreement. More over, One-Way ANOVA was employed. To test whether there was a difference in perception about the level of agreement of the points raised on the table which are related to the contents of the

course materials. Accordingly, the responses of the respondents were summarized and are presented in the following table.

Table: 5. Mean Value and Standard Deviation of Responses with Regard to the Quality of the Course Materials

NO	*Question items*	*Learners (N =300)*		*Tutors (N=52)*		*Comparing means*	
A	***Course Materials Are:-***	*mean*	*St.De*	*mean*	*St.De*	*F*	*Sig*
1	Match with the level of the learner	4.10	.890	4.02	.918	.361	.548*
2	Include sufficient information's about the course.	4.21	.757	3.88	1.096	6.920	.009
3	Include enough practical work	4.25	.684	4.08	1.064	2.264	.133*
4	Include sufficient self assessment exercises	4.35	.703	3.94	1.211	11.385	.001
5	Contain enough number of assignments	3.81	1.064	3.67	1.354	.640	.424*
B	***The Course Contents Are:-***						
6	Related to the objectives of the course	4.01	1.087	3.29	1.499	17.268	.000
7	Have clear objectives	4.26	.820	3.87	1.205	8.626	.004
8	Sufficient time to complete the course	4.02	.961	3.17	1.543	28.002	.000
9	Give opportunity for discussion	4.16	.883	3.87	1.172	4.544	.034

(<2.5=complete disagreement, 2.5__3.00= undecided, and.>3.00= complete agreement.) *significance difference at 0.05df

As one can easily see from the table above, the mean scores for item 1- 5 do not vary greatly or fall almost in one category i.e.> .3.00. This shows that, both learners and tutor respondents agreed that the prepared course materials were self instructional which contain the necessary basic knowledge about the course and also contain enough practical activities and self assessment exercises which help them to check their progress in their study. This implies that, learners can read and understand the course materials easily. However, there is statistically significant difference between respondents in item 5 of the table. In line with this, the data obtained from Deans and Heads of distance education institutions through interview, revealed that , in preparation of the course materials emphasis was given to make the materials more student centered and self instructional which fit in with the level of the learners. However, the result of one way ANOVA test shows that there is statistically significant difference between learners and tutors in expressing their agreement in the match of the course materials with the

level of the learner, the inclusion of enough practical work and the number of assignments embodied in it which are presents in item 1, 3 and 5 of the table.
Regarding issues related to the content of the course material in terms of its relevance, amount of time given to cover, clarity of the objectives of the course and the availability of discussion questions, both tutor and learner respondents have agreed on item 6, 7&8 of the table with the mean value of > 3.00. This implies that the courses prepared for distance education program were relevant, and had clear instructional objectives. However, the associated p-value of the ANOVA test shows level of significance which is less than 0.05 in the perception of the two respondents which indicates that there is statistically significant difference in the mean response of the two groups.

As item 9 of the table shows both tutor and learner respondents agreed that the content of the course was prepared in a way that it gives a good opportunity for learners to make discussion by their own or with their group mates. Concerning the preparation of the course, an interview question raised for both tutors and administrative workers of the sample institutions. Which said "who are responsible to prepare the course material for the institution", According to their response, distance education giving institutions took all responsibilities for preparing the course materials under their distance education unit. They further expressed that, most of the time each subject area department of the unit used subject matter specialization and prior experience in preparing distance education course materials as a criteria for writing or preparing course materials. From this one can say that, course writers are knowledgeable and have good exposure in preparing course material for distance program.

3.3 Media Employed In Course Material Distribution and Associated Problems

Obviously, in provision of distance education, the selection of appropriate media and finding a better way for reaching the material to individual learners is vital. It needs great concern as equally as to the preparation of course materials. In relation to this, the respondents of the study were asked questions that are pertinent to media employed for the distribution of course

materials from the institution to the learners, and problems associated with it. The following table portrays the summary of responses as perceived by the respondents.

Table 6: Frequencies and Percentages of Respondent Responses on Course Material Distribution

NO	Question items	Response Items	Learners		Tutors	
			Freq	%	Freq	%
1	Course materials distributed	• On time	94	31.3	50	96.2
		• Not on time	206	68.7	2	3.8
		TOTAL	***300***	***100***	***52***	***100***
2	Time of delivering the course materials	• During registration time	156	52.0	25	48.1
		• After registration time	99	33.0	-	-
		• During exam time	24	8.0	7	13.5
		• During tutorial time	5	1.7	17	32.6
		• At any time convenient to me	16	5.3	3	5.8
		TOTAL	***300***	***100***	***52***	***100***
3	Media used to deliver the program	• Printed module	262	87.33	37	67.3
		• radio broadcast	-	-	-	-
		• TV program	-	-	-	-
		• Recorded cassette	38	12.66	17	32.7
		• Computer aided instruction	-	-	-	-
		• Internet(E-learning)	-	-	-	-
		TOTAL	***300***	***100***	***52***	***100***

Item 1 of table 6 above shows that, the majority (68.7%) of learners confirmed that they could not receive the course materials on time; however, 96.2%of tutors took the course materials on time. This shows that there is a problem on the side of the institution in providing the course materials to the learners on time. Regarding this, shortage of some modules, or not making available the materials on time, and shortage of time to collect the material from the institutions were some of the weaknesses expressed by learners in the open ended questions.

As item 2 of the same table shows 52% of learners indicated that they receive the course materials at the time of registration, whereas 33.0% of them indicated that they took the module after registration. This shows that the institutions dispatch the course materials during and after the time of registration. Tutors indicated that they collect the materials from the institution at the time of signing an agreement with the institutions.

Item 3 in table 6 indicate the mode or medias used by the institutions to deliver the course. Consequently, 87.33% of learners and 67.33% of tutors asserted that the most prominent medium used to distribute the courses to the learner was the course module (print). In this case the provision of distance education course materials still relies only on print modules which are an age old experience. About 11.66% of learners and 32.7 % of tutors, however, said that the recorded audio cassette was also used in addition to the printed module. Thus, it is an indication of the efforts of some of the institutions to support the course material other than print which is encouraging, and should be appreciated by all concerned body.

Table 7: Frequencies and Percentages of Responses on Media Used and Associated Problems

No	*Question items*	*Response Items*	*Learners (N=300)*		*Tutors (52)*	
			F	*%*	*F*	*%*
1	Means of communication with your tutor /learners	• Telephone	48	16.0	10	19.23
		• Personal communication	13	4.33	7	13.46
		• E-mail	-	-	-	-
		• At the time of tutorial session	239	79.66	35	67.30
		TOTAL	***300***	***100***	***52***	***100***
2	* Availability of information communication technologies	• Computer	100	27.39	32	61.53
		• Internet	74	20.27	8	15.4
		• AV-player	176	48.22	30	57.69
		• Not at all	15	4.11	-	-
3	Pertinent Problems	• Shortage of modules	126	42.0	-	-
		• Misplaced of pages	9	3.0	-	-
		• Editing problem	7	2.33	-	-
		• Delay in distribution	150	50.0	-	-
		• Lack of clarity	8	2.66	-	-
		TOTAL	300	100	-	-

**multiple responses*

The other issue raised on the table was means of communication which were used by both learner and tutors to communicate to one another. 79.66% of learners and 67.3% of tutors asserted in item 1 of the above table that, in most cases, learners and tutors communicate in a face-to-face situation only at the time of tutorial sessions and in writing, learners send their

assignments for correction or grading and other demands they raised. Only 16.0% of learners and 19.23% of tutors indicated that they made telephone communication with one another. Currently, most of developing and developed countries use information communication technologies to their distance education program. Using such new and modern technologies make the provision of distance education easier, especially for learners. This is because they can attend the program no matter wherever they may be. When we see the situation in our country it is not given much attention yet, especially by the institutions. They are still relying on printed module whereas other countries are using E-learning, satellite instruction, and audio-video conferencing to support distance learning

In line with this, respondents were asked whether they have easy access to some of the technologies use for their study or not. As it is shown in item 2 of table 7, 33.33% of learners and 61.53% of tutors have a computer access which they can use for their study. This shows that the majority of distance learners lack access to computer which can be considered as an obstacle to use modern technologies on the side of the institutions. Regarding audiovisual devices, item 2 of the same table indicates that, 176 (58.66%) of learners and 30 (57.69%) of tutors have complete access to audio visual player. This is one advantage that, the institutions use to support their course with AV- Materials.

Even if they are few in number, 24.66 % of learners and 15.4% of tutors have an internet access. According to the data one can say that, the course prepared by distance education giving institutions can be supported with additional Medias like; CD-Rom, Video and recorded cassettes to make the course easily accessible to the learners. As it is found in most literatures, at present, the use of modern information technology for distance program gets greater and greater acceptance by most of distance education institutions through out the world. As part of the world, our distance education providing institutions and at the same time learners in these institutions should strive to make it applicable.

Respondents were also asked about problems they faced in distribution of course materials (modules). As item 3 of table 7 shows, delay in distribution (50%) and shortage of module in some courses (42 %) were major problems raised by learner respondents. This means, the

distribution of course materials were not effective which in turn create an obstacle on the pace of learners to complete the course on time.

3.4 Support Services Given to Learners

In the enhancement of education at a distance mode, the availability of student support service unit and additional support materials are mandatory. Learners in distance program need to get support on issues which are related to their study, mechanisms use to complete the program successfully and other related issues. In line with this respondents were asked to give their reflection on whether counseling services (academic and non-academic) were provided to them or not and the availability of additional supporting materials offered to them. The following two tables (table 5 and 6) depict the summary of results observed in the findings

Table 8: Frequencies and Percentages of Respondents Responses on Advisory Services

no	Areas of advises		Learners =(300)				Tutors = (52)			
			A	S	R	N	A	S	R	N
1	Pre-application inquiry	F	19	23	50	208	4	10	26	12
		%	6.3	7.66	16.6	69.33	7.7	19.2	50.0	23.1
2	Field choice	F	-	42	56	202	3	4	13	32
		%	-	14	18.66	67.33	5.8	7.7	25.0	61.5
3	Personal problems which affect your study	F	10	27	30	233	5	2	14	31
		%	3.3	9	10	77.66	9.6	3.8	26.9	59.6
4	For further study	F	14	30	75	181	5	6	13	28
		%	4.9	10	25	60.33	9.6	11.5	25.0	53.8
5	Study technique	F	15	39	51	195	12	7	4	29
		%	5.0	13.0	17.0	65.0	23.1	13.5	7.7	55.8
6	Exam taking strategy	F	6	49	87	158	-	5	16	31
		%	2.0	16.3	29.0	52.7	-	9.6	30.8	59.6
7	TMAs handling mechanisms	F	16	74	59	151	15	7	10	20
		%	5.3	24.7	19.7	50.3	28.8	13.5	19.2	38.5
8	Orientation prior information on rules and regulation of the institution	F	40	150	60	50	-	-	-	-
		%	13.3	50	20	16.6	-	-	-	-
9	Ways of presenting complaints and appealed	F	15	20	45	220	-	-	-	-
		%	5	6.66	15	73.33	-	-	-	-

A=always, S= sometimes, R= rarely and N= not at all

As one can see from the table, for the kind of advice and counseling support which the institutions offered to their learners, the majority, more than 68% of learners and 60% of tutors revealed that the institution did not provide any services in the area of field of choice, pre application query, personal problems which hinders their study and information related to further study. Different literatures indicate that, since distance learners have taken most of the responsibility when they enrolled at a distance mode, institutions have opened an office for giving advices and counseling services to them. Because it helps the institutions to sustain the number of learners without wastage (dropout)

Similarly, advices related to academic issues like study technique, exam taking strategy, and ways of handling tutor marking assignments were the points raised to the respondents. Here also 65% of learners and 55.8% of tutors asserted that there was no guidance on study technique and similar issues. Likewise, 52.7% of learners and 59.6% of tutors reported that there is no such kind of advices given by the institutions on the points raised above. To make the teaching learning processes, be it in distance or conventional mode, learners are in need of several relevant supports services from their respective institutions. Among these, ways of handling assignments, study technique and strategies used to prepare oneself for exam have to be raised frequently while learners struggle for success in their learning. As the study shows, these types of support were not visible in distance education institutions. Lack of such supports may create problems which have their own negative impacts on the success of learners' performances, which needs much attention from such institutions.

On the contrary, 16-20% of the respondents admitted that the institutions provide advisory and counseling services for some times in their stay in the institution. Thus, as the data shows, many learners in distance education provision institutions did not get the necessary assistance and guidance. On the other hand, 63.3% of learners confirmed that the institution provide orientation and prior information on its rules and regulations sometimes in their study time. Regarding issues related to ways of presenting complaints and appeals 73.33% of learners gave their view that such kind of in formations was not given due attention by the institutions. In general, even if the availability of well organized and frequently execute advice and counseling

services help learners to develop their confidence of learning at a distance mode, as the data indicates , the institutions failed to do so.

3.5 Availability of Supplementary Materials

One of the supports given for distance learners is arranging different materials which support learners in their learning. According to this learners were asked to tell about the availability of supplementary materials in their respective institution. Their reactions are summarized in the following table.

Table 9: Frequencies and Percentages of Learner *Responses* on Availability of Supplementary Materials

No	*Available course Materials*	*Learners (N= 300)*				*Total*	
		Yes		*No*			
		F	*%*	*F*	*%*	*F*	*%*
1	Audio Cassette	47	15.7	253	84.3	300	100
2	Video Cassette	21	7.0	279	93.0	300	100
3	CD-Rom	13	4.3	287	95.7	300	100
4	Course calendar	207	69.0	93	31.0	300	100
5	Information booklet	167	55.7	133	44.3	300	100
6	Reference material	55	18.3	245	81.7	300	100

As shown in item 1, 2, and 3 of table 9 the vast majority of respondents confirmed that the non availability of audio and video cassette and CD-Rom in the institutions as a supplementary course materials which ought to support their learning. This verifies that distance education institutions do not use additional materials to support the program. As most of the respondents fill on the spaces provided for "if any other" item on the questionnaire, using such additional materials in the provision of courses make learning situations easy and minimize the felling of boredom created by depending only on the print module throughout the whole courses.

It was also affirmed by 69% of the respondent that the institution discharged to them course calendars and information booklets. This can be considered as an acceptable practice which

helps distance learners to adjust their programs accordingly. Regarding reference materials, 81.7% of respondents witnessed that, there were no reference materials prepared by the institutions for them. Thus, it clearly shows that, the distance education programs given by private higher institutions were highly dependent on pre- prepared printed materials only. In general, even though, the use of additional support materials is vital in distance program, still most of the institutions were not in a position to make use of other alternative Medias.

3.6 Tutor Marked Assignment And Tutorials

Tutor marked assignments and feedback in distance education plays a major role in helping learners in providing information and guiding them by telling and tracking in their academic progress. Moreover, they are the basis of communication between learners and their tutors towards learning. If the feedbacks given for tutor marked assignments are clear, applicable and bring out their mistakes, they maintain and develop learners' motivation and commitment to their studies. In such a way, certain important issues related to TMA were presented for respondents to highlight their perception. Their responses are summarized and presented in the following table (table 10).

Table 10: Frequencies and Percentages of Responses of Learners' Responses on Tutor Marked Assignment

No	*Question items*	*Response Items*	*Learners*	
			F	*%*
1	Time of submission	• On time	254	84.7
		• Not on time	46	15.3
		Total	300	100
2	Frequency of getting feedback from tutors	• Always	171	57.0
		• Sometimes	66	22.0
		• Rarely	44	14.66
		• Never	19	6.33
		Total	*300*	100
3	Appropriateness of mark/grade given to each assignment	• Very appropriate	166	55.33
		• Appropriate	85	28.33
		• Moderately appropriate	31	10.33
		• Not appropriate	18	6.0
		Total	*300*	100

In distance education program, one of the means by which learners communicate with their tutors is Tutor Marked Assignments (TMAs). Learners always require submitting at least one TMA for each course on time. On the other hand the institution also checks and returns the corrected assignment to the learners on time too. If this is done frequently and in an organized manner, it will benefit learners a lot in their learning. To this point, respondents were asked to give their opinion regarding issues related to TMAs and face-to-face tutorials.

As shown in item 1 in table 10 the vast majority, 254 (84.7%) of learners verified that they submit their TMAs on time. But 15.3% of the respondents did not do so. In the interview conducted with the Heads and Coordinators of distance education units of the institutions say that, doing and submitting TMAs were the main requirements to complete each course. They further elaborated that doing and sending assignments on time help the learners to get feedback as early as possible which in turn has a great contribution to know their mistakes which can be used as references in their studies.

Item 2, in table 10 indicates that, 171 (57%) of learners said that they always get feed back for each TMA. Others, 66 (22%) of learners also said that they got feed back for TMAs, but not always. From this one can say that most of the time the institutions return TMAs for learners on time. This implies that, learners have a chance to correct their mistakes before they sit for the final end course exam. This makes their result at least above average which encourages them to go through each course in detail when they were in studying the courses.

Regarding the weight /mark given for each TMAs, item 3 in table 10 shows, 166 (55.3%) of learners agreed that the marks given to TMAs were very appropriate. Among other respondent, 85 (28.3%) of them confirmed that the mark given for TMAs were appropriate. Even if, few 18 (6.0%) of respondents hold that the mark given for TMAs was not appropriate, the majority of respondents viewed it as reasonable and appropriate in relation to the time they spent in dealing with it. Information obtained from document observation indicated that institutions give 30-40 points out of hundred for each TMA in a given course. As respondents suggested that, the value given for the assignments were appropriate, which creates a sense of motive in preparing themselves for end course exam.

Table 11: **Frequencies and Percentages of Respondents' Responses With Regards to Significance and Problems associated with TMA**

No	*Question items*	*Response Items*	Learners(300)		Tutors(52)	
			F	%	F	%
1	Significance of doing the assignments	• Very high	192	64.00	16	30.80
		• High	68	22.67	28	53.80
		• Low	28	9.33	4	7.70
		• Very low	12	4.00	4	7.70
		Total	**300**	**100.00**	**52**	**100.00**
2	Adequacy of assignments for submission	• Too much	-	-	-	-
		• Adequate	245	81.66	47	90.5
		• Inadequate	55	18.33	5	9.5
		Total	**300**	**100.00**	**52**	**100**
3	Major problems encounter in correcting TMAs	• Delay in submission	-	-	-	-
		• Incomplete answers	-	-	25	24.50
		• Coping with each other	-	-	23	22.54
		• Getting it done by others	-	-	49	48.03
		• Readability	-	-	5	4.90
		• **Total**	-	-	102*	

* Multiple responses

The significance of doing TMAs was seen positively by both groups of respondents. As it is shown in item 1 in table 11 (84.6%) of tutors and 86.67% of learners expressed their agreement in the significance of the TMAs in learning at a distance. Doing assignments and getting timely feedback support learners by giving chance to review and learn from their completed assignments while they are study the course.

Regarding the adequacy of the number of assignments for submission, 81.66% and 90.5% of learner and tutor respondents respectively, agreed that the number of assignments for submission given for each course was adequate. The interview held with heads and experts of distance education units of the sample institutions indicated that each course has one tutor marked assignment in addition to many self assessment exercises embodied in the course materials.

In item 3 of table 11 tutor respondents were asked to indicate the type of problems they encountered when the time of correcting assignments done by learners. According to their responses, among other problems, exchanging their answers among one another or at least getting

answers from those who are better were considered as a problem by 92.0% of tutor respondents. In this case respondents added that, in the open ended item, studying together and exchange ideas from one another is one part of learning and encouraging , but in most cases , they said , copying with one another was seen in their answers. Another problems observed from the table was that learners got the assignments done by other people who were subject specialist. This has been witnessed by 29.87 % of tutors. The problem of incompleteness of answers for questions was also considered as a problem by 32.46% of tutor respondents.

The interview held with coordinators and experts of the institutions indicates that, even if the cases were not significant, copying from one another, incompleteness of their answers and readability problems in some questions were observed from the side of the learners. Learners in a distance education have a number of problems which challenges them in studying their courses. Shortage of time because of different social, family, and or other societal commitments also take most of their time. This may force them to commit the above observable mistakes and low performance.

Table 12: Frequencies and Percentages of Respondent Responses with Regards to Tutorial Programs

No	*Question items*	*Response Items*	Learners	
			F	*%*
1	Attending the tutorial program regularly	• Attend regularly	254	84.66
		• Not attend it regularly	46	15.33
		Total	*300*	100
2	Benefit got from attending the Tutorial program?	• To get clarification on concepts Which are difficult to understand	150	59.05
		• Use the chance to get other students	75	29.52
		• It push me to work hard (study)	9	3.54
		• To add on my knowledge	20	7.84
		Total	*254*	100
3	Importance of the face-to-face tutorial program	• Very high	175	68.89
		• High	35	13.77
		• Moderate	44	17.71
		• Low	-	-
		Total	*254*	100

The other issue raised in the table was related to face-to-face tutorials. As item 1 of table 12 indicates, the majority 84.66 % of learners attend the tutorial program regularly. Whereas, some 15.33% of learners said that they did not attend the tutorial program regularly. Learners who attend the tutorial program regularly were asked the reason or what they expect from the tutorial session. As it is clearly seen in item 2 of the table (59%) of them assert that they attended the tutorial program to get clarification on concepts which are difficult to understand while they are studying. To get or communicate with other students who took similar course (29.52%), because it motivated me to work hard (3.54%), and to get additional knowledge (7.84%) were the responses forwarded by the respondents. From the above date one can understand that the tutorial program arranged by the institutions were help the students to study the course thoroughly. Besides, if the sessions are carefully designed and well experienced tutors assigned learners can have great benefits from the program.

Learners who attended the tutorial program were also asked to rate the importance of the tutorial program in accordance with their purpose and intention. As to their responses which item 3 in table 12 indicates, 68.89% and 13.77% of learners rate the importance of the tutorial program as very high and high respectively. From this one can infer that learners in distance education program were benefited from the tutorial program arranged by the institution.

3.7 Problems Associated with Tutorial Programs

Respondents were asked to cite some of the problems they faced during their tutorial session. Statements which are considered as problems in relation to tutorial programs were presented to the respondents. In order to give them chance to express their level of agreement or disagreement, those statements were presented in a way to be rated by a five point likert scale: very serious problem= 5, serious problem=4, moderate problem=3, problem =2 and not a problem =1. For analysis purpose, the percentages of the two outside categories "strongly agree" and "agree"; and "disagree" and "strongly disagree" can be combined and computed. For each statement, the expected mean response was 3.0. A response below 3.0 was considered to indicate level of disagreement with the statement which designate that the statement was not a problem and vice versa for the mean above this figure.

Table 13: Frequencies and Percentages of Respondents' Responses with Regards to Problems Related to Tutorial Session

	Problems		Learners N = (300)					total	Mean value
			VSP	SP	MP	P	NP		
1	Inconveniency of the tutorial time	F	30	56	69	9	136	300	
		%	28.7		23	48.3		100	2.45
2	Tutor absentees	F	107	60	75	9	49	300	
		%	55.7		25.0	19.3		100	3.55
3	Lack of prior information about the time and place of the tutorial session	F	1	45	63	20	171	300	
		%	15.33		21	63.4		100	1.95
4	The time given for each course is too short	F	97	82	53	31	37	300	
		%	59.6		17.7	22.6		100	3.57
5	Inefficient performance of teachers	F	66	13	93	83	45	300	
		%	26.3		31.0	42.7		100	2.90

(VSP)Very serious problem= 5, (SP) serious problem=4, (MP) moderate problem=3, (P) problem =2 and (NP) not a problem =1

As the table reveals absence of tutors from the programs and shortage of time given for each course was rated by respondents as a very serious problem with the mean value greater than 3.0. This indicates that absence of tutors from the tutorial sessions was one of the problems which respondents faced in attending the program. Moreover, the information obtained from the interview which was held with experts of the distance education units also affirmed that, such problems occurred some times when tutors were unable to come up on time. Furthermore, in rare cases shortage of tutors had also caused a problem. From this one can infer that these conditions may discourage learners from participating or attending the tutorial programs. The other issues which respondents considered as a serious problems were insufficient time given for each course per tutorial program. They feel that, even if the purpose of tutorial session in distance education is to get assistance on issues which may create problems while learners do their studies, because of the size of the class and the vastness of the course materials, it was not possible to raise important issues or difficulties mostly within one hour.

Regarding item 1, 3 and 5, 48.3%, 63.7 % and 42.7% of the respondent confirmed that there was no serious problem on place, time and the performance of tutors in the tutorial session with

the mean value 2.45, 1.95 and 2.90 respectively. However, 26.3 % of respondents accepted that there was a serious problem on the efficiency of tutors in giving tutorial. This happened because of lack of orientation and training regarding distance learners and how a tutor should handle learners' characteristics and different techniques applicable in tutoring distance learners. Besides many respondents, repeatedly reported (on the space provided for 'others if any') that, the number of the tutorial session per course was inadequate. As many research outputs indicates , among other things , the interaction made between learners and their tutors was one of the strategy which was used for strengthening learners study skills and ability to learn.

3.8. End Course Exam and its Administration

One of the requirements in any education system including distance education is evaluating the level of students' knowledge, understanding on a given course. The time and type of evaluation mechanisms for learner performance on each course vary from one institution to another. Some gave more emphasis for continuous evaluation through different mechanisms (assignments, practical works student participation and the like.) while others gave mid-term exam together with one final end course examination. There were also some, who used only end course exams at the end of the course work. In order to make the evaluation sound and practical, the institutes prepare themselves ahead of time to implement such evaluating mechanisms.

3.8.1 Ways of Evaluating Learners' Performance

To suit this, three sets of question items which were related to methods of evaluating learners' performance, nature and administration of exams and problems related to end course exams were prepared in such a way to determine the perception of respondents about the overall implementation of end course exam. Having this in mind, the following table (Table 14) demonstrates the summary of the result observed in the finding.

TABLE 14: Frequencies and Percentages of Respondents Response with Regards to Kind of Evaluation

Methods of Evaluation applied	Learners(*) N =300		Tutor s N =52	
	F	%	F	%
• Continuous assessment through TMAs'	190	42.50	30	57.7
• Mid exam	-	-	-	-
• End course exam	257	57.49	22	42.3
• Project and practical activities	-	-	-	-
TOTAL	447*		52	100

* *Multiple responses*

As indicated in table 14, respondents were asked to point out their views in aspect to the mechanisms that the institutions use to measure learners performance. Accordingly, all respondents (100%) depicted out that distance education institutions used continuous assessments through tutor marked assignment and end course exams to evaluate learner performance for each course. Here one can clearly see from the response that the advantages of conducting continuous assessments for each course through tutor marked assignments, project work and other similar activities have two folds; On one hand they help learners to learn from their mistakes by referring the responses of such activities, on the other, it helps the institutions to measure learners performance for the purpose of grading.

3.8.2 Content and Administration of End Course Exam

With the attention to the content and administration of end course exams, major issues were presented to the respondent to be rated by a five point likert scale. The items were prepared in such a way to determine respondents' level of agreement on stated views. For analysis purpose , the collected percentage responses present by combining the two outside categories, "strongly agree" and " agree" ; and " disagree" and " strongly disagree" (Best, 1999:247). Besides to see whether or not there was a difference in perception between the respondents, one-way ANOVA were employed. Table 11 presents the summary of responses obtained through questionnaires.

Table 15: Frequencies and Percentages of Respondents' Responses with Regards to the Content and Administration of End Course Exams

No	Items		Responses									
			Learners N = (300)					Tutors N = (52)				
			SA	*A*	*ND*	*D*	*SD*	*SA*	*A*	*ND*	*D*	*SD*
1	Learners get exam schedule in advance.	F	125	108	-	55	12	16	19	-	-	17
		%	77.7		-	22.3		67.3			32.7	
2	Exam schedule are highly consistent	F	129	97	-	42	32	8	19	-	21	4
		%	75.3		-	24.7		51.9		-	48.1	
3	Have convenient time.	F	131	105	37	19	8	-	20	-	23	8
		%	78.7		12.3	9.0		38.5		-	59.6	
4	Time allowed for exam is enough	F	205	60	14	12	9	15	18	13	5	1
		%	88.3		4.7	7.0		63.4		25	1.5	
5	Have clear instruction.	F	128	154	1	8	9	30	22	-	-	-
		%	94.0		3	5.7		100		-	-	
6	Appropriate to the objectives of the course.	F	124	118	38	10	10	30	22	-	-	-
		%	80.6		12.7	6.6		100		-	-	
7	Covered all portion of the course	F	76	121	39	50	14	20	28	4	-	-
		%	65.6		13	21.4		92.3		7.7	-	
8	Numbers of questions are sufficient enough.	F	118	101	41	35	5	8	17	13	14	-
		%	73.0		13.7	13.4		48.1		25	26.9	
9	Feed backs for exam are given timely	F	22	12	52	100	114	7	8	26	4	7
		%	11.3		17.3	71.3		28.9		50	21.2	

(SA)Strongly agree=5, (A)Agree=4, (ND)Undecided=3, (D)Disagree=2 and (SD)Strongly disagree=1.

As item 1 and 2 in table 15 show clearly 77.7% of learner and 67.3% of the tutor respondents agreed that, distance education institutions make exam schedule to known in advance. In addition, 75.3% of the learners and 51.9% of the tutors admitted that the schedule prepared for exam was highly consistent. Additionally, the interview conducted with heads and experts of the institutions and the observation made on the documents, the institutions made all its effort to provide information regarding exam schedule much before date of examination. Public media and notice boards in the compound were the two major means's that the institution employed to notify the exam schedule in advance. This can be considered as a good experience which gives time for students to arrange their time. This in turn has a great contribution for the successful accomplishments of the course.

Conveniences of the exam time and the extent of time given for each end course exam were the question raised for respondents in item3 and 4 of table 15. In their response, 78.7% of learners

and 38.5% of tutors agreed that the time of exam was convenient for them. This agreement, however, was not accepted by 59.6% of tutors. This shows that, the exam time was more convenient to learners than tutors. As indicated earlier, most of tutors in distance education institutions were part time employees. This may create such a feeling of inconveniency on behalf of the tutors. In relation to the time given for each course got an agreement from 88.3% of learners and 63.4% of tutors. From the results obtained, it is clear that the time given for doing each exam was adequate. This is a good trend which gives chance for learners to recall and remember what they have studied and to answer the questions properly.

As it can be seen in table 15, item 5 and 6 the questions were about the clarity of the instruction and the appropriateness of exams to fulfill the objectives of the courses. Accordingly, 94% of learner respondents and 100% of tutors expressed their view that most of the exams had clear instruction and were appropriate to the objectives of the course. Regarding the content coverage of the exams, 65.6% learners and 92.3% of tutors suggested that exams had a good coverage of the course materials. As it is exposed on item 8 in table 15, the numbers of questions in exams were sufficient and appropriate which got acceptance by 73.0% and 48.1 % of learners and tutors respondents respectively. This can contribute to encourage learners to study and finish the course with limited time.

In any type of examination, whatever the contents of the exams are related to the course and the time of examinations are more convenient to the learners, it has no use unless the feedback of the exams are returned on time. In relation to this, learners and tutors were asked in items 9 of table15, the timeliness of the return of feedbacks for exams. In this case, 71.4% of learners agreed on delays of feedback for the end course exam. However, 11.3% of learners and 28.9% of tutors agreed that the institutions release exam feedback on time.

From the overall findings of the above table, one can deduce that distance education institutions offered well designed and prepared exam for their learners at suitable times. However, in relation to feedback it can easily be seen from the responses that, distance education institutions have problems in releasing the exam results on time. This may lacks the benefits that learners get from feedback.

In relation to this, respondents were asked questions to indicate the type of problems (if any) that were encountered prior to, during, and after exams were conducted. The responses obtained from them is represented in the following table (table15)

Table 16: Frequencies and Percentages of Responses with Regards to Problems Encountered on End- Course Examination

No	Items		Learners=(300)					Tutors=(52)				
			SA	*A*	*ND*	*D*	*SD*	*SA*	*A*	*ND*	*D*	*SD*
1	Loose security of exams	F	47	4	74	59	116	5	2	20	12	13
		%	17.0		24.7	58.4		13.4		38.5	48.1	
2	Genuineness of invigilators	F	85	129	33	24	29	13	10	22	3	4
		%	71.3		11	17.7		44.2		42.3	13.5	
3	Disclosing of exam ahead of time	F	28	14	5	54	199	16	21	14	-	1
		%	14		1.7	84.3		71.2		26.9	1.9	
4	Assisting some students During exam	F	13	8	61	84	134	4	1	6	23	18
		%	7.0		20.3	68.7		9.6		11.5	78.8	
5	Repeating exam items Subsequently	F	13	12	64	95	116	-	11	26	14	1
		%	8.3		21.3	70.4		21.2		50.0	28.8	

Strongly agree=5, agree=4, undecided=3, disagree=2 and strongly disagree=1.

From the experience in the field, one can learn that technical problems related to exams occur mostly during the exam time than the pre and post exam periods. In line with this, 58.4% of learner and 48.1% of tutor respondents expressed their disagreement for item 1 of table 16 which says exams have loose security before exam period. This shows that distance education institutions make the necessary control and follow-up for the protection of the exam. Few 17.0% of learners and 13.4% of tutors expressed that the exam was not secured in its handling especially before exam time. There were also 24.7% of learners and 38.5% of tutors who were unable to decide whether exams were loosely secured or not. In general the majority of both tutor and learner respondents feel that the exams were under good care until the time of their implementation.

Regarding item 2 of table 16, the majority, 71.3% of learners and 44.2% of tutors confirmed that invigilator leniency was observed during exam time. They further elaborated in the space provided for "if any other" that, there were times when examiners leave learners free to do all

sorts of mischief, be it copying from one another or referring to their own notebooks or modules in the exam hall. Item 5 of table16 shows that, 70.4o% of the learner respondents and 28.8% of tutors replied that most of the time they did not comprehend that question items were not repeated. Others, 21.3% of the learner respondents and 50.0% of tutors took a middle position. Finally, All in all from the responses of the respondents, one can see there was good exam administration in distance education institutions.

3.9. Problems Related To Learning at a Distance

Learners in distance education have different backgrounds. As it was indicated before, they chose distance mode of education for different reasons. In their learning, they may face different problems which need arrangements. In this part of the analysis discussing over all problems which can be obstacles for learners in their study at a distance mode seems essential. To this end, certain items were designed to obtain information from both tutors and learners in order to point out problems they faced during there learning and tutoring.

To summarize, general problems which hinder learners from successfully completing the program or being an obstacle in their learning were presented to learners to give their level of agreement or disagreement. Accordingly, respondents were asked to rate the level or degree of problems they faced in their study as (very high= 5, high= 4, moderate =3, low =2 and not a problem=1). The calculated mean values were interpreted as value > 3 considered as a very serious problem, 2.00-3.00 moderate problems and mean value below 2.0 were considered as not a serious problem.

Table 17: Mean Value and Standard Deviation of Respondent Responses on Problems Related to Distance Education

No	Items	*Learners(300)*		*Tutors (52)*			
		Me.V	*St.d*	*Me.V*	*St.d*	*f*	*sign*
1	Lack of money to afford tuition fee	3.35	1.468	1.58	.723	43.409	.000
2	Shortage of time due to work load.	3.79	1.204	2.31	.919	10.750	.001
4	High difficulty level of the study materials	2.22	.980	3.56	1.17	6.006	.015
5	Various social commitment	1.49	1.00	3.96	.766	2.723	.100
6	Lack of communication with tutors	3.68	1.375	2.96	.816	12.047	.001
7	Lack of interaction with group mates	4.11	1.169	1.56	.826	1.456	.228
8	Lack of access to library and other recourses.	3.89	1.154	3.10	.846	8.178	.004
9	Lack of needed modern technology	3.63	1.435	4.15	.894	39.410	.000
10	Lack of sufficient tutorial service	4.01	1.366	4.31	.701	21.208	.000

> 3 = very serious problem, 2.00-3.00 moderate problems and below 2.0 = not a serious problem.

In addition to, the inadequate number of tutorial programs, unable to contact tutors and other group mates in any time when they were in need, inability to use different additional support materials like library and other recorded materials and other ICTs were considered as a very serious problem in learning at a distance mode by both respondents with the mean value greater than 3.00. In distance learning the contact made between learners and tutors is vital in encouraging learning through distance mode of delivery. Learners need the support of tutors while they study the course so as to make clear complex and vague ideas and concepts they faced. Lack of such contact with their tutors, may become an obstacle to go through the course material.

Moreover, as respondents mentioned in the open ended question items, the tutorial sessions allotted to each course was not sufficient, especially for those who had no sufficient time to study the course material with specified time and for those who have problems in understanding some concepts by their own.. Even if the idea is recognized by experts and coordinators of the program they had the feeling that two tutorial sessions were not enough for each course .They further explained that to alleviate such problems, most distance learners organized themselves

in a group and appointed additional tutor and attend a lecture session at lest once or twice a week., some of the institutions let them free their physical facilities. This can be seen as a good trend which should be encouraging because it assists learners from incurring additional cost.

Similarly, commitment on different social issues and shortage of time because of work load was also considered as very serious problem with the mean value greater than3.0. In these points, respondents have feelings that, even if these are personal problems and may differ from individual to individual, they were able to badly challenge their learning at a distance mode.

Among all other points raised for learners, unrelated ness of the course which was observed after registration or some time after registration and lack of motivation to study learners were considered as not a serious problem with the mean value less than 2.0. In these cases the reasons may be attached to their decisions which learners made before joining the program. Tutor respondents on the other hand viewed it as a moderate problem with the mean value between 2.00 to 3.00. This shows that tutors did not consider the different responsibilities that distance learners had faced in their studies. From this one can deduce that, this feeling came to their mind because of lack of understanding about the characteristics of distance learners. Hence, it is safe to say that the institution did not give training or orientation for tutors about the tutees and their characteristics.

On the other hand, lack of communication with tutors, were considered as a moderate problem by most of the tutor respondents. Similarly, they considered item 7.7 which refer to their interaction with their group mates, as not a problem with the mean value less than 2.00. Here as it can clearly be seen in the table, on item 7.6 which is lack communication with tutors was considered by both respondents as a problem. However, the difference lies on the degree of the seriousness of the problem. For item 7.1 and 7.7 however, differences in understanding the issue was seen in their response. In summary, the information obtained from the respondents' clearly shows that, distance learners had such common problems which may create challenges.

3.10 Actions taken for Making Distance Education Program Successful

One of the purposes of the study was to collect and forward suggestions and constructive ideas, for improving the distance education program. To this end, respondents were asked to forward their views which are important for improving distance education programs. In this regard among several things which could be assumed to stand for successful implementation of distance education, the major ones were presented to the respondents to be rated by a four point likert scale: strongly agree=4, agree=3, disagree=2 and strongly disagree=1. For each statement the expected mean response was 3.00. A response below 3.00 was considered as an indication of some level of disagreement with the statement, and the mean above 3.00 was considered a level of agreement with the statement to indicate that the recommended ideas are much helpful for improving the program. Table 17 displays respondents' reaction on the statements, which are supposed to be important for completing distance education program successfully

Table 18: Frequencies and Percentages of Responses with Regard to Recommended Solution

No	Recommended Solutions		Learners(300)				Tutors=(52)			
			SA	A	D	SD	SA	A	D	SD
1	Well designed course materials.	F	219	64	12	5	32	20	-	-
		%	94.3		5.7		100		-	
2	Additional alternative medias such as radio, TV audio cassette.	F	196	36	39	29	23	22		7
		%	77.3		22.7		86.5		13.5	
3	Attending courses related to the current work of the learner.	F	195	76	14	15	23	29	-	-
		%	90.3		9.7		100		-	
4	Sufficient number of tutorial program	F	191	75	30	4	32	20	-	-
		%	88.7		11.3		100		-	
5	Easy accesses to communicate the tutors throughout the course.	F	159	54	75	12	23	22	-	7
		%	71.0		29.0		86.5		13.5	
6	Availability of resources room (library, lab, computer access, internet service…)	F	191	60	29	20	24	28	-	-
		%	83.7		16.4		100		-	
7	Give adequate and continuous training on correspondence and face to face tuition for tutors	F	203	66		31	32	20	-	-
		%	89.7		10.3		100		-	
8	Make frequent follow-up on face to face and correspondence tuition	F	195	76	14	15	23	29	-	-
		%	90.3		9.7		100		-	
9	Increased number of tutor marked assignments	F	130	91	59	20	23	24	-	5
		%	73.6		26.4		90.38		9.61	
10	Timely release of feedbacks for assignments and exams	F	214	86	-	-	32	20	-	214
		%	100				100		-	
11	Update the course by collecting information from learners.	F	205	69	22	4	22	30	-	-
		%	91.3		8.6		100		-	

Strongly agree=4, agree=3, disagree=2 and strongly disagree=1

As table 18 displays respondents gave their reactions on the statements that are supposed to be important for improving distance education program. Regarding the course preparation and its distribution, 94.3, 77.3, 71.10 and 83.7 % of learner respondents agreed on item 1,2,5and 6 respectively, with emphasis on that;

- the availability of well designed and self instructional course materials which are prepared on the basis of learners past experience ,
- Incorporating more practical exercises which lead learners to study the material without felling bored.

- supporting the course with the available modern technologies like; video cassettes , CD-Rom
- Create the best way on which learners get their tutor when they are in need.
- And arranging a resource room with computer, internet and other similar services to the learners which make the program more successful. These ideas were also supported by all of the tutors.

In addition to the course material preparation, 88.7, 89.7and 90.3% of learners and all tutor respondents agreed on item 4, 7, and 8 respectively which shows;

- Increasing the number of tutorial program
- Arranging adequate and continuous training programs on correspondence and face- to-face types of tuition and other related issues for tutors
- Frequent follow-up on the implementation of face to face and correspondence tuitions as to make the program efficient.

For item, 9, 10 and 11, 73.6,100 and 91.3 % of learners respectively and almost all tutor respondents believed that the institutions give due attention to issues like; Increasing the number of tutor marked assignments, releasing feedbacks for assignments and exams on time and collecting information from the learners and make use of it for improving the program so as to make the distance education program more successful.

CHAPTER FOUR

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This part of the study comprises the summary of the major findings; conclusions which are drawn from the major findings of the study; and recommendations, which the researcher assumes to be practical and applicable.

4.1. Summary

The main purpose of this study was to investigate and explain the current implementation status of diploma level distance education institutions of Addis Ababa city administration with the following basic objectives;

- To assess the current implementation status of distance education program in private higher institutions of Addis Ababa.
- To investigate the manner in which course materials are designed and developed in private distance education institutions.
- To examine the mechanisms employed in providing support services for learners.
- To investigate the manner on which the mode of delivery employed in the provision of education in a distance mode.
- To analyze the application of tutorial sessions and related issues.
- To identify different factors that affects the provision of distance education programs.

In order to achieve these objectives, the study was given due attention on points like :the implementation of course designing and distribution, mode of delivery of the program, the condition of the student support services and how exams, tutorials and related issues were administered by the institutions. Besides, the study aimed to examine problems encountered during the implementation of the program.

To conduct the study, the following basic questions were set beforehand.

1. How do private distance education institutions design, produce and distribute course materials to their learners?
2. What is the status of the student support services in private distance education institutions in Addis Ababa?
3. What are the available media that the private distance education institutions in Addis Ababa use to deliver the course/program?
4. How do the institutions administer exams, tutorials and related issues?
5. What are the problems faced by the learners, tutors, and administrators in implementing distance education program?
6. What can be done to make distance education program more successful?

In an attempt to achieve the listed objectives and to examine the implementation status on the basis of the above fundamental questions, related literature on the different concepts of distance education, definitions of different terms, benefits of distance education, comparison made between distance education and conventional classroom education, growth and current status of distance education, mode of delivering distance education programs and other related issues were examined.

The study was carried out in five private distance education giving institutions in Addis Ababa city administration. Out of the 3380 diploma level distance learners, 102 tutors and twelve experts and heads of the institutions a total of 300 distance learners, 52 tutors and seven coordinators and experts were used as data sources. Questionnaire and structured interview were the major data collecting instruments of the study. The data obtained were then, tabulated and analyzed mainly using the descriptive statistics and in few cases a t-test was employed. while a number of issues have been analyzed and discussed, in this sub section, attention were given to the major findings of the study which were related to the implementation of course designing and distribution, mode of program delivering, the status of tutorial and student support services and how exams, tutorials and related issues were administered by the institutions in private distance education institutions in Addis Ababa city administration.

4.1 .1 Major Findings

Characteristics of the Study Population

1. In the study, it was attempted to examine the backgrounds of the respondents. As it is seen in the study, the majority of both tutor and learner respondents were males. This is confirmed by the demographic characteristics of the study which indicate that 68.3 and 84.6 percent of the respondents were male and the remaining 31.7 and 15.4 percent were female respondents.

   In Regard to the qualification of tutors, in the education system, there is a minimum requirement to be a teacher / tutor / for a given grade which was set by MOE. Unless the situation is difficult and shortage of teachers is met, institutions are required to appoint teachers /tutors/ who have fulfilled at least the minimum qualification in their field of studies. In this regard, the study confirms that all tutors, 73.1 and 26.9 percent have first and second degree respectively with an average of three to four years of experience with tutoring distance learners.

   As to their employment, the study shows that most of the institutions employed tutors in a part time basis. Since they are full time workers in other organization, they gave tutorial services once or twice per course using either at their weekends time or by arranging time with their permanent employers.

   As regards the working condition of the learner respondents most of the learners were workers in government organization and the remaining were either employed in private organization or were self employed.

Learners View on Learning at a Distance Mode

2. The findings of the study indicate that most of distance e learners have positive attitudes towards learning in a distance mode. As it shown in the study, the majority of learner respondents joined the distance education program mainly because of its conveniences

to adjust ones own time and pace. Moreover, availability of appropriate and flexible time tables which fit to the interests of most learners and the availability of carefully prepared and self instructional course materials were some of the reason which makes distance education more suitable to them. As it is revealed in the study due to these reasons they prefer learning at a distance.

Training of Tutors

3. In the study, the observation has verified that there were no sufficient trainings given to the tutors in relation to the basics of distance education; tutoring distance learners, characteristics of distance learners and ways or mechanisms necessary to handle them and other relevant issues. Even if the tutors had experience in tutoring distance learners, as the findings of the study shows, were not given any training from the institution.

Course Material Designing and Distribution

4. The study displays that, distance education institutions took all responsibilities to prepare the course materials by themselves. The findings also indicate that course writers were selected based on their field of studies and prior experience in writing modules for distance programs.

5. The result of the study showed that the course materials which distance education institution prepared were perceived by the learners as well organized self instructional and easy to follow or understand the content. Similarly as it is revealed by the findings, the course materials include enough information, practical exercises and self assessment exercises. In addition, the findings also show that the course materials were relevant and had clear instructional objectives which gave them opportunity to discuss issues independently or with their group mates and guide learners in their study.

6. The findings of the study shows, only a single medium, the print, was used for the delivering of the courses in almost all distance education institutions.

Support Services Given to Learners

7. Learners in a distance mode strongly need advice and counseling services. They are in need of advices mainly at the time of registration, in field choice which match with their interest and future dream. They also need guidelines and assistance in ways or strategies they use in studying their course. Besides, techniques for doing assignments and exams are also included in the counseling services. Arranging such services are mainly the responsibilities of the institutions. All private distance education institutions under study, however, did not offer such services to their learners. On the other hand, institutions give high emphasis on introducing the rules and regulations of the institutions when learners come to join the program.

Availability of Additional Materials

8. In this regard the findings of the study shows that, except the course calendar and reference materials, there were no additional support materials like Audio Cassette, Video Cassette and CD-ROMs.

Tutor Marked Assignment

9. The findings of the study indicate that most of the distance learners submitted tutor marked assignment on time. Similarly they always got feedbacks on corrected TMA from the institution. This can be considered as a good trend which helps learners to master the subject matter of the course better.

10. In relation to the marks allotted for each TMA the study reveals that it had been found very appropriate. According to the findings of the study, the significance of doing and submitting assignments was very high. Moreover, the numbers of assignments for submission given for one course were adequate.

11. Regarding the problems which were related to TMAs, it was found that, incomplete answers, copying from one another and getting it done by others were some of the problems observed in handling of TMAs. This may be attributed to the lack of

awareness and motivation by the learners or to the case of different commitment they have.

Face-To-Face Tutorials Program

12. With regards to attending the face-to-face tutorial program, majority of distance learners found to have been attending tutorials regularly. As the findings of the study show, learners attend the tutorial programs mainly to find clarification on concepts which are difficult to understand and to get other students who took the same course, significant number of respondents replied that, the face-to-face tutorial programs have very high contribution to their study. The study discovered certain problems associated to Face-to-face Tutorials program like: absenteeism of tutors from the tutorial session, insufficient time given for each course and in some cases poor performance of some tutors.

End Course Exam and Its Preparation

13. The findings of the study revealed that, distance education institutions used continuous assessment through TMAs and end course exams to evaluate learners' progresses. Regarding the end course exams, it was observed that the institutions announce exam schedule before the exam time using public Medias and Campus notice boards. It is found that, regarding h content coverage, exams have clear instruction, appropriate to the objectives of the course and covered all portion of the course. In addition, most of respondents indicate that the time given for each exam and the number of questions in each exam were enough.

    As to the weak points related to exams, a large proportion of respondents reported that, because of the leniency of invigilators, all sorts of mischief like, copying from one another or referring to their notes or the course material itself were observed during the exam time. It was also reported by a significant number of respondents the institutions did not offer exam results on time.

Problems Related To Learning at a Distance

14. It was reported by large proportion of respondents that there was shortage of time due to work load. Various social commitments, lack of communication with tutors, lack of sufficient tutorial services, inability to use different additional support materials like recorded Information communication technologies were the major problems faced by distance learners. Besides, distance education institutions did not try to go further in providing the course using WWWs the form of E-learning. They were not in positions even to communicate with their learners and tutors through E-mail services.

4.2. Conclusions

Based on the major findings of the study, it is possible to draw the following conclusions.

The course materials which the distance education providing institutions prepared contain sufficient self assessment questions which help learners to check their progress while they are studying the materials. They also have clear objectives and self instructional which might be an indication of good effort made by the institutions to fit the course materials at the level of the learners. Besides, distance learners in all distance education institutions were requested to do and submit one tutor marked assignment for each course.

All distance education institutions used no other Media except print materials (modules) to deliver the course. On the other side, the results of the data on the access of new and modern technologies indicate that the majority of learner respondents have access to, AV-player and recorded cassettes which can support their study if the institutions facilitate such kind of materials for teaching purpose.

The study exposed that almost in all distance education institutions, learners were deprived of the right of getting advisory and counseling services on field choice, over coming of different inconveniences, and other obstacles, exam taking strategies and methods in doing assignments. Thus, such non-availability of professional advice and counseling support create delay from completing the program or in some cases being causes to dropout of learners.

Almost all private distance education institutions used one continuous assessment through TMAs and one end course exam to evaluate learners, performance for each course work. Learners in all private distance education institutions were required to sit for end course exams some time after taking (studying) the course materials. Regarding the contents of the exam, the majority of respondents confirmed that, end course exams prepared by private distance education institutions, covered all portion of the course with clear instruction and the number of question were sufficient and appropriate to the objectives of the course. However, Private distance education institutions, as the study reveals were not able to dispatch the exam results on time..

The result of the study reveals that shortage of time to study due to workload and Lack of sufficient tutorial service were the major factors which created problems in the learning of distance learners followed by lack of frequent interaction with their tutors and group mates. Factors such as, supporting the course materials with new and modern technologies, easy accesses to communicate with the tutors throughout the course, getting immediate feedback for assignments and updating the courses by collecting information from learners are vital for successful distance learning. In addition, most of the respondents agreed that, arranging adequate and continuous training on correspondence and face to face tuition for tutors, making frequent follow-up on the effectiveness of face to face and correspondence tuition and increasing number of tutor marked assignments per course make the program more successful.

4.3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- It is believed that distance education will have an immense contribution in the learning of adults who for some reasons were unable to continue in the regular conventional classroom systems. It can equip them with the necessary knowledge, skills and attitudes without displacing them from their work place and families. These contributions can also be used as an input in the development of the education system of the country. Therefore, the following recommendations are forwarded for the effective implementation of the program.

- Distance tutors should familiarize themselves with the concept of distance learning, characteristics of both distance education and distance learners, and techniques of helping learners in their study. To acquaint them with all these basics of distance education and other related issues, the institutions prepare and provide tutors' guide and must arrange a training program at least once a year. Similarly, they have to arrange a training program and special coaching on their module writers and office workers.

- To bring about success in providing education at a distance program and be viable in the market (now a days education is a business in private sectors), it is recommended that distance education institutions should prepare the courses in softcopy (recorded cassettes either or both sound and visuals, CD-ROMs, and other similar devices) which are accessible to hardware devises like; tape recorder, video player and computer.

- In this age of information, the time demands to find new strategies, to employ computer aided teaching for distance learners. Using the product of new modern technology like E-learning, E-mail, Video conference, and Tele-conference in supporting the teaching learning processes is something to be taken in to consideration. Therefore,

  - Private distance education institutions make the necessary endeavor to emulate the experience of such developing countries to improve the program. In addition to this like the regular schooling, the government should design mechanisms which support private distance education institutions to make the information communication technologies in use for their programs.

  - Another kind of support which the institutions should offer to their learners is arranging different facilities like the use of E-learning, E-Mail and audio and video materials by establishing resource centers in their

respective campus and centers which can support the course materials so as to make the content easy and understandable.

- The researcher also believes that since private distance education institutions contribute to the development of the countries' education and share the burden of the government, the government like in regular classroom teaching should facilitate the use of information communication technologies for distance program.

- The researcher feels that, formal advice and counseling services were not practical in almost all distance education institutions. This may cause additional problems to the learners which in effect will have negative consequence on the enrollment and their staying on the program. Therefore, it is advisable for the institutions to create rooms in their administrative structure and frequently providing such services for distance learners by opening an office and assigned well trained professionals. Besides, the institutions should prepare study guidelines and provide them to the learners.

- In any education system doing assignments, and exercises are ways of learning which give opportunity for learners to deal with the course materials in detail. This benefit can be obtained when learners make all their effort to do such activities by their own. Therefore, the institutions should continuously follow-up learner's performance and, at the same time, create awareness on the use of doing assignments by oneself regularly.

- Face-to-face tutorial sessions, as respondents indicated in the study, are planed to assist learners to share some difficulties while they are studying. Above all, distance learners come to the session after making choice among other cases which needs time too. Therefore the institutions should make necessary follow-up so as learners will benefit from the sessions. In relation to this, the time given for each course on the tutorial session should be improved by discussing the issue with them.

- Exams are parts of teaching learning processes. They need continuous attention from their preparation to their final implementation. The problems seen in the study create a feeling of discouragement and lack of motivation on the learners. Therefore, to curb these problems the institutions should design a program at least ones in a semester in their annual plan which creates awareness on over all exam administrations. On the learners and tutors as well. Besides, the institutions should strictly controlled the way they administered the end course exams so as to fairly treat all students by reducing all kinds of mischief's. The institutions should control the overall implementation of end course exams and make the necessary amendments after collecting information from the learners and tutors.

Finally , the researcher recommends that ,even if the overall implementation of private distance education institutions seem encouraging , institutions need to give due attention, to make the courses available using other than print module, to the tutorial programs and training of tutors and continuous merit based on evaluation of their performances.

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ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION
DEPARTEMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PLLANING AND MANAGEMENT

Survey questionnaire: To be Filled by Distance Learners and Tutors.

Dear respondents!

The main purpose of this questionnaire is to investigate the implementation of diploma level distance education program in private higher institutions of Addis Ababa city administration.

The study will attempt to asses the implementation of the teaching learning program in a distance mode. In this study, you are identified as sample respondent from among 'distance tutors who serve as a tutor in a diploma program of same institution. I do believe that you can provide valuable information that contributes immensely to the study. The trustworthiness of the study is therefore, based on the accuracy of the information you will provide. Please note that the data you supply will only be used for the research purpose: and will be strictly confidential.

On the page follow, there are several types of questions. Some are multiple choices; others require a descriptive answer; and still others ask for your reasoning for your answers. I would be grateful if you could complete and return the questionnaire as soon as possible.

General Direction:

Please read each question carefully and indicate your response by putting a tick mark against the one you feel appropriate. Some question items may require choosing more than one item, ranking items, or listing of possible answers. There are also open ended question, with the intention to elicit more information.

Do not write your name on the questionnaire.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

SECTION ONE: INFORMATION ON PERSONAL DATA

1. Sex ☐ A Male ☐ B. Female

2. Age ☐ A. 20—30years ☐ B. 31--40
☐ C. 41--50 ☐ D. Above 50

3. Marital status ☐ A. Married ☐ B. Divorced
☐ C. Single ☐ D. Widowed

4. Educational qualification ☐ A. B.A/B.SC ☐ B. MA/MSC/LLM
☐ C. PHD D. Others, specify_____

5. Work experience in teaching (in years); ☐ A. 1-2 years ☐ B. 3-5 years
☐ C. Above five years ☐ D. No work

6. Your experience in tutoring distance learning. (In years)
☐ A. 0--2 years ☐ B. 3--4 years
☐ C. 5--6 ☐ D. more than 6

7. Monthly income in birr ☐ A. 300-500 ☐ B. 501-1000
☐ C. 1001-1500 ☐ D. 1501- 2000 ☐ E. 2000 and above

8. Institution you are now serving as a tutor? _____

9. Have you got any training which is related to distance education?
☐ A. Yes ☐ B. No

11. If your answer for question '10" is yes, please indicate the topics of the training. (Multiple responses are possible)

No	Topics	yes	No
11.1	Concepts of distance education.		
11.2	Characteristics of distance learners.		
11.3	Effective teaching in distance education.		
11.3	Face to face tuition.		
11.4	Use of TMA and its handling mechanism.		
11.5	Techniques of giving feedback.		
11.6	Ways of handling distance learner.		
11.7	Correspondence tuition.		
11.8	Role of tutor in distance education.		
11.9	All		

Others, specify _____

_____

SECTION TWO: COURSE MATERIAL PREPARATION

1. Do you receive the course materials/ modules on time?

☐ A. Yes ☐ B. No

2. Does the institution provide you the tutors guide for the tutorial program?

☐ A. Yes ☐ B. No

3. Whom do you think responsible to develop/prepare course materials in your institution?

☐ A. Subject area department or unit of the institution

☐ B. Commercial vendors

☐ C. Distance education department of the institution

☐ D. By outsider (other developer)

☐ E. By another higher education institution.

F. If any other, please specify_____

4. What criteria does the institution used to select or nominate course writers?

☐ A. Subject matter specialization. ☐ D. Prior experience in preparing a course.

☐ B. Being a Member in the institution. ☐ E. If any other, please specify_____

☐ C. Wining the competition.

5. What are the major mediums of instruction that the institution employed to deliver the course?

☐ A. Print module ☐ B. radio-lesson

☐ C. audio visual ☐ D. T V- lesson

☐ E. video cassette ☐ F. E-mail

☐ G. Mixed H. If any other please specify_____

6. When does the institution distribute the course materials to its learners?(multiple responses are allowed)

☐ A. At the time of registration ☐ E. During tutorial session

☐ B. At exam time ☐ F. It will send to them through their personal address

☐ C. Before registration G. If any other please specify_____

☐ D. At any time convenient to the learners

7. What kind of support does the institution offered to the learners?

☐ A. Administrative ☐ C .Guidance and counseling

☐ B. Academic D. If any, please specify_____

8. How often your institutions make provision of guidance and counseling service to the students?

☐ A. Always ☐ B. Some time ☐ C. Rarely ☐ D. Not at all

9. If your answer for question "8" is "Always" who is responsible to provide such service?

☐ A. Independent unit in the institution ☐ D. Administrative workers

☐ B. Tutors ☐ E. Not

☐ C. Counselors F. If any, please specify_____

10. If your response for question number "8" is "C" or "D "what do you think the reason is?

☐ A. Lack of skilled personnel ☐ C. problems organizational structure

☐ B. lack of budget ☐ D. If any other, please specify_____

12. Following, there are statements which are related to course materials. Give your opinion on each of the statements by marking an "x" in the box of your choice.

5= Strongly Agree 4= Agree 3= Uncertain 2= Disagree 1= Strongly Disagree

No	statement	5	4	3	2	1
12.1	**Course designing**					
	The course materials:					
	• Are appropriate to the level of the program.					
	• Match with the level of the learner.					
	• Include sufficient information about the course.					
	• Include enough practical work					
	• Include self assessment exercises.					
	• Contain adequate number of assignments for submission.					
	• Are well prepared.					
	• Are self instructional					
	• **Any other**					
	•					
12.2	**Contents** of the course material.					
	• Are relevant.					
	• Have clear objectives.					
	• Have sufficient time to complete the course.					
	• Have appropriate difficulty level.					
	• Have relevant exercises, assignments and self test exercises.					
	• Give opportunities for discussion with other students.					

Others, specify _____

SECTION THREE: STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

1. What methods or Media does your institution employ to support the distance learner in their learning?

- ☐ A. Correspondence tuition (based on tutor marked assignment)
- ☐ B. Face-to-face tuitions
- ☐ C. Two-way radio tuition.
- ☐ D. Residential tuition.
- ☐ E. Telephone
- ☐ F. Tuition through mentor.
- ☐ G. Uses of the resource room available.
- ☐ H. All
- I. Others,_____

2. Following are some questions that are related to support service that your learners get from the institution. Rate each one based on your observation.

4. Always **3. Sometimes** **2. Rarely** **1. Not at all**

No	ITEM	4	3	2	1
2.I	Sort of support the learners get from the institution.				
	• Guidance and counseling services				
	• support on the subject matter of the course				
	• Orientation about prior information on the institution regulation and procedure.				
	• Ways of presenting compliant and appeals.				
	• **Any other, please specify**				
	•				
2.2	forms of support on guidance and counseling				
	• Pre- application advice.				
	• Field choice				
	• Counseling on personal problems which may hinder studying.				
	• Advice on career and further study.				
	• Advice on study technique.				
	• Advice on examination technique.				
	• Advice on TMAs handling mechanisms.				

Others, specify _____

_____

3. How do you rate your institution support system for students who learn at a distance?

☐ A. Excellent ☐ C. Fair

☐ B. Good ☐ D. Poor ☐ E. Not acceptable

4. Do you think that you are answering questions or enquiry raised by your students?

☐ A. Always ☐ B. Sometimes ☐ C. Rarely ☐ D. Not at all

5. What medium of communication do you use to contact your learners?

☐ A. Telephone ☐ D. all

☐ B. E-mail E. Other_____

☐ C. personal contact only

6. Do you think that the average numbers of distance learners have access to the following facilities that are used for distance learning?

A. Computer Yes _____No_____ D. Audio- video Yes _____No_____

B. Internet Yes _____No_____ E. All Yes __No___

C. Audio- cassette player Yes ___No___ F. Any other, _____

SECTION FOUR: END COURSE EXAM

1. What form (s) of evaluation your institution establishes to distance learner. (Multiple responses are allowed)

☐ A. Continuous evaluation through assignments
☐ B. Mid exams. .
☐ C. End course exams.
☐ D. All.
E. If any others, _____

2. How do you rate the significance of the assignments given to evaluate students' performance?

☐ A. Very high
☐ B. High
☐ C. Low
☐ D. Very low
E. Any other comment _____

3. The number of assignments for submissions are:

☐ A. Too much
☐ B. Adequate
☐ C. Inadequate
☐ D. Any Other comment _____

4. How do you rates the mark value given to each assignment and different types of questions in the assignment?

☐ A. Too much
☐ B. Adequate
☐ C. Inadequate
D. If any other comment _____

5. Do students complain regarding marks / grading of assignments?

☐ A. Yes
☐ B. No

6. If your answer for question 5 is yes, what do you think the reason is? (Multiple responses are allowed)

☐ A. Unfair marking of exams (denying or unfairly giving grades)
☐ B. The weight given is not appropriate.
☐ C. Difficulty of question items in the assignment.
☐ D. If any other specify_____

7. In correcting the assignments, what are the major problems you encountered so far?

☐ A. Delay in submission of assignments.
☐ B. Incompleteness of their answers.
☐ C. Coping with each other'.
☐ D. Getting it done by others.
☐ E. Readability problem..
f. If any other specify_____

8. How do you evaluate the difficulty level of the exam?

☐ **A.** very high
☐ B. high
☐ C. moderate
☐ D. low
☐ E very low

9. Following there are statements which are related to end course exam and its administration. Give your opinion on each of the statements by marking an "x" in the box of your choice.

5= Strongly Agree 4= Agree 3= Uncertain 2= Disagree 1= Strongly Disagree

No	statement	5	4	3	2	1
9.1	**Do the exam fulfill the following criteria**					
	• The question items covered all portion of the course.					
	• Numbers of questions are sufficient enough.					
	• The questions of the exam have clear instruction.					
	• Exams are appropriate to the objectives of the course.					
	• Exams have good coverage of taught portions.					
	• If any other, please specify.					
	•					
9.2	**How do you evaluate the exam administration in light of the following criteria?**					
	• Has fixed schedule					
	• Time of examination is convenient					
	• Students get exam schedules in advance					
	• Exam schedules are highly consistent					
	• By and large time allowed for exams are enough					
	• Loose security of exams					
	• Leniency of invigilators are seen frequently					
	• Disclosing of exams ahead of time					
	• Overlooking misconducts during exam sessions					
	• Assisting some students during exam time					
	• If any other, please specify					
	•					
11.3	**Grading and feedback**					
	• Feedbacks on exams are given timely.					
	• Unfair marking of exams (denying or unfairly giving grades)					
	• The weight given is appropriate.					

Others, specify _____

SECTION FIVE: GENERAL FACTORS AFFECTING DISTANCE LEARNERS

1. In the following table there are lists of possible factors, in random order, which are believed to hinder distance learners from pursuing or successfully completing their education through distance mode. What is your response in this regard? Please write their rank order, from the most serious (1st) to the list serious (13th or so).

5 = Very serious problem **3. Moderate problem**

4 = Serious problem **2. Rarely a problem** **1. Not a problem**

No	Possible factors	5	4	3	2	1
1.	Lack of money to afford tuition fee.					
2.	Shortage of time due to work load.					
3.	Irrelevance of the contents of the subject matter to the learner.					
4.	High difficulty levels of study materials.					
5.	Heavy social commitments.					
6.	Lack of communication with tutors.					
7.	Lack of personal contact / interaction with the group.					
8.	Lack of access to library and other resources.					
9.	Lack of needed technology and tools.					
10	Lack of sufficient tutorials.					

Others, specify _____

SECTION SIX: RECOMMENDABLE SOLUTIONS

1. The following are statements which are supposed to be important for completing distance education program successfully. Give your opinion on each of the statements by marking "x" in the box of your choice.

1= strongly Disagree **2= Disagree** **3= Uncertain (neither agree nor disagree)**

4= Agree **5= strongly Agree**

No	statement	5	4	3	2	1
1.	Well designed course materials.					
2.	Additional alternative medias such as radio, TV audio cassette.					
3.	Attending courses related to the current work of the learner.					
4.	Sufficient number of tutorial program(more than one)					
5.	Easy accesses to communicate the tutors throughout the course.					
6.	Availability of resources room (library, lab, computer access, internet service…)					
7.	Give adequate and continuous training on correspondence and face-to-face tuition for tutors.					
8.	Make frequent follow-up on face to face and correspondence tuition.					
9.	Increased number of tutor marked assignments.					
10	Timely release of feedbacks for assignment and exams					
11	Update the course by collecting information from the learners.					

Others, specify _____

_____

4. Any more recommendation, please?

_____

_____

_____

Thank you again for completing the questionnaire.

INTERVIEW GUIDE QUESTIONS FOR DEANS, DEPARTMENT HEADS AND EXPERTS IN THE INSTITUTION

1. Do the staff members in the institution have taken necessary / relevant trainings (work shops, seminar)? Related to distance learning/teaching.
2. Is there a mechanisms does your institution uses to make clear the roles and responsibilities of
    a. Tutors?
    b. Students?
    c. Heads and experts in the institution?
3. Would you please explain how the course materials developed?
    a) Who are responsible to prepare (write) the course?
4. How and when is the course materials (modules) distribute to your learners?
5. What are the menses that your institution used to dispatch learning materials to learners?
    a. How effective are they?
    b. What problems did you face?
6. How does your institution arrange face-to-face tutorials for a given course?
    a. How often are face-to-face tutorial classes given per course?
    b. Do you think it is enough?
7. Do you think that your institution provide enough assistance for learner? How?
8. What ways (means) do you normally used to contact your learners, for example (telephone, letters, notice board, E-mail, Radio etc)?
9. How do learners and tutors communicate to:-
    a. the institution
    b. one another
10. How exams preparation and administration in your institution are looks like?
    a. What problem does the institution faced?
11. would you ,please identify major problems related to
    a. Tutorial service?
    b. Correspondence tuitions?
    c. Evaluation of learners' performance?
12. To what extent (degree) are learning resources and support services are accessible for the learners? Please explain.

THANK YOU

Declaration

I, the underlined, declare that this thesis is my original work, has not been presented for a degree in any other university and that are sources of materials used for this thesis have been duly acknowledged.

Name Ketema Hiseso

Signature

Date of submission 20/07/07

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

Name Professor Mamiraga Pandey

Signature

Date of submission 20/07/07