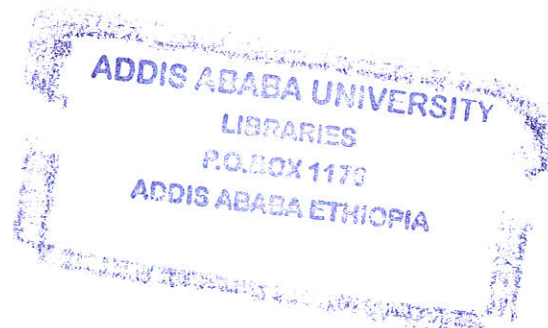


**THE TRAINING OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT FUNCTIONARIES
THROUGH DISTANCE EDUCATION:
OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES -
THE CASE OF SOUTH WOLLO ADMINISTRATIVE ZONE**

**A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES
OF ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTERS OF
ARTS IN EDUCATIONAL PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT**

**BY
MEHRETEAB G/SELASSIE T/GIORGIS**



June 2004

ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES

THE TRAINING OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT
FUNCTIONARIES THROUGH DISTANCE EDUCATION:
OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES:
THE CASE OF SOUTH WOLLO ADMINISTRATIVE ZONE

BY

MEHRETEAB G/SELASSIE T/GIORGIS

Approval of Board of Examiners

Gaim S Abebe

Chairman, Department of Commission

Luime TA

Yalew Ingidayehu

Advisor

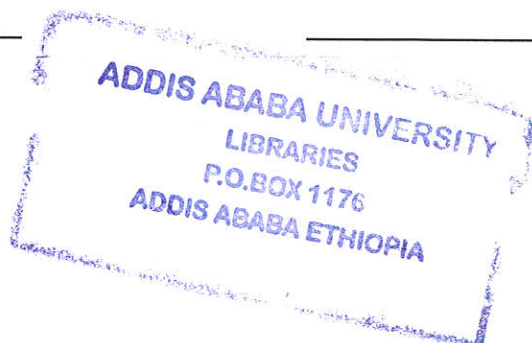
[Signature]

EYAYU LULSEGED

Examiner, External

[Signature]

Examiner, Internal



Acknowledgements

I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to my advisor Dr. Yalew Ingidayehu for his relentless effort in reading through the paper and made valuable suggestions and comments.

I am also very grateful to the Ethiopian Civil Service College for granting me the scholarship opportunity to do my second degree (M.Ed.).

My appreciation and deepest thanks are due to my colleagues: Ato Alemayehu Seberu Ato Eshetie Abebe, Gebre Egziabher Debeb, Hussien Eshetu and Ato Kifle Zeleke who read my drafts, starting from its inception to its finish. I would also thank Ato Alemu Mengistie, Ato Asefa Guangul and Ato Mohammed Seid Hamza for helping in collecting the necessary data.

Finally, I am very grateful to my wife w/ro. Hiwot Mehari and my children, Mulu, Bekuretsion and Akiberet, for their ceaseless encouragements to pursue my education.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Acknowledgments.....	i
Table of Contents.....	ii
List of Tables.....	iv
Abstract.....	v
CHAPTER ONE	1
1. THE PROBLEM AND ITS APPROACH.....	1
1.1. Background of the Study.....	1
1.2. Statement of the Problem.....	4
1.3. Significance of the Study.....	7
1.4. Delimitation of the Study.....	8
1.5. Limitation of the Study.....	8
1.6. Research Methodology and Procedures of the Study.....	9
1.6.1. Sources of Data.....	9
1.6.2. Sample and Sampling Techniques.....	10
1.6.3. Instruments for Data Collection.....	10
1.6.4. Procedures.....	11
1.6.5. Method of Data Analyses.....	12
1.7. Definition of Terms.....	12
1.8. Organization of the Study.....	13
CHAPTER TWO.....	14
2. Review of the Related Literature.....	14
2.1. The Concepts of Education and Distance education.....	14
2.1.1. The Concept of Education.....	14
2.1.2. Distance Education and its Development.....	16
2.1.2.1. The Concept of Distance Education.....	16

2.1.2.2. Distance Versus Conventional Education	18
2.1.2.3. Historical Development of Distance Education.....	19
2.1.2.4. Experience of Other Countries.....	21
2.2. Distance Education in Developing Countries.....	24
2.3. Distance Education in Ethiopia: Genesis and Growth.....	25
2.4. Factors Affecting the Provision of Distance Education.....	28
2.5. Distance Education and The Need for Human Resource	30
2.6. Training and Development.....	32
2.6.1. The Rationale for Training.....	33
2.6.2. The Training Cycles.....	34
2.7. Training Policy	35
2.8. Training of Civil Servants in Ethiopia.....	36
2.9. Decentralization and Human Resources	37
2.10. Management of Distance Education	39
CHAPTER THREE.....	41
3. PRESENTATIONS, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA.....	41
3.1.Characteristics of the Sample Population.....	42
CHAPTER FOUR.....	70
4. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	70
4.1.Summary.....	70
4.2. Conclusions.....	75
4.3. Recommendations.....	77
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	81
APPENDICES.....	A-E

LIST OF TABLES

	Page
Table I: Background Information of the Respondents	42
Table II: The Availability and Accessibility of Infrastructure Facilities.....	45
Table III (a): Attitude towards Distance Education.....	46
Table III (b): Test of Mean Difference Between Employee and Manager on Attitude towards Distance Education.....	48
Table IV (a): Factors Affecting the Learning of Distance Learners.....	49
Table IV (b): Computational procedures for calculating Spearman's Rho (r_s) from the above ranked factors.....	50
Table V: The Importance of Distance Education for Civil Servants.....	51
Table VI: Factors that Can Facilitate or Constrain Distance Learning Programme.....	54
Table VII: Training Needs.....	56
Table VIII: Problems that Affect the Performance of Civil Servants in the Woredas.....	59
Table IX: Staff Development Policy.....	60
Table X: Human Resource Status of the Woredas	64
Table XI: Reasons for the inadequacy of Manpower in the Woredas Studied.....	67

Abstract

The main purpose of this study was to scrutinize the opportunities gained and the challenges faced in providing training to local government functionaries through distance education. To realize the purpose of the study, the necessary data were secured from 146 employees and 32 managers working in six woredas of South Wollo Administrative Zone, using a descriptive survey approach. Questionnaire, structured interview, document analysis and observation checklist were used to gather the relevant data. Both qualitative and quantitative methods of analysis were employed. Then, the data were tabulated and analyzed using frequency percentages, mean, t-test, and Spearman's Rho (r_s) correlation. The findings showed that there was a big gap between the actual and the demand for employees in the woredas. The t-test indicated that respondents showed no difference in attitude about distance education. The study also showed that there was an increased need for education and training through distance learning. This is because, as the study revealed, employees and employers can obtain a wide range of opportunities, among which the most important one is that employees upgrade their knowledge and skills without being absent from work and employers do not need to release employees to attend full time courses and to hire substitutes. The study concludes that there is great need for distance education in the Zone studied. The need should be fulfilled in order to enhance the capacity of the employees so that they would be able to discharge their duties and responsibilities effectively and efficiently. To this end, government should consider distance education as one of its priorities in education and establish a national regulatory body to coordinate all the activities of distance education providing institutions in the country and to assist them in providing incessant training to course developers and tutors.

CHAPTER ONE

1. THE PROBLEM AND ITS APPROACH

This chapter contains background of the study, statement of the problem, significance of the study, delimitation of the study, limitation of the study, research methodology and procedures of the study, definition of terms used in the study and organization of the study.

1. 1. Background of the Study

As Swamy (2000: 5) states "... the wealth of a nation ... depends on the productivity of every individual which again depends on education and training." This means education and training is an essential human endeavour for both the individual and the society. It helps to "strengthen the individual's and the society's problem solving capacity, ability and culture...." (MOE, 1994: 1). It does this by equipping individuals with the necessary knowledge, skills and attitude. It is a means to improve productivity and to fight the social ills such as poverty, disease and ignorance. It also plays a significant role in the modernization of a country. It is through education that numerous new discoveries and inventions have come into being. By and large, education is of an immense contribution to the economic, social, political, cultural, and scientific advancements of a country.

If education is to contribute to the development of both the individual and the society, it must be made accessible to all citizens of a nation. Equally important to accessibility are its quality and relevance. The education to be provided should maintain quality and be relevant to the socio economic needs of the society. However, provision of quality and relevant education to

all citizens is not an easy task. It requires huge investments, in terms of human, material, financial, and other resources, which is beyond the economic capacity of many countries.

The problem is more demanding in the developing countries, especially in the Sub-Saharan Africa. Some studies show that the school age population is growing faster than the schools whereas the economy of the countries is deteriorating from time to time. In relation to this, The World Bank (1988: 28) states:

Because of the invidious combination of rapid population growth and economic stagnation, the gap between Sub Saharan Africa and the rest of the world appears to be widening ...unless steps are taken to address the serious problems in education, this gap will in time become a gulf.

This implies that the educational systems of these countries are unable to accommodate the educational needs and aspirations of the society. Regarding the incapability of the conventional systems to meet the educational needs of the society, Shrestha (2000: 4) notes that since it is difficult to overcome present day educational challenges with traditional means alone, other options have to be sought.

Coombs in Keegan (1996: 40) noted that most countries of the world need educational systems, which can accommodate a very large number of students at a time. Hence, searching for effective and efficient alternative means of providing education is not only of a necessity but is also becoming a must. It is in this context that distance education assumed to have a considerable importance in the education systems of countries.

Distance education, like the formal conventional education, is a mode of imparting and acquiring knowledge, developing skills and attitudes, but the learners and teacher are separated in time and space for most of the study time. Hence, distance education, as the name implies, is a means of providing instruction at a distance.

Distance education programs can be arranged to serve the needs of adult learners who are unable to attend conventional classes for various reasons. Distance education employs a multi-media approach including human contact through counseling and tutorial sessions or giving feedback on assignment- responses. In other words, distance education uses different means to take programs to the learners like the radio, TV, print, and face-to-face instruction so that educational services can reach students in the most efficient way.

Studies conducted by Eliserman and Williams 1987 cited in Willis, (1993: 11 – 12), Rumble (1992: 95), Keegan (1996: 26) and STRIDE (1999: 40) reveal that distance education as compared to the conventional education system:

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

These days, distance education is attracting the attention of governments and educational institutions in all parts of the world as a means of overcoming the enormous shortage of teachers, buildings, facilities etc. Distance education institutions do not require new and additional buildings. They can use the facilities of the conventional institutions. One teacher can also reach several students at a time where the conventional teacher cannot (Abebe and Taye, 1967: 3 and Rumble, 1992: 32). Hence, it has become an important component of the education system of many countries in the world. In a nutshell, Ramanujam (2000: 64) and Daniel (2000: 23) believe that distance education will play a vital role in the 21st century.

In Ethiopia, where resources are limited, it seems sound to pay particular attention to distance education. This is because distance education might alleviate the problem of acute shortage of skilled human power within the shortest possible time and with relatively low cost. On top of that, it helps to update and upgrade the skills of huge number of employees while they are at their place of work and residence.

In the light of the above information, it is of paramount importance to assess the potentiality of distance education to train local government functionaries in the country in general and in South Wollo Administrative zone in particular.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

Ethiopia is a federal state consisting of nine regional states and two city administrations. The regional states consist of woredas (districts). Since 1991, after the downfall of the Derg Regime, considerable efforts have been made to devolve power to Regional States and thereby to Woredas and Kebeles in order to foster greater responsiveness to local needs. The devolution

of power into regions has created an acute shortage of trained human power. Due to lack of financial, administrative and human capacity, the woredas have not been able to fully translate the decentralization process into action until recently.

However, at present the decentralization process is being implemented at woreda level. In order for the woredas to be able to discharge their duties and responsibilities effectively and efficiently, they, among other things, need adequate civil servants both in terms of quantity and quality. This study focuses on South wollo Administrative Zone of the Amhara Regional State.

The Amhara Regional State is among the nine regional states of the country. According to the Federal Civil Service Commission (2003: iv), the total population of the Region was 17,205,000. To serve these people, there were 72,006 civil servants of whom 49,175 were male and the remaining 22,831 were female. The educational level of the majority 56,769 (78.84%) of the civil servants was below college diploma. The region is divided into 11 zones, among which South Wollo is one. The study focuses on the woredas of this zone. Within this zone there are 17 woredas. The number of civil servants of the zone was about 8000.

The employees in the woredas can be categorized into two; namely, those employees who may not have the required qualification and training; and those who have the required qualification and training, but their knowledge and skills is depreciating due to lack of access to the newly emerging technologies. Regarding employees skill obsolescence, Rue and Byars (1997: 329) and Armstrong (1993: 414) assert that changes in economic, social, technology, and governments can make current skills of employees obsolete in a short time. This implies

competent employees do not remain competent forever. Their knowledge and skills depreciate and can become out of date due to lack of access to the ever-changing technologies..

In the above context, those employees who do not have the required qualification and training have to be trained to upgrade their standard to the required level. Those who have the required qualifications and training do also need training and development to keep them abreast with the current developments and innovations. That means both need education and training in order to improve their productivity.

It follows that if employees are to be productive and responsive to the needs of the society, they should remain abreast of current innovations and developments. In this regard, distance education seems to be appropriate to train the local government functionaries with out disrupting them from their work place and families. Local government functionaries, in this study, refer to the government employees responsible for undertaking office and developmental work at the woreda level of the administrative hierarchy.

The main purpose of this study is, therefore, to examine ***“The training of Local Government Functionaries through distance Education: Opportunities and Challenges - The Case of South Wollo Administrative Zone.”*** Specifically, the objectives of the study include:

1. explore the gap between the demand and supply of civil servants in the zone ;
2. identify the factors that affect the demand and supply of civil servants;
3. assess the training needs of employees and employers and the support employers could offer to their employees if they pursue their education through distance mode.

4. recommend to address the role that distance education could play on the country's overall development endeavour.

In order to realize the objectives of study, an attempt was made to give response to the following basic questions:

1. To what extent does the gap between the actual and desired number of civil servants at the woreda level affect the work of the respective organizations?
2. What challenges will local functionaries face when studying through distance education?
3. What possible factors do affect the training of local functionaries via distance education?
4. What are the training needs of employers?
 - i. in terms of duration?
 - ii. in term of fields of study?
5. What kind of support could employers offer to their employees to pursue their education through distance mode?

1.3. Significance of the Study

The researcher hopes that the study would give out the following significance:

i. Academic significance: it will attempt to fill the data gap by documenting an up-to-date picture on the status of the available civil servants and the future demands and the means with which the civil servants will be upgraded and updated to keep them abreast with current issues and developments.

ii. Policy wise: the study will serve as an input to assist policy makers and planners in the formulation of feasible and sustainable strategies to implement the distance education programme.

ii. Research wise: the study may serve as a springboard for other researchers to carry out similar studies that cover broader aspects of distance education programme.

1.4. Delimitation of the Study

This study was delimited to South Wollo Administrative Zone because the writer knows that employees of the zone do not have an opportunity to pursue their higher education, as there is not any higher education institution there. It is also confined to the training of local government functionaries at six woredas in South Wollo Administrative Zone. It did not include the training of individuals who are employed by institutions other than the government. Furthermore, the data gathering techniques were also limited to questionnaires, interview, documentations and observation checklists. The subjects of the study were also restricted to those who have completed grade 12 and above. The reason why the scope of the study was confined to the above dimensions was that to make it more manageable for the researcher.

1.5. Limitation of the Study

The researcher faces various limitations while studying this problem, among which unavailability and inaccessibility of the required data and informants were the major ones. In some institutions the required data were not available though it was accessible. In others the required data were available but difficult to access to them. Some respondents were reluctant to give responses to questionnaire and interview. Furthermore, time and financial constraints were also the limitations of the study. This may affect the scope and depth of the study.

Nevertheless, in the absence of other studies, it is hoped that the paper will make a significant contribution to the issue.

1.6. Research Methodology and Procedures of the Study

This section of the study discusses the sources and types of data collection, samples and sampling techniques, instruments employed for data collection, the data collection procedures and methods of data analysis. The research methodology employed for this study was predominantly descriptive research method. Under this method a descriptive survey method was employed and the procedures followed are presented in the subsequent pages. The reason for opting this method was that it was more appropriate to gather several kinds of data related to the problem considered. In other words; this method would help to obtain an accurate description of the current status of the employees at woreda level in terms of qualification and number (adequacy).

1.6.1. Sources of Data

The data for this study were collected from both primary and secondary sources. While the primary sources were collected through questionnaire and interview, the secondary sources were obtained from documents. The study covered six woredas: five rural and one urban. The sources of information were government employees working in the woredas. The employees were categorized as 'employees' and 'managers'. The "employees" category comprises middle and first level managers and non-supervisory workers; and the "managers" category refers to the members of the Woreda Administrative Council, the highest executive body in the woreda. Specifically, the manager category comprises principal heads of various executive sectoral offices, including the Administrator and Deputy Administrator of the woredas.

An endeavour was made to include employees who had ever been enrolled/attended distance education programme in one way or another. This was done on the belief that these people could share their experience on their success and failures. They might also locate the support services necessary for distance learners to pursue their education successfully and the academic and administrative problems they face during their study time.

1.6.2. Sample and Sampling Techniques

Out of the 18 woredas in the Zone, a total sample of six woredas, one from urban and five from rural woredas, were randomly selected, but Dessie, which was purposely selected. The urban woreda was Dessie ketema, the capital of Administrative Zone. The five rural woredas were Dessie Zuria, Kalu, Tehuledere, Legambo and Wereilu.

The six woredas had a total of 3578 employees. Of this population, 220 employees were randomly selected to complete the questionnaires. A proportionate stratified simple random sampling technique was used to select respondents in order to provide every individual in the study with an equal chance of being represented in the sample. A purposive sampling method was also used to select key informants like heads of the employees for interview.

1.6.3. Instruments for Data Collection

Both quantitative and qualitative data were collected using different tools. The instruments used to collect the necessary data were questionnaires, structured interview, and document analysis and an observation checklist. Questionnaires were used to elicit data from the large number of respondents; the interview to collect data from limited number of respondents and the

information used to help strengthen some of data collected through the questionnaire. The observation checklist was used to collect data on the availability of physical facilities and equipment that can be easily seen by the researcher (See Appendix- D). Document analysis was employed to collect data which were difficult to obtain through the other tools.

To solicit the necessary information two sets of questionnaires were prepared; the first set was administered to the employees and the second set to the manager respondents. In all cases, bio-data of the respondents and general information were included. The items in the questionnaires were mostly closed, but some open-ended questions were also included. The open-ended items were meant to allow the respondents to give more details on the problems faced and suggestions for improving the distance education programme envisaged. One set of interview schedule for the woreda administrators was prepared and administered. An observation checklist on the availability of physical facilities and equipment was also set and used. Available documents like list of employees and reports were reviewed, too.

1.6.4. Procedures

As stated in the preceding discussion, closed and open-ended questionnaires and structured interviews were set. Then the questionnaires were pilot tested on 15 potential respondents to make the data-collecting instruments objective, relevant, suitable to the problem, and reliable. In addition to this, five colleagues of the writer checked the content validity of the questionnaires and the interview questions for improvement. Based on the feedback obtained from the potential respondents and colleagues the necessary corrections and amendments were made. Finally, the improved versions of the questionnaire were made ready for distribution and administration. Assistant researchers were hired to administer the questionnaires. A four-hour

training had been given to the assistance researchers on how the data gathering tools should be administered to respondents before the questionnaires were distributed.

Thereafter, the questionnaires were administered to the respondents by the assistant researchers and the necessary data were collected. Respondents were given adequate time (2 –3 days) to fill in the questionnaires. The principal researcher made a close follow up of the administration of the questionnaires. Concerning the interview, the researcher himself carried out the interview using structured interview questions. Other pieces of information were also collected from documentations analysis and observations checklists by the investigator.

1.6.5 Method of Data Analyses

Based on the nature of the research questions and the data collected, different statistical techniques were employed. These include frequency count, percentage, rank order, chi-square and correlation to describe and draw inferences from the data collected. Finally, the implications of the results were discussed. Overall every endeavour was made to relate the final results with the relevant literature.

1.7. Definition of Terms

Distance Education: The organizational frame work and process of providing instruction at a distance. Distance education takes place where a teacher and student(s) are physically separated and technology (i.e. voice, video or print) are used to Bridge the instructional gap. (Willis, 1993: 120)

Local Functionaries: refers to individuals who are employed by the government and serve in a certain function at woreda level. It includes both educational and other

sectors of government institutions. They are responsible for undertaking office and developmental activities/work for the woreda people (Operational definition).

Woreda (District): The lower tier/level of administration in the regional states. It is the administrative hierarchy below the regional state. It is the local government. A Woreda comprises a number of kebeles or sub woredas.

Local government: is taken to mean the level of government where some degree of everyday face-to-face interaction between citizens/beneficiaries and government is possible.

Training: involves acquiring skills or learning concepts to increase the performance of employees (Rue and Byars, 1997: 329).

Administrative Zone: An administrative hierarchy below a region. It serves as an administrative bridge between regions and woredas.

1.8. Organization of the Study

The thesis contains four chapters. The first chapter includes the study and its approach; the second one a review of the related literature. The third chapter deals with the presentation, analysis and interpretation of the data collected through various instruments. The fourth chapter comprises a summary, conclusion and the recommendations of the study.

CHAPTER TWO

2. REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

In this section of the study, an attempt was made to include the works of different scholars and researchers on distance education and training. Specifically, the related literature includes the concepts of education in general and distance education in particular; historical development of distance education, distance versus conventional education, experiences of countries in distance education, distance education in Ethiopia: genesis and growth, factors affecting the provision of distance education, distance education and the need for human resource training and development, decentralization and human resources.

2.1. The Concepts of Education and Distance education

It is worthwhile looking into the concepts of education and distance education at this stage of the discussion.

2.1.1. The Concept of Education

Education is an important human endeavour. It helps to "strengthen the individual's and the society's problem solving capacity, ability and culture." (MOE, 1994: 1). Education provides individuals with new knowledge and skills that enable them to be skillful and productive citizens. This means education supplies to the society trained and competent human power that can engage in different development endeavours of a country. More often than not, the contribution of an educated person to the economic, social, political, cultural and scientific advancements of a country is greater than that of an uneducated person (Gould, 1993: 146).

Researchers have pointed out that the productivity of a person even with a minimum of two years of basic education exceeds the person with no basic education by 16 %.

It follows that “The pace of development of a country is based upon its ability to develop and utilize the innate capacities and capabilities of its people” (Srivastava, 1997: vii). Peoples’ capacities and capabilities again depend on the quality of education and training they receive. It is through education that the world has reached the technological age of the contemporary world. In general, education can play a cardinal role in ensuring the socio-economic development of both the individual and that of the society by producing competent and committed individuals. Hence, it is considered as one of the most important aspects of development.

Education is more important today than ever before. In ancient times, education was used to transmitting cultural heritages from generation to generation. But today education serves more than transmitting cultural heritages. It is now a means of survival. As the world is in a continuous change, one has to learn all his/her life in order to cope up with and adjust oneself to changing conditions. Education is becoming indispensable to everyone, be it to a parent, an employee, or a member of a local community, in order to survive as a parent, an employee or a local member of a community.

We are living in an era of information. An advance in information technology creates new jobs and outdates old ones. This requires a new set of human knowledge and skills. People need to have higher qualifications to cope up with the changing environment. As the World Bank (2000a: 18) warns, “without improved human capital, countries will inevitably fall behind and

experience intellectual and economic marginalization and isolation. This result will be continuing, if not rising, poverty.” Human capital is the increase in knowledge and skills that enable individuals to be productive in their sphere of work.

These new knowledge and skills are acquired through education and training. Education and training provides competencies and skills for people to manage new tasks. Education and training is significant for sustainable development and improving the capacity of people to resolve environment and development issues. That is why education is widely considered to be the most important instrument for development in any country. (UNESCO, 2002: 7)

The question to raise here is, “How are educational programmes be made available?” Educational programmes are made available to more people at one time either in a residential or a non-residential delivery mode. The residential arrangement is the formal conventional face-to-face education system. It is the most popular and dominant one at present. The non-residential mode of delivery, on the other hand, includes all organized but non-contiguous educational programmes. Distance education, which is the main concern of this paper, is a classic example of non-residential arrangement that offers greater educational opportunities outside the formal/regular system of education.

2.1.2. Distance Education and its Development

2.1.2.1. The Concept of Distance Education

Distance education is one of the modes of delivery of education. As the name implies, it is a means of providing instruction at a distance. It is the “practice of providing education and training through selective use of instructional means both traditional and innovative which can

promote self teaching and learning process to achieve specific educational objectives with greater geographical coverage than the traditional face to face system of education.” (ME:URT, 1990:1).

Distance education, like the formal conventional education, is a mode of imparting and acquiring knowledge, developing skills, attitudes and insights, but the learners and teacher are separated in time and space for most of the study time (Keegan, 1983). Yet, it employs a multimedia approach including human contact through counseling and tutorial sessions by providing feedback on assignment responses in order to help the learners. In other words, it uses different means to take programs to the learners like the radio, television, print and face-to-face instruction. Indeed, the face-to-face instruction is very minimal.

It is worth mentioning here that the purpose of face-to-face instruction in distance education is not to cover the entire syllabus as is in the formal education system but to provide clarifications on selected topics that are deemed difficult to tackle by the learner alone. Putting it differently, the face-to-face sessions are limited and are aimed to clarify difficult concepts, principles, and facts, not to cover all the lessons as is done in the conventional mode. Another purpose of the face to face (tutorial) programme is check how the learners are doing on their courses. It also allows learners to discuss with their fellow learners (Rumble, 1992:17). As Swart, Keegan and Holmberg (1983: 9) describe the separation of the learner from the teacher or teaching institution is fundamental to all form of distance education weather they are print based, radio, audio etc.

Thanks to information technology, face-to-face teaching is made possible at a distance today. The invention of videoconferencing made it possible to teach students from various countries from one center. Videoconferencing is essentially face-to-face instruction, only, at a distance. It refers to two-way video teleconferencing system that allows live or real time communication between several sites. In this method of teaching, the teacher with the learners or learners with other learners can see and hear each other, but in image. It is lively and interactive way of teaching and learning.

2.1.2.2. Distance Versus Conventional Education

Conventional/traditional education is a system that operates within the four walls of a classroom setting. It is a term "... applied to formal classroom -based instruction in a school, college, or university setting, where teacher and students are physically present at the same time at the same place" (Kaye and Rumble, 1979: 22). It is the oldest and still the most dominant system of the teaching learning process.

Distance education, in contrast, is a recent system developed as a result of the innovation of information/communication technologies. As Garrison and Shale 1987 in Jeffries (2001:4) proposed, distance education:

- implies that the majority of educational communication between teacher 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.

Research comparing distance education to conventional/traditional face-to-face instruction indicates that teaching and studying at a distance can be as effective as traditional instruction, when:

1. The methods and technologies used are appropriate to the instructional tasks,
2. There is student - to - teacher interaction in tutorial and counselling sessions,
3. There is timely teacher – to - student feedback through assignments. (Moore and Thompson, 1990 and Verduin and Clark, 1991)

2.1.2.3. Historical Development of Distance Education

Distance education, as compared to the conventional education, is a recent phenomenon (Swart, et.al 1983: 1). Even so, it has been growing very fast over the last three decades. The history of distance education dates back to 1840s (Rumble, 1992: 14; Rumble and Oliveira 1992: 3 and Keegan, 2000: 5). It started in the form of correspondence education. Correspondence education is a form of delivery of education. It is entirely dependent on the written material distributed to learners through post/mail. It is just an extension of the conventional system of education (Jeffries, 2001: 1). At any rate, correspondence education is the foundation of distance education.

Correspondence education extended its roots to several countries in the 1930's. The establishment of the International Council for Correspondence Education (ICCE) in 1938 gave it more impetus and recognition in many countries of the world (Manjulika and Reddy, 1996: 166). It also caught the attention of the educationalist throughout the world.

Distance education, which employs a wide range of technologies, came into being after the 12th World Conference of the International Council for Correspondence Education (ICCDE), which was held in Canada in 1982. Since then, the name of the Council has also changed to International Council for Distance Education (ICDE).

As mentioned in the preceding discussion, distance education is different from correspondence education in that the latter uses only the print medium while the former uses a variety of media of which the print medium is one. The uses of a wide variety of media such as print, the radio, TV, VC, the Internet etc. make distance education possible to reach students who cannot get to the formal education system.

Distance education, as a mode of teaching and learning, can be very effective to people who are at a distance and those who cannot afford to leave their work and join schools. It is very useful for adults who still look after their children while studying. It is a solution to those people who cannot trade off their life style with training because one can learn while working and earning money. In brief, a student can learn while s/he is at home, working and away from the teacher through distance mode.

Distance education is used in a variety of settings and for an array of purposes. Firms use distance education to improve their employees' knowledge and skills. Individuals use it for their own professional development and to augment their career development. Governments use distance education to provide on the job training to teachers or other workers. The Ministry of education of Ethiopia is a case in point. The Ministry uses distance learning programme to

provide in service training to its teachers to upgrade them to the required standards. Universities use it to increase the number of students who have access to higher education.

2.1.2.4. Experience of Other Countries

Several countries, be developed or developing, utilize distance education to alleviate their particular problems. Indonesia, for instance, used distance education to alleviate the problem of shortage of teachers that arose from the increased demand for education after independence. Population explosion and greater demand for education have put a severe strain in the education system of Thailand. As a result the Thai Government introduced distance education to give response to increasing demand for higher education. Australia introduced distance education to reach out its sparsely populated areas (STRIDE, 1995a: 9).

Distance education in Bhutan helps to alleviate the acute shortage of work force, particularly skilled ones, the country was faced with. It helps to train many at a shorter period of time. In Japan distance education was introduced to promote access to education for those who could not attend the formal traditional system for various reasons (STRIDE, 1995a: 10). Many countries use distance education to train their work force. For instance, Pakistan uses distance education for in-service training; Tanzania and Zimbabwe to train pre-service teachers and Kenya uses it to train secondary school teachers (Perraton, 2000: 57).

Any discipline, be it vocational or academic, can be offered through distance education. It is possible to say that there is no field of study wherein distance education cannot touch.

“Distance education is a concept that is being seized upon by governments to provide the

education and training the population/workforce requires if nations are to maintain and enhance the skills of their workforce and to remain competitive” (Lockwood in Melton, 2002: ix).

Today distance education has gained impetus and recognition in many, if not all, parts of the world may be for two main reasons. The first reason may be due to the increasing social demand for more education to earn degrees as a result to increase earning power. The second reason may be because of limited resource capacity of countries to establish and run the conventional type of universities.

Distance education, though a recent phenomenon, is now becoming a prominent feature of the national education systems of many countries in the world. “Because of their capacities to meet national educational priorities on a large scale, distance education systems are favored by governments of all political persuasion.” (Manjulika and Reddy (1999: X). In 1997 there were 986 distance learning institutions of different types and sizes in 107 countries offering distance education programs to roughly 50 million learners (IIT Delhi, WBLN and IGNOU, 2000: 63). Distance learning program is expected to play a key role in the present century.

As Keegan (2000: 12) states the rapid improvement in the quality, the quantity and the status of the provision of distance education through out the world is the result of the opening out of Open Universities in the 1970’s. The British Open University, which was created in 1969, has laid the foundation for other universities to establish open distance learning institutions. There are several open and distance learning institutions in the world. Of these open/distance learning institutions, 10 were mega universities. Mega universities are open distance learning institutions which have an enrollment capacity of over 100,000 students (STRIDE, 1995a: 54).

According to Rumble (2000: 103), distance education can open up opportunities to those who:

- live in distant/remote areas where provision of face to face teaching is difficult or impossible.
- Suffer from physical disability which prevents them from going to universities/colleges
- have been displaced for various reasons, may be for fear of war
- move frequently from place to place such as nomads
- are unable to attend colleges/universities because of employment.

Furthermore distance education gives ample opportunities to the learners as well as to the government. For example, it would help:

- learners remain at home and avoid family and other disruptions while studying ;
- learners continue in their jobs so that their respective institutions' work will not be hampered; and
- learners would be able to apply learning to work immediately.

Therefore, distance education is an effective and purposeful educational strategy that helps to meet the increasing demands of the society for education and training. It is a viable and an important means of educating and training civil servants, too. It enables learners, particularly adults ones, to pursue their education while earning their living and learn at their own pace and time (Rumble, 2000:103 – 105 in IIT, WB and IGNOU).

Suffice is to say here that distance education helps to update and upgrade the work force of countries within the shortest possible time. However, it should be noted that it could not be a cure to all problems of a nation.

2.2. Distance Education in Developing Countries

Developing countries cannot satisfy the educational needs of their population because of limited resources to build more schools, equip the schools with the necessary facilities and hire teachers as required. The high population growth together with the declining of their economy frustrates them to meet the demand of their population for education through the formal education system alone. Rumble (1997: 1) for example describes that developing countries lack the resources to expand conventional schools, colleges and universities. Distance education is, thus, very important for developing countries to train their human power requirements and to reach the unreached segments of their population.

Several countries in Asia, Latin America and Africa have introduced distance education programmes to their education systems. As of July 1995, there were 122 distance learning institutions in 34 countries in Africa, 97 institutions in 18 countries in Asia and 60 institutions in 13 countries in Latin America (STRIDE, 1995a: 27).

However, many institutions fail to realize their educational objectives due to paucity of material, financial and human resources, which are backbones for the implementation of any endeavour (IIT, WBLN and IGNOU, 2000: 72). Ethiopia is a case in point. Ethiopia started distance education in the 1960s. However, the programme could not continue long just for lack

of resources. To express in Ramanujam terms "... it [Ethiopia] did not have either the necessary infrastructural facilities [nor] the expertise in developing, designing and implementing its educational programme" (2000: 72).

Distance education in Africa started by foreign correspondence colleges. At present a number of domestic distance education institutions have blossomed at university and college level (Adekanmbi, 2000:88). In 1993, nearly 47 per cent of all African students in universities were studying through distance education. As Murphy, et.al (2002: VIII) stated there were 140 public and private institutions offering distance education programme in Africa. However, distance education in Africa is not expanded, as it should be. The reasons that constrain the expansion could include lack of supporting Infrastructural facilities, institutional and human resources capacity

It is important to quote at this juncture to show the place of distance education in Africa. (Murphy, et.al, 2002:44) concluded that:

The potential for distance education to help improve educational quality and access is becoming more recognized and funded in Africa as new initiatives are developed and adapted. With growing interest and investment on the part of African countries in distance education and educational technology, the time is right for strategic action to ensure a wise use of resources.

2.3. Distance Education in Ethiopia: Genesis and Growth

Distance education in Ethiopia is also a relatively new phenomenon that started in the early 1960's in the form of correspondence education (IIT, WBLN and IGNOU, 2000: 72). If one looks into the history of education in Ethiopia, well-trained and qualified teachers have always been the critical problem of the system. The first correspondence education, entitled '*Directed*

Study for Teachers', introduced to the education system of the country was intended to train teachers. It was under the Extension Division of the Addis Ababa University. The programme was designed to run jointly by the Governments of Ethiopia and the United States of America, but it had discontinued before it was put into action for lack of resources and expertise in distance education (Solomon, 1992: 13).

Scattered literature indicates that the British Tutorial College was the pioneer of correspondence education in Ethiopia. The College, which had a base in Kenya, opened an office in Addis Ababa in 1967 and was offering correspondence education courses in Ethiopia. In about ten years time, 1967–1976, about 7000 students were reported to have graduated from the college. Nevertheless, the college discontinued its programme for lack of accreditations.

Other private institutions such as International Correspondence School (1972) and Trans-World Tutorial College (1980) were opened and used to teaching vocational and other courses by correspondence. These two institutions were also discontinued their programmes for the same reason mentioned previously.

In 1967 the MOE established a distance teaching unit under the Department of Adult and Continuing Education and ultimately transferred to Educational Media Agency (EMA). EMA has been providing certificate course by correspondence to individuals who were unable to complete their secondary education for an array of reasons (Tilson and Getachew, 1998: 79). EMA had been used to providing education to primary and junior secondary schools through radio and television to supplement the conventional education.

Presently, there are government and private intuitions that provide distance education programme in the country. As mentioned earlier, EMA is relatively the oldest government owned distance teaching institution. It is the pioneer of distance teaching institution still serving the public by providing various distance learning programmes. It has been providing distance education programmes to those who, for one reason or another, do not complete their secondary education. Furthermore, in collaboration with regional governments, EMA has been providing distance education programme to more than 21,000 primary second cycle teachers to upgrade them to the required standards. The summer in-service programme being offered by the Ministry of Education to upgrade the qualifications of teachers to a degree level at the Addis Ababa University, Bahir Dar University, Alemaya University and Dilla College are supplemented with distance education courses and tutorials.

Regarding domestic private distance teaching institutions, Alpha Higher Education for Distance Studies is one of the private institutions that offer distance education programme to the public. It was established in 1999, but reaches many of the regions within this short period of time. Unity University College, St. Mary College, and Admas College etc are other private institutions that have started providing distance education programmes in many parts of the country, too.

With regard to foreign institutions that are offering education through distance mode at present are the United Kingdom Open University, the African Virtual University in collaboration with the Addis Ababa University could be cited as examples.

2.4. Factors Affecting the Provision of Distance Education

The formal education system in every country operates under a number of constraints, so does distance learning. Many factors affect the provision of distance learning. These factors may be classified into three major groups; namely, learner, institutional and external factors. Each factor is succinctly discussed hereunder:

Learner Factors: There are many factors that constrain learners, particularly adults, not to attend distance education programme. Among the many factors, time constraints, financial problems, professional and societal obligations and motivation of the learners are the major ones, but only a few.

Institutional Factors: Distance learners usually depend on learning/instructional materials. The purpose of distance education is to help students learn on their own. The effectiveness of the programme, thus, depends mainly on the quality of the course materials, the support services rendered by the institution and the quality of the management system.

Course materials can play a facilitative or impeding role in the learning of students. It depends on the content and pedagogic presentation of the subject matter. If the examples cited in the contents of the learning materials are irrelevant or foreign to the context of the learner, then learning will be impeded. Therefore institutions should pay attention to the examples to be cited in the course materials to be relevant to needs of the learners (Willis, 1993). Supporting this idea, Rowntree (1997: 12) also states that learners can learn well if the course materials are clearly relevant to what they perceive as their needs. In short, the learning materials should be

prepared in such a way that learners can learn from them without difficulty and with minimum help from others (Rowntree, 1999: 9). To conclude, “Good distance learning materials can and must cover everything that learners need to know to succeed with their course” (STRIDE, 1995c: 53).

In addition to the course materials learners need a wide variety of support services. They need tutorial and counselling, library and other services. The amount and the quality of services the institutions provide can affect the learning of students positively or negatively. Learners primarily communicate with their tutors through the comments on the assignment responses. That means the tutor’s comments serve as the means of communication for effective learning provided that the comments are written appropriately and returned immediately.

In addition to the quality of the comments written on the assignment responses, rapid/immediate feedback is very essential if students are to retain and progress in their studies. Slowness or delay of feedback frustrates the learners and increases dropouts. Rekkedal in Keegan (2000: 26) described, “Turnaround time was a crucial variable in success or failure of distance learning”. The turnaround time is the time ranging from student’s submission of an assignment up to the return of the marked assignment to the student. In general, for effective and efficient distance learning quality of materials, quality of management and quality of support services are indispensable.

External Factors: These factors may include:

Infrastructural Facilities: Absence of adequate infrastructure such as electricity, postal service, telecommunication, transportation, library services etc can hinder the learning of the students.

Culture of the Society: The culture of the society has great impact on the provision of distance education. It is obvious that cultural factors can act to facilitate or constrain the performance of organizations. The society does not consider distance education as an educational system. It considers it inferior to the formal education system.

Material Support and Political will: Government/political support is one of the decisive factors for the implementation of any project/programme. If distance education is properly provided with the supportive infrastructures, physical resources as well as policies and regulations its contribution to the development of a country is immense.

In general, Shomaker (1998: 57) verified that content of the learning materials, finance, readiness to study (motivation to learn), time and employment do affect the learning of students at a distance.

2.5. Distance Education and The Need for Human Resource

Countries, be developed or developing, need some sort of resources. Resources involve human and non-human (material and financial resources), of which the human resource is a decisive one because it is the human resource (people) that make the decisions about the utilization of other resources. All non-human resources are idle without human knowledge and skills. Regarding this Bartholomew (1976: 13) writes, “... *All ... a modern firm uses are unproductive except for human effort and direction.*” This implies that people are the lifeblood of an organization, be it a production oriented or service rendering one, to attain its objectives for which it was established. In fact the human and non-human resources are complementary. One

cannot live without the other. They jointly increase the productive capacity of the economy of a country.

The development of a country largely depends on the capacity of its human resource. This implies countries should induce adequate and quality human power if they are to realize sustainable development. Human power qualities and capabilities are produced through processes of education and training.

Competent and committed employees are needed today than ever before. This is because the rapid advancement in information and communication technology calls for skilled personnel.

Regarding this Bartholomew (1976: 13) states:

Rapid technological progress is leading to a requirement for manpower, which is both more highly skilled and more adaptable; while social changes including education system, are altering the pattern of the safety of the human resources in ways which are not in gear with the technological requirement.

The implication is that the labour force should constantly get training in order to adjust itself to the changing conditions of the environment in which it operates. The primary objective of training is to improve individual and organization performance – to increase productivity so as to achieve development. In fact training alone does not increase performance; commitment of the individual is also of paramount importance. This means a person's performance is determined by his/her *capability* to do the work and his/her *willingness* to apply that ability on the job (Pittman in Craig, 1987: 27).

The management of an organization has a central role in the training of its employees. Management is defined as “the process that ensures the goals of an organization are achieved and resources are used efficiently and effectively.” (World Bank (a), 2000: 14).

2.6. Training and Development

Different authorities define the terms training and development differently. For instance, Lussier (1990: 369) defines training as “the process of developing the necessary skills to perform the present job while development as “the process of developing the ability to perform both present and future jobs.” Others use them interchangeably. In this study the two terms are often used together, and interchangeably as well.

In today’s fast growing world, people’s basic education and training is no longer adequate to carryout their jobs because jobs are growing faster than the people who hold them. This is primarily due to the rapid and continuous production and dissemination of the results of science and technology.

Ideally, the vision of any democratic country is realization of modernization and development. This is contingent, among other things, upon the quantity and quality of the labour force that the country is able to produce. The quality of the labour force can be maintained through education and training. That is why Middleton, Ziderman and Adams (1993: xv) say, “improving the job skills of the work force has been a cornerstone of economic development, theory and practice.” This implies labour productivity is dependent on the level of education and/or training acquired by an individual.

If organizations need to effectively utilize their human power resources, they have to provide them with training and development. Training and development is a planned and systematic process to develop or modify the ability of employees to perform defined tasks or functions effectively and efficiently to enhance the achievement of organizational goals (Reid and Barrington, 1997: 7). ILO (1986: V) says, “Training and education are particularly important in helping older workers to adapt to changing demands and opportunities”.

2.6.1. The Rationale for Training

As mentioned earlier, the need for systematic training has increased because of the rapid technological changes, which create new jobs and do away with old ones. For instance, because of the discovery of computers, typewriters are on the way out. As a result typists have been trained in the new jobs if there is a need to remain in the organization.

Most countries use distance education to meet the educational aspirations and needs of their population. This is because distance education has the potential for reaching a huge segment of the population with relatively low cost. The use of new technologies makes it possible to reach greater number of students than was ever possible in the past. Technology is “the means by which a country becomes more productive by applying discoveries and innovations to the tasks people perform” (Coffery, Cook and Hunsaker, 1994: 163). Apart from its comparatively low cost, distance education is a system that can fulfill a plurality of interests and needs. It also helps to alleviate the problem of distance. In general distance education alleviates the problem of: access, student explosion, population explosion, increasing demand for higher education, geographic and demographic peculiarities etc.

2.6.2. The Training Cycles

Training should not be given for the sake of training or because other institutions give it. It must have a certain purpose to be achieved. Training is given when there is a need. A need is a lack or a problem between the actual performances and the desired performances. In essence, a training need occurs when the knowledge, skill or behaviour required exceeds current capabilities of employees. Premature and delay in the provision of staff training can both be ineffective. If the training is provided early, the acquired knowledge and skills will not be put into effect. Conversely, “delay in the provision of training can cause frustration and also erode the commitment of staff” (Inglis et.al, 1999: 143). As Howe (1995: 45) states, “... the bigger the gap between the ideal and the actual level of performance the greater the training need.”

The underlying principle of any training/development is to improve employees’ knowledge and skills so that they are able to do their jobs effectively and efficiently. Pittman in Craig (1987: 19)

No human enterprise can succeed without properly skilled and knowledgeable human resources. Hence ongoing employee development is critical to the short- and long-term success of every business (profit or nonprofit). All organizations, either formally or informally, must continually address the training and development of their people. To do otherwise is one means to assure obsolescence and eventual failure.

New technologies and the explosion of knowledge very often undermine the demand for previous skills and knowledge. Because of obsolescence, human beings are required to update themselves through self-study and/or on the job training to keep abreast of new developments in one’s profession or skilled trade. But of course, the major part of human capital comes through formal education.

As Cowling and Chloe (1992: 76), training needs may arise from a whole variety of factors including:

1. the introduction of products/services
2. re-organization, merges or sell-offs
3. new legislation or changes in legislation
4. the introduction of new technology
5. quality initiative
6. customer service initiative
7. high labour turn over or low staff morale

Needs Assessment: Training is not a one shot activity; rather it is a continuous process. Training is not provided at random. It is a planned activity. It has to be planned through conducting training needs analysis. Training needs analysis is a method of scrutinizing the gaps between existing conditions and desired conditions” (Guyette, 1996: 14). In other words, training needs arises when there is a difference between the desired level of performance (be it current or future) and the existing level of performance. These needs commonly arise when changes happen or are forecasted to happen in an organisation.

2.7. Training Policy

A policy is “a general guide specifying the broad limits within which organizations are expected to function in pursuit of organizational goals” (Batral and Martin, 1991: 174). Policies provide guidance in decision making of subordinates. They do not normally dictate exactly what actions should be taken. Rather, they set limits within which decisions are to be made or actions be taken. This implies policies guide action and the thinking process. Therefore, “it is clearly essential for an organization to frame its policy to take account of potential problems and opportunities” (Reid and Barrington, 1997: 260).

As Seyoum (1996:12) clearly states, the involvement of the stakeholders, those who are directly or indirectly affected by the practices and outcomes, in plan/policy formulation is a decisive factor for its effective implementations. Therefore, managers should develop policies and communicate to all their employees. This is because ... “top management’s decisions are likely to be more effective if they are consonant with the values and expectations of the employees in the organization they direct” (Reid and Barrington, 1997: 261).

The staff should be involved in decision-making and in matters that affect them directly. The more the staff involve in, the more they will have a sense of ownership in decisions and be encouraged to help in achieving the objectives.

2.8. Training of Civil Servants in Ethiopia

The Federal Civil Servants Proclamation No. 262/2002, Article 49 states that “a civil servant is trained either to improve the capabilities of the employee so as to achieve better performance in his/her present job or to prepare him/her for higher responsibility based on career development.” The proclamation further stipulates, “Every government office is responsible to identify the training needs of both its respective office and employees and to prepare plans and budget for training and thereby implements upon approval.” This implies adequate training is usually desirable not only for the organization but also for the employee.

2.9. Decentralization and Human Resources

Decentralization can mean different things to different people. In this study decentralization refers to “the distribution of authority among many organs of defined geographic or functional

competence according to relatively permanent constitutional or legislative provision” (Gruberg, 1997: 587). It refers to the devolution of power from the central government to the local levels. Put differently, it is the transfer of power away from the central government to the local level of the government. More specifically, it refers to “ the division of political, economic and administrative power/responsibility between the center and sub-national levels of government” (Eshetu, 1994: 1).

The prime objective of decentralization is to foster greater responsiveness to local needs- to increase the direct involvement of people at the local level as prime initiators, actors and beneficiaries. Decentralization can serve as a way of improving access to services, tailoring government actions to private needs, and increasing the opportunities for state-society interactions. It can make state institutions more responsive to the citizenry served (World Bank; 2001: 106).

Effective local government is critical to improving access to social and infrastructure services and to mobilizing local resources. Yet, sub-national governments will only be effective when they have access to the necessary human and financial resources to undertake the services they have been bestowed/given.

Decentralization requires the development of new staff with financial, human resources and logistical management skills. Regular monitoring of the impact of decentralization on human resource development is required. Managers need to become promoters for human resource issues.

Human resource development is defined as "organized learning activities arranged within an organization in order to improve performance and/or personal growth for the purpose of improving the job, the individual, and/or the organization" Human resource development includes the areas of training and development, career development, and organization development.

These days there has been a tremendous change all over the globe. The changes are founded on the global economy, on technology, on cultural and demographic aspects of a society. These changes have brought about great influence on the nature of work and the work force. The works/jobs require new skills to operate effectively and efficiently.

This implies that employees are required to learn new skills and develop new abilities, to respond to the changes occur in their lives, their careers, and their organizations. They can deal with these constructively, using change for their competitive advantage and as opportunities for personal and organizational growth.

The goal of human resource development is to improve the performance of organizations by maximizing the efficiency and performance of employees. Human resource development helps to develop the knowledge and skills, actions and standards, motivation, incentives, attitudes and work environment of employees.

In an effort to improve morale and productivity and limit job turnover, organizations help their firms effectively use employee skills, provide training opportunities to enhance those skills, and boost employee satisfaction with their jobs and working conditions. However, it is important to

note that training cannot be a solution to any problem; it is one of the factors that motivate employees to work effectively and efficiently.

Training offers a way of developing skills, enhancing productivity and quality of work, and building loyalty to the firm. Training is widely accepted as a method of improving employee motivation, but this is only one of the reasons for its growing importance. Other factors include the complexity of the work environment, the rapid pace of organizational and technological change, and the growing number of jobs in fields that constantly generate new knowledge (Watson, 1979: 79).

2.10 Management of Distance Education

As clearly stated in the preceding discussions, distance education is a mode of delivering education. It is an effective and purposeful educational approach. It helps to extend one's education system to reach a large number of the population as well as the people residing in the remote areas by using various media. It also offers various courses to fulfill the diverse needs of many people. Because of these and other reasons not mentioned here, distance education is now becoming the salient features of the educational systems of many countries in the world.

Literature in the field of distance education reveals that the development of new technologies has promoted an astounding growth in distance education, both in the number of students enrolling and in the number of institutions incorporated distance education programmes to their curriculum.

Distance teaching institutions can broadly be classified into three types. They are the single mode institutions, the dual mode institution and the consortium mode institutions (Rumble, 1992: 37).

A single mode is one whose sole duty and responsibility is providing education through distance mode only. It is exclusively distance teaching institution. The United Kingdom Open University and the Indira Gandhi National Open University are typical examples of a single mode institution (Rumble, 1992: 38).

A dual mode institution, on the other hand, is an institution that provides education through both conventional (face-to-face) education and distance education concurrently. The University of Delhi in India and Deakin University in Australia could be good examples for the dual mode institutions. Most, if not all, distance teaching institutions in Ethiopia are dual mode institutions (Rumble, 1992: 38).

The third type of distance education providing institution is the consortium mode. A consortium is an association of different institutions established mainly to resolve resources constraints. It is an arrangement where a group of separate distance education institutions work together to sharing distance education programming. In short, they are established to make the best use of available resources by sharing programmes and courses using new technologies.

CHAPTER THREE

3. PRESENTATIONS, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

This chapter deals with the presentation, analysis and interpretation of the data collected from respondents. All the required information for this study was obtained through questionnaires, structured interview, document analysis and observation checklists. The respondents were local government functionaries that include middle and first level managers and non-supervisory employees and managers - Executives of the Woreda Administrative Council. The employees were randomly selected from provided lists and the manager respondents were taken as a whole. The educational levels of all respondents was 12th grade complete and above

Two sets of questionnaires were prepared and distributed to respondents that comprise 180 employees and 40 managers. The questionnaires had closed and open ended items. The rate of return of the distributed questionnaires was 146 (81.11 per cent) for employees and 32 (80.00 per cent) for managers. The combined rate of return is 80.56 per cent. In addition to the questionnaires, structured interview questions were prepared. Available documents were also reviewed. Furthermore, related literature on distance education was also reviewed and organized from available sources.

The characteristics of the respondents are included in the questionnaires and are presented on the page that follows.

3.1.Characteristics of the Sample Population

Table I: Background Information of the Respondents

No.	Variables	Characteristics	Respondents by Categories			
			Employees		Managers	
			No.	%	No.	%
1	Sex	Male	117	80.14	30	93.75
		Female	29	19.86	2	6.25
		Total	146	100	32	100
2	Age (in years)	20 – 29	37	25.34	1	3.13
		30 – 39	49	33.56	18	56.25
		40 –49	46	31.50	11	34.38
		50 and above	14	9.59	2	6.25
		Total	146	100	32	100
3	Work Experience (in years)	1 – 5	30	20.55	3	9.38
		6 – 10	16	10.96	4	12.50
		11 – 15	26	17.81	7	21.88
		16 – 20	24	16.44	9	28.13
		21 and above	50	34.25	9	28.13
		Total	146	100	32	100
4	Educational Level	12 th complete	21	14.38	2	6.25
		TTI	21	14.38	2	6.25
		College Diploma	75	51.37	13	40.63
		First degree and above	25	15.12	14	43.75
		Others	4	2.72	1	3.13
		Total	146	100	32	100
5	Completion year of highest educational level	Before 1976 E.C.	25	17.12	4	12.50
		1976 – 1980 E.C.	20	13.70	4	12.50
		1981 –1985 E.C.	19	13.01	4	12.50
		1986 – 1990 E.C.	13	8.90	3	9.38
		1991 – 1995 E.C.	61	41.78	15	46.88
		NR	8	5.48	2	6.25
Total	146	100	32	100		
6	Family Size	Less than 3 persons	30	20.55	23	71.88
		3 – 5 persons	83	56.85	2	6.25
		6 – 8 persons	27	18.49	4	12.50
		More than 8 persons	2	1.37	3	9.38
		NR	4	2.74	-	-
		Total	146	100	32	100
7	Monthly Salary	Birr 200 – 342	4	2.74	-	-
		Birr 360 – 560	25	17.12	-	-
		Birr 595 – 990	58	39.73	4	18.75
		Birr 1040 and above	58	39.73	26	81.25
		NR	1	0.68	-	-
		Total	146	100	32	100
8	Marital Status	Single	35	23.97	1	3.13
		Married	102	69.86	31	96.88
		Divorced	6	4.11	-	-
		Widowed	3	2.05	-	-
		Total	146	100	32	100

NR = No Response

Table I portrays the bio-data of the respondents. The respondents are categorized/grouped as employees and managers. The total numbers of respondents (subjects) involved in this study were 178; of which 146 were employees and 32 managers. The managers were members of the Woredas Administrative Councils.

Item 1 shows the sex composition of the respondents. As can be seen from the table, the great majority, in both categories of the respondents, 80.14 % of the employees and 93.75 % of the managers are male. The rest i.e., 19.86 % of the employees and 6.25 % of the managers' respondents are female. The data shows, the involvement of women in the management is very insignificant.

Concerning the age of the respondents, the majority 33.56 per cent and 31.50 per cent of the employees were between the age brackets 30 – 39 and 40 – 49 years respectively. Only 9.59 per cent were 50 years and above. The ages of the majority (56.25 per cent and 34.38 per cent) of the managers also fall within the same age brackets. Only 6.25 per cent of the respondents were above 49 years. The average age for employees was 37.03 and that of the managers was 38.88 years. It seems cost effective for the government to invest on the education of the employees as they are expected to serve more than ten years.

As can be seen from item 3 of the table above, the majority, 65.75 per cent, of the employees' respondents served from 1 - 20 years whereas 34.25 per cent of them served for more than 20 years. In relation to the managers work experience, 71.88 per cent had a work experience between 1-20 years and the remaining 28.12 per cent above 20 years. The average work experience of the employees was 14.64 years and that of the managers was 16.74 years.

Item 4 of Table I indicates the educational level of the respondents. 51.37 per cent of the 146 employees respondents had a diploma; whereas 43.75 per cent of the 32 managers respondents had a first degree and above. Only 15.12 per cent of the employees had a first degree and above. The vast majority (more than 80 per cent) of the employees and more than 53 per cent of the managers had an educational level of below first degree. A study by the MCB (2002: 4) indicates that there is scarcity of high-level skilled human power at woredas. The analysis can lead one to conclude that the local government functionaries need training to upgrade them to the required level so that they will be able to discharge their duties and responsibilities effectively and efficiently.

As indicated in item 5, the majority (41.78 per cent) of the employees and that of the managers (46.88 per cent) have completed their highest educational level in between 1991 – 1995 E.C. If one looks into the work experiences (item 3) of the respondents and the highest grade level they achieved (item 5), the work experiences of the vast majority (79.46 per cent) of the respondents above six years while the highest educational level the respondents achieved is very recent. The reason for such variation might be due to those respondents who attended distance education programmes. The data discloses that the schooling experience of the respondents is different. Most of the respondents have left school recently and others left many years ago. This might remind distance education providers to take into account the characteristics of their learners during preparation of course materials and in providing support services.

As to the family size of the respondents, 56.85 per cent of the employees had a family size of 3 – 5 persons; whereas 71.88 per cent of the managers had a family size of less than three persons

(see item 6). The data shows employees have more family members than managers. With regard to the monthly salary of the respondents, a great proportion (59.59 per cent) of the employees earn less than Birr 1040; while 81.25 per cent of the managers earn more than Birr 1040.

Most (69.36 per cent) of the employee respondents and nearly all (96.86 per cent) of the manager respondents are married. The remaining 23.97, 4.11 and 2.05 per cent of the employees' respondents were single, divorced and widowed respectively. Of the 32 managers respondents only 1 (3.13 per cent) was single.

As the bio-data of the respondents reveal, the majority have no first degree. This implies they need training to upgrade them to first degree and even above. The age and work experience of the respondents show that the majority can provide service for many years to come. Thus, it seems cost effective to invest on the education of the local functionaries as the majority is expected to serve for more than 10 years.

Table II: The Accessibility of Infrastructure Facilities

No	Infrastructural Facilities	Employees						Managers			
		Accessible		Not Accessible		NR		Accessible		Not Accessible	
		No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
1	Postal service	125	85.62	18	12.33	3	2.05	31	96.88	1	3.13
2	Telephone	128	87.67	17	8.22	1	0.68	32	100	-	-
3	Internet service	43	29.45	103	70.55	-	-	5	15.63	27	84.38
4	Fax	48	32.88	90	61.64	8	5.48	7	21.88	25	78.13
5	E-mail	48	32.88	90	61.64	8	5.48	6	18.75	26	81.25

NR = No Response

The availability of and accessibility to the infrastructure facilities such as the ones listed in Table II above are believed to be crucial for successful distance learning. In order to know

whether they were accessible to the facilities, respondents were asked to indicate by marking 'X' in the appropriate space.

Accordingly, the overwhelming majority of the employees (85.62 and 87.67 per cent) and of the managers (96.88 and 100 per cent) indicated that they had access to postal service and telephone facilities in that order. Conversely, the majority of the employees (70.55; 61.64; 61.64 per cents) and of the managers (84.38; 81.25; 78.13 per cents) reported that they did not have access to Internet, e-mail and fax respectively.

Table III (a): Attitude towards Distance Education

No	Statements	Mean	
		Employee N=141	Manager N=32
1	Distance learning is a suitable way of training civil servants.	3.99	4.03
2	There is increased need for distance education in your woreda.	4.26	4.31
3	The attitude of the general public towards distance learning is positive.	3.76	3.50
4	Learning through distance mode can be as effective as learning through regular mode.	2.95	2.66
5	Distance learning opens up access to educational opportunities for disadvantaged societies.	3.89	4.00
6	Learning through distance is inferior to any other mode.	2.78	2.72
7	Distance learning is more useful for civil servants to upgrade their qualifications.	4.33	4.38
8	The diplomas and degrees obtained through distance learning are not valued as those obtained from the formal education system.	3.37	3.28
9	Distance learning is less expensive than that of the regular one.	3.30	2.78
10	Employees trained through distance learning mode can perform equally as their counter parts that trained in the conventional mode.	3.18	3.16

Note: The overall mean score for: employees is 3.49 and for managers.3.53

According to Lussier (1990: 59) “an attitude is a strong belief or feeling toward people, things and situations.” It could be positive or negative; it depends on the individual’s feelings/beliefs

about people, things or situations. Table III shows the attitude of employees and managers in the selected worded as towards distance education.

As can be seen from the above table, the mean score of 8 (eight) aspects exceed the neutral position 3.0, the midpoint of the 5 - point scale. Likewise, four of the ten items (No. 1, 2, 5, and 7) exceed the aggregate mean scores 3.49 and 3.53 for employees and for managers respectively. These are categorized as above average ratings. This shows that both the employee and manager respondents favoured the facts that:

- distance education is an appropriate way of training civil servants;
- there is a high demand for distance education in their worded as;
- distance learning opens up access to educational opportunities for disadvantaged societies or groups; and
- distance learning is more useful for civil servants to upgrade their qualifications.

Furthermore, the mean score (3.76) of item 3 exceeds the overall mean (3.49) for employees. But the mean score (3.50) of the same item is slightly lower than the overall mean (3.53) for managers. That is to say, employees agreed that the attitude of the general public towards distance learning is positive. However, managers did not agree to the same extent as employees. This shows that there is difference in opinion between the two categories of respondents about the attitude of the general public towards distance learning.

On the other hand, the mean score of each of the remaining five aspects (item No. 4, 6, 8, 9 and 10) is lower than the combined mean of 3.49 for employees and 3.53 for managers. These are

categorized as below average ratings. Both category of respondents agreed that learning through distance is not at all inferior to any other mode, and the diplomas and degrees obtained through distance learning programme are as valued as those obtained from the formal education system. However, they disagreed with the facts that learning through distance mode could be as effective as learning through regular mode of delivery and it is less expensive than that of the regular mode. They also did not agree that employees trained through distance learning mode could perform equally as their counterparts who were trained in the conventional mode.

Table III (b): Test of Mean Difference Between Employee and Manager on Attitude towards Distance Education

Respondents Category	N	Mean	SD	Observed /t/ $\alpha = .05$	Critical /t/ $\alpha = .05$
Employee	141	3.49	1.26	0.162	1.96
Manager	32	3.53	1.26		

$p < .05$, $df = 171$

As is clearly indicated in Table III (b) above, the observed value, $t = 0.162$, is lower than the critical value, $t = 1.96$. Therefore, we cannot reject the null hypothesis. The result reveals that managers and employees had mean scores of 3.53 and 3.49 respectively. This shows that both groups of respondents had positive attitude about distance education. In other words, managers rated themselves as having the same attitude towards distance education as that of employees. Though the samples were drawn from two different populations, their mean scores are not significantly different.

Table IV (a): Factors Affecting the Learning of Distance Learners

No.	Factors	Respondents			
		Employees		Managers	
		Total weighted Score	Rank	Total weighted Score	Rank
1	Lack of money to afford tuition fee	853	2 nd	185	2 nd
2	Shortage of time to study due to workload	883	1 st	199	1 st
3	Lack of encouragement from families	556	6 th	110	8 th
4	Irrelevant content of the subject matter to the learner	613	4 th	122	6 th
5	Difficulty levels of study materials	686	3 rd	168	3 rd
6	Motivation to learn	601	5 th	133	4 th
7	Heavy social commitments	522	7 th	123	5 th
8	Problem of isolation from one's group/institution	480	8 th	116	7 th

Note: The total weighted score is tabulated by the inverse weightings (Koul, 1988: 146).

It is a truism that constraints are evident in any human endeavour. It is prudent to identify the constraints and their real cause(s) and to find their solutions. Table IV (a) provides factors that can possibly affect the education of distance learners. Respondents were asked to rank the factors in their order of seriousness or severity – i.e. from the most serious to the least serious.

As can be observed from the table, factors such as: shortage of time to study due to workload, lack of money to afford tuition fee and difficulty levels of study materials were ranked 1st, 2nd and 3rd by both groups of the respondents.

In the other factors, respondents differ in their rankings. For instance, motivation to learn is ranked 4th by managers; but 5th by the employees. Employees considered “problem of isolation from one's group/institution” the least serious; whilst managers considered “lack of encouragement from families” as the least serious problem.

An attempt is made to see whether the difference is significant using *Spearman's Rho* (r_s) as given in Table IV (b) below.

Table IV (b): Computational procedures for calculating Spearman's Rho (r_s) from the above ranked factors

Respondents		D	D ²	$r_s = 1 - \frac{6 \sum D^2}{N(N^2-1)}$ $= 1 - \frac{6(14)}{8(8^2-1)}$ $= 1 - \frac{84}{504}$ $= 1 - 0.17$ $= 0.83$
Employees Rank	Managers Rank			
1	1	0	0	
2	2	0	0	
3	3	0	0	
4	6	-2	4	
5	4	1	1	
6	8	-2	4	
7	5	2	4	
8	7	1	1	
$\sum D = 0$		$\sum D^2 = 14$		

The table above reveals that there is considerable difference ($r = 0.83$) in factors affecting the provision of distance education programme rankings in the sample of 146 employees and 32 managers. Although a similar trend was observed for employees and managers in the 1st, 2nd and 3rd rankings, the magnitude for managers and employees are not the same. The difference might come from the difference in the number of respondents.

Table V: The Importance of Distance Education for Civil Servants

No.	Question	Response	Respondents			
			Employees		Managers	
			No	%	No	%
1	Do you think that distance education is important for civil servants in your woreda?	Yes	135	92.47	31	96.88
		No	10	6.85	1	3.12
		NR	1	0.68	-	-
		TOTAL	146	100	32	100
2	If 'Yes', in what way (s) is it important for civil servants? (More than one response is possible).	Helps them to remain on job while learning	60	44.44	7	22.58
		Avoids absence from family	34	25.19	6	19.35
		Enables them to immediately apply what they have studied	37	27.41	1	3.23
		Meets their educational needs	45	33.33	3	9.68
		All of the above	62	45.93	20	62.52
		NR	5	3.70	-	-
		TOTAL*	243	180	37	111.36
3	Do you have a plan to continue your education?	Yes	139	95.21	30	93.75
		No	7	4.79	2	6.25
		TOTAL	146	100	32	100
4	If 'Yes', through which mode do you want to continue your education?	Distance learning	59	42.45	15	50.00
		Regular/day program	32	23.02	10	33.33
		Extension/evening	10	7.19	2	6.67
		Summer program	37	26.62	2	6.67
		NR	1	0.72	1	3.33
		TOTAL	139	100	30	100
5	If your response for question 4 is 'distance education', why did you select it?	It enables me to study at my own time and pace.	22	37.29	8	53.33
		It fits in with my work.	22	37.29	9	60.00
		It avoids family disruptions.	14	23.73	1	6.67
		There is no course available locally other than distance.	12	20.34	5	33.33
		NR	3	5.08	-	-
		NR	3	5.08	-	-
		TOTAL*	76	128.8	23	153.33
			1			

NR = No Response

*Note: Due to multiple responses given by respondents, the total percentage surpasses 100%. (Hardon and Hayes, 1997)

Various literatures on distance education give further details about its importance. The above table shows the importance of distance education to civil servants.

As can be seen from Table V, the great majority, 92.47 per cent of the employees and 96.88 per cent of the managers believed in the importance of distance education to civil servants; only

6.85 per cent of the employees and 3.12 per cent of the managers refuted the idea that distance education is important to civil servants.

Item 2 of the same table indicates that 45.93 per cent of the employees and 62.52 per cent of the manager respondents believed that distance education would: help employees to remain on job while learning, avoid absence from home/family, enable them to immediately apply what they have studied to their work and meets their educational needs.

As denoted in item 3 of Table V, nearly all (95.21 per cent of the employees and 93.75 per cent of the managers) respondents had a plan to continue their education. Only 4.79 per cent of the employees and 6.25 per cent of the manager respondents indicated that they had no plan to continue their education. These people might have their own problems that inhibit them from continuing their education. However, as the majority of both groups of respondents indicated, it seems that there is great need by employees to continue their education.

Item 4 of Table V indicates the mode through which respondents would like to continue their education. In this regard, 42.45 per cent of the 59 employees and 50 per cent of the 15 managers reported that they were interested to pursue their education through distance learning mode. The rest 26.62, 23.03 and 7.19 per cent of the employees indicated summer, regular and extension programme in that order; and 33.33, 10.00 and 6.67 per cent of the managers' respondents indicated regular, summer and extension programme respectively.

Respondents who would like to continue their education through distance learning were asked to indicate their reason(s) for choosing distance learning. As can be seen from item 5 Table V,

28.95 per cent of the employees' respondents chose distance education seeing that it enables them to study at their own time and pace and the same number of respondents reported that they chose distance education since it fits in with their work. Others 18.42 per cent indicated that they chose distance education because it avoids family disruptions and 15.79 per cent stated that because they had no other alternatives.

Replying to the same question, 39.78 per cent and 34.78 per cent of the managers chose distance education because it fits in with their work and enables them to study at their own time and pace in that order. 21 per cent of the 15 managers pointed out that they chose distance education because they have no other alternatives to pursue their education, meaning there is no course available locally other than through distance.

The results of the above discussions (Table V), unveil that employees have great need for education and training through distance learning programme. This possibly is because it helps them earn while learning; minimizes absence from families and it may also enable them to immediately apply what they have studied to their work and meets their educational needs (improves their qualifications relevant to their work).

Table VI: Factors that Can Facilitate or Constrain Distance Learning Programme

No.	Question	Response	Respondents			
			Employees		Managers	
			No	%	No	%
1	Have you ever been enrolled/attended in distance learning programme?	Yes	59	40.41	14	43.75
		No	83	56.85	18	56.25
		NR	4	2.74	-	-
		TOTAL	146	100	32	100
2	If 'Yes', have you completed the programme successfully?	Yes	32	54.24	9	64.29
		No	20	33.90	4	28.57
		NR	7	11.86	1	7.14
		TOTAL	59	100	14	100
3	If 'Yes', which of the following factors helped you to complete the programme successfully? (More than one response is possible)	Support from my employer	9	28.13	4	44.44
		Support from family	16	50.00	6	66.67
		Support from the teaching institution	19	59.38	1	11.11
		The quality of the learning materials	23	71.88	6	66.67
		TOTAL*	67	209.4	17	180.9
4	If your response for question 2 is 'No', which of the following factors hinder you to complete your study? (More than one response is possible)	Lack of access to peer group support	9	45.00	1	25.00
		Lack of time to study and complete assignments on time	15	75.00	2	50.00
		Lack of immediate feedback from the teaching institution	12	60.00	2	50.00
		Lack of study skill to cover the learning materials and do assignments on time	6	30.00	-	-
		TOTAL*	42	210.0	5	125
5	How do you feel the program fees charged by the distance education institutions in your woreda?	Very expensive	49	33.56	7	21.88
		Expensive	13	8.90	3	9.38
		Less expensive	56	38.36	17	53.12
		Cheap	12	8.22	-	-
		NR	16	10.96	5	15.62
		TOTAL	146	100	32	100

**Note: Due to multiple responses given by respondents, the total percentage surpasses 100%. (Hardon and Hayes, 1997)*

As indicated in item 1 of Table VI, the majority of both groups of respondents, i.e. 56.85 per cent and 56.25 per cent of the employees and managers respondents respectively had never attended distance education. Yet, 40.41 per cent and 43.75 per cent of the employees and managers respectively replied that they had ever attended distance education programme.

Those who had ever attended distance education programme were asked to indicate whether they had successfully completed their programme or not (item 2). A substantial number (54.24

per cent) of the 59 employees and (64.29 per cent) of the 14 managers confirmed that they had successfully completed the programme. On the contrary, 33.90 per cent and 28.57 per cent of employees and managers respectively, responded that they had not completed successfully.

As regards the factor(s) which helped them to complete the programme effectively, 71.88 per cent of the 32 employees and 66.67 per cent six out of the nine managers, who successfully completed the distance learning programme, pointed out that the quality of the learning materials as well as support from their families helped them to be successful with their studies (item 3).

Those who did not succeed in their distance studies were also asked to indicate the factor(s) which hindered them from completing the programme effectively (item 4). Fifteen out of the twenty (75%) employees who responded “no” for question item 2 considered “lack of time to study and to complete assignments on time” as impediment for completion of their programme. 12 (60%) considered “lack of immediate feedback from the teaching institution” as the barrier for completion. Both lack of time to study and to complete assignments on time (50 per cent) and lack of immediate feedback from the teaching institutions (50 per cent) were considered as the barriers for successful study.

As depicted in Table VI, item 5, from the 146 employee-respondents and 32 manager respondents, greater number 56 (38.36 per cent) and 17 (53.12 per cent) respectively felt that the fee charged by distance education institution in their woreda was reasonable. In contrast, many 49 (33.56 per cent) and 7 (21.88 per cent) of the employee and manager respondents

respectively felt that the fee was very expensive. 12 (8.22 per cent) of the employees felt the fee very reasonable. None of the managers felt that the fee was very reasonable.

Table VII: Training Needs

No	Questions	Responses	Respondents			
			Employees		Managers	
			N	%	N	%
1	Did you receive any training related to your present job in the last two years?	Yes	81	55.48	19	59.38
		No	62	42.47	13	40.62
		NR	3	2.05	-	-
		TOTAL	146	100	32	100
2	How many times did you receive training in the last two years?	Once	24	29.63	12	63.16
		Twice	23	28.40	4	21.05
		Three times	18	22.22	2	10.53
		More than three times	16	19.75	1	5.26
		TOTAL	81	100	19	100
3	What benefit did you get from the training? (More than one answer is possible)	Salary increment (Remuneration)	8	5.48	2	6.25
		Promotion in job	35	23.97	4	12.50
		Competence	27	18.49	11	34.38
		Self confidence	13	8.90	18	56.25
		Upgrade my educational qualification	67	45.89	6	18.75
		TOTAL*	150	102.7	41	128.1
4	Who do you think benefits from training of employees?	The individual trainees	12	8.22	-	-
		The organization where the trainees work	22	15.07	4	12.50
		The people of that particular community	9	6.16	1	3.12
		All of the above	103	70.55	27	84.38
		TOTAL	146	100	32	100
5	If you do have an opportunity to pursue your education through distance mode, will you accept it?	Yes	114	78.08	28	87.50
		No	29	19.86	4	12.50
		NR	3	2.05	-	-
		TOTAL	146	100	32	100
6	If your response for Question 5 is 'Yes', what kind of courses do you want to study?	Courses relevant to my present occupation (job).	27	51.75	16	57.14
		Courses that have high demand on the market	53	20.18	3	10.71
		Courses related to my personal academic development	17	19.30	2	28.57
		Any course available	15	8.77	1	3.57
		TOTAL	114	100	28	100
7	If your response to item No.5 is 'Yes', what percent of your salary can you afford for your education and training per month?	5 % and below	27	23.68	6	21.42
		6 – 10 %	53	48.25	12	42.86
		11 – 15 %	17	14.91	9	32.14
		Above 15 %	15	13.16	1	3.58
		TOTAL	114	100	28	100

NR = No Response

*Note: Due to multiple responses given by respondents, the total percentage surpasses 100%. (Hardon and Hayes, 1997)

In an era of rapid economic and technological change, it is natural to expect changes in the training needs of employees and employers. The principal purpose of providing training to employees is to help them acquire the necessary knowledge, skills and attitudes to their jobs so as to increase their performances. In other words, training is offered to enhance competence of employees as the result they will be productive. Hence, it is necessary to examine the training needs of employees and employers in order to tune them to the changing situations. Table VII shows the training needs of employees in the woredas studied.

As can be noted from item 1 of Table VII, more than half of the respondents (55.48 % of the employees and 59.38 % of the managers) responded that they had received training in the last two years. However, 42.47 % of employees and 40.62 % of managers responded that they had not received any training in the past two years. Of those who received training, the majority (29.63 per cent) of the employees and 63.16 per cent of the managers had received training only once.

As indicated in item 3, the majority (45.89 per cent) of the employees responded that the training helped them to upgrade their qualifications. Replying to the same questions, the majority (56.25 per cent) of the managers responded that the training helped them to develop self-confidence.

In relation to the beneficiaries from training of employees, the greater proportion (70.55 per cent) of the employees and 84.38 per cent of the managers showed that all, the individual trainees, the organization where the trainees work and the people of that particular community have all benefited from the training of employees.

As indicated in item 5 of Table VII, out of the 146 employees and of the 32 managers, the great majority 114 (78.08 per cent) and 28 (87.50 per cent) respectively replied they would accept it if they were given the opportunity to pursue their education through distance learning. Only 19.86 per cent of the employees and 12.50 per cent of the managers respectively responded negatively.

As to the courses they would like to study, the majority, 51.75 per cent of the employees and 57.14 per cent of the managers specified that they would like to study courses relevant to their current jobs. Others 20.18 and 19.30 per cent of the employees would like courses that have high demand on the market and courses related to their personal academic development in that order. It seems that most of the respondents would like to study courses that are pertinent to their current jobs.

In order to solicit their paying capacity, respondents were asked what percent of their salary they would be able to pay for their education and training (item 7). Of the 114 employees and 28 manager respondents, who showed interest in pursuing their education through distance mode, 48.25 per cent and 42.86 per cent respectively indicated that they would be able to pay 6 – 10 per cent of their salary per month.

Respondents were asked to write down the particular field of study they would like to study through distance learning programme (as an open ended). In this regard, respondents identified the fields of studies indicated in Appendix – E.

Table VIII: Problems that Affect the Performance of Civil Servants in the Woredas

No	Questions	Responses	Employees		Management	
			N	%	N	%
1	Which of the following is a major problem that affects the performance of civil servants in your woreda? (More than one response is possible)	Lack of adequate knowledge and skills	89	60.96	27	84.36
		Engagement in other activities	16	10.96	3	9.38
		Lack of motivation in the job	60	41.10	10	31.25
		Lack of defined roles and responsibilities	19	13.01	10	31.25
		Others	12	8.22	-	-
TOTAL*			196	134.3	50	156.2

**Note: Due to multiple responses given by respondents, the total percentage surpasses 100%. (Hardon and Hayes, 1997)*

As disclosed in the table, the great majority 89 (60.96 per cent) of the employees and 27 (84.36 per cents) of the manager respondents indicated that lack of adequate knowledge and skills is the major problem that affects the performance of civil servants in their woredas. Lack of motivation in the job was considered the major problem that impinges on the performance of the civil servants in the woredas by 17.12 per cent of the employees and 12.5 per cent of the manager respondents. It seems reasonable to conclude that lack of adequate knowledge and skills is the major problem that affects the performance of civil servants in their woredas

Table IX: Staff Development Policy

No.	Question	Response	Respondents	
			N	%
1	Does every employee have the required qualification in relation to the job assigned?	Yes	9	28.13
		No	23	71.88
		TOTAL	32	100
2	Does every employee accomplish the assigned duties and responsibilities according to the given time and standards?	Yes	5	15.63
		No	27	84.38
		TOTAL	32	100
3	If your answer is 'No', then what do you think would be the cause(s)? (More than one response is possible)	Lack of adequate knowledge and skills	23	85.19
		Lack of motivation	8	25.00
		Their qualification being below the job requires	21	65.63
		Lack of adequate resource	8	25.00
		TOTAL*	60	200.8
4	Is there a staff training/development policy?	Yes	22	68.75
		No	9	28.13
		NR	1	3.12
		TOTAL	32	100
5	Does the policy cover both full and part time staff?	Yes	6	27.27
		No	16	72.72
		TOTAL	22	100
6	Does your organization have budget for staff training?	Yes	5	15.62
		No	27	84.38
		TOTAL	32	100
7	Does a staff member get any support while learning?	Yes	22	68.75
		No	9	28.13
		NR	1	3.12
		TOTAL	32	100
8	If 'Yes', what kind of support do you give him/her? (More than one answer is possible.)	Material	4	18.18
		Financial	11	50.00
		Time	11	50.00
		TOTAL*	26	118.2
9	Does a staff member get salary increment and/or promotion after completing training?	Yes	24	75.00
		No	7	21.88
		NR	1	3.12
		TOTAL	32	100
10	Do your employees need on the job training?	Yes	32	100
		No	-	-
		TOTAL	32	100
11	If 'Yes', what kind of training is most suitable for the employees? (More than one response is possible)	Short term	12	37.50
		Diploma	18	56.25
		Degree	12	37.50
		TOTAL	*	*
12	Which mode of training do you prefer (is most suitable) to train employees?	Regular	3	9.38
		Distance	23	71.88
		Extension/evening	2	6.25
		Summer	4	12.50
		TOTAL	32	100
13	Do employees leave their jobs because of lack of educational opportunities in their locality?	Yes	18	56.25
		No	14	43.75
		TOTAL	32	100

NR = No Response

*Note: Due to multiple responses given by respondents, the total percentage surpasses 100%. (Hardon and Hayes, 1997)

If institutions are to be successful and competitive in the competitive environment, they have to develop their employees constantly. This means that staff development should be one of the main concerns of institutions, be it government or non-government or private. As Williams (1995: 142) states professional and staff development of employees is the responsibility of managers. Managers have to make training available to their employees.

The study tried to probe what the training of employees in the woredas studied look like and the result is presented in Table IX, as provided above. It is worth mentioning here that the questions in the table were administered to managers only because, as mentioned earlier, managers are responsible for the training of their employees.

As shown in the table above (item 1), the great majority 23 (71.88 per cent) of the respondents replied that employees had not had the required qualification in relation to the job they were assigned. Only 9 (28.13 per cent) said that their employees had the required qualifications. According to the information, most of the employees seem to have no adequate qualifications, which enable them to discharge their duties and responsibilities effectively and efficiently.

The responses of the overwhelming majority 27 out of the 32 (84.38 per cent) of the managers to item 2 indicated that employees did not accomplish their duties and responsibilities according to the given time and standards.

What's more, those who responded 'no' to item 2 were also asked to indicate the cause(s) why employees were unable to accomplish the assigned duties and responsibilities as desired (see item

3). The response of the majority (71.88 per cent) was lack of adequate knowledge and skills followed by the qualification of employees being below the jobs require (65.63 per cent).

As depicted in item 4 of Table IX, a great proportion 68.57 per cent of the 32 respondents confirmed that there was a staff development policy in their woreda. However, a considerable number of respondents (28.13 per cent) also responded that there was no staff development policy and 1 (3.12 per cent) did not give response to the question.

Item 5 asks whether the policy covers both full time and part time staff. In reply to this question, 72.72 per cent of the 22 respondents, who assured the availability of staff development policy, replied that the policy did not cover part time staff. Conversely, however, 27.27 per cent of the respondents indicated that the policy includes the permanent as well part time staff.

As is revealed in Table IX, item 6 above, the great majority of the respondents (84.38 per cent) replied that they had no budget for the training of their staff. Only 15.62 per cent of the respondents answered that they had budget for the training of staff. The implication is that employees cannot upgrade and update themselves so as to improve their work performances.

From item 7, one can note that the majority (68.75 per cent) of the 32 respondents replied that a staff member got support while learning; but 28.13 per cent replied that a member did not get support while learning. It is evident that the resource capacity of institutions is different. Hence, the difference in opinion might come from the resource capacity of the organizations. For example, Ethiopian Electric Power Corporation, Ethiopian Telecommunications Corporation, Commercial Bank of Ethiopian etc. pay tuition fee for their employees.

As to the kind of support organizations offer to their employees while learning, financial and time support were designated by 50 per cent of the respondents equally (item 8). The researcher also tried to consult some employees on this issue. Most of them said that they got work permission to take examinations; and some said they got material support such as pens, pencils and writing pads.

As can be observed from item 9, respondents were asked to point out whether a staff member got salary increment/promotion after completing training. The majority (75 per cent) of the 32 respondents pointed out that staff members got salary increment/promotion if they had completed their studies successfully. Only 21.88 per cent responded the opposite and only **1(3.12 per cent)** refrained from responding to this particular question. The researcher also tried to get information on this issue from employees who had completed their education and many of them replied to the question affirmatively – i.e. they got promotion, but by competing with others.

As shown in item 10, managers were asked whether their employees needed on the job training. All the 32 (100 per cent) of the manager respondents unanimously reported that employees needed on the job training.

The managers were also asked to indicate the type of training needed for the employees. The majority (56.25 per cent) of the respondents indicated diploma programme. Others, 37.50 per cent indicated short term. Still others, 37.50 per cent indicated degree programme. What can be implied from the information provided is that short term, diploma and degree programmes seem to be necessary to meet the immediate, medium and long term manpower needs of the woredas respectively (item 11).

As can be seen in item 12 of the same table, the next question approached to the respondents was to indicate the most appropriate mode of training the employees. Accordingly, the majority 23 (71.88 per cent) of the respondents reported that distance learning was the most suitable approach to train the employees.

Respondents were asked whether employees had left their jobs as a result of lack of educational opportunities. As indicated in item 13, more than half (56.25 per cent) of the subjects responded a “yes”.

Table X: Human Resource Status of the Woredas

No.	Question	Response	Respondents	
			N	%
1	How do you rate the adequacy of the present human power of your organization?	More than adequate	-	-
		Adequate	3	9.38
		Inadequate	27	84.38
		I do not Know	2	6.25
		TOTAL	32	100
2	Is there staff turnover in your organization?	Yes	20	62.50
		No	12	37.50
		TOTAL	32	100
3	If “Yes” how do you rate it?	Very high	1	5.00
		High	6	30
		Medium	9	45
		Low	4	20
		TOTAL	20	100
4	What do you think would be the major reason for the staff turn over in your woreda?	Lack of appropriate training incentives	7	21.88
		Low salary	7	21.88
		Lack of educational opportunities	18	56.25
		TOTAL	32	100
5	Which of the following do you think would be a problem that affects the decentralization process going on at your Woreda? (More than one response is possible)	Lack of adequate resources	27	84.38
		High turn over of staff	11	34.38
		Lack of established system	14	43.70
		Hardship	6	18.75
		Others (specify)	1	3.13
		TOTAL*	59	184.3

**Note: Due to multiple responses given by respondents, the total percentage surpasses 100%. (Hardon and Hayes, 1997)*

Basically the human resource is the most important asset of a country. It is inconceivable to achieve sustainable development without adequate and a well-trained human resource. Table X shows the status of human resource of the woredas studied.

As can be observed from the table, the majority 27 (84.38 per cent) of the respondents rated the human power of their respective organizations as inadequate. Only 3 (9.38 per cent) rated it as adequate. No respondent rated it as more than adequate. The possible reason(s) for the shortage of manpower in the organization is/are indicated in Table XI on the subsequent pages.

Data on the manpower needs of the woredas studied was also collected from documents of each woreda. As per the data obtained from those documents, the manpower needs of all the woredas studied were 3578. However, the existing number of employees was 2112. The difference between the required number and the existing (i.e., $3578 - 2112$) is 1466, which is approximately 41 per cent of the total employees required to run the activities of the woredas. This study coincides with that studied by the Ministry of Capacity Building (MCB) in 2002 on 430 woredas. As per the aforementioned study, the then existing manpower of the 430 woredas was nearly 65,172 and the additional manpower demand was estimated at 64,948, which was more or less half (50 per cent) of the existing manpower in the woredas. The study further acknowledged that shortage of high-level skilled manpower was even worse than the existing overall personnel at woreda (MCB, 2002: 4).

As shown in Table X (item 2), Out of the 32 respondents 20 (62.50 per cent) confirmed that there was staff turn over in their respective organizations. On the contrary, 12 (37.50 per cent) of the

respondents replied that there was no staff turn over in their respective organization. The rate of turn over, as indicated by the majority (45.00 per cent) of respondents, was medium.

As indicated in item 4 of the same table, the major reason for the staff turn over was lack of educational opportunities around their work place. This was indicated by 56.25 per cent of the respondents.

As stated in chapter one of this study, power is being devolved from Regional States to Woredas. In other words, woredas are exercising power. It is a truism that problems are evident in change. So respondents were asked to indicate the problems that affected the decentralization process going on at the woredas. Accordingly, 84.38 per cent and 43.70 per cent indicated that lack of adequate resources and lack of established system respectively had affected the decentralization process going on at the Woreda? Staff turn over was also considered by 34.38 per cent.

As disclosed in item 4, the majority 27 (84.38 per cent) of the respondents indicated that lack of adequate resources was the major factor that affected the decentralization process going on in the woredas. Lack of established system (43.70 per cent) and high turn over of staff (34.38) were also considered as the problems.

Those who responded inadequate for the above question were asked to point out the seriousness of the possible causes for the inadequacy of the manpower in the Woredas. The result of the question is presented in Table XI as below.

Table XI: Reasons for the Inadequacy of Human Power in the Woredas Studied

No.	Factors	Responses in % N = 27*			
		<i>Less seriously</i>	Seriously	<i>Very seriously</i>	<i>Total</i>
1	Budget constraints	22.22	25.93	51.85	100
2	Lack of desired applicants in the market	37.04	18.52	44.44	100
3	Unattractive salary scale	33.33	37.04	29.63	100
4	The on going decentralization process	37.04	33.33	29.63	100
5	Staff-turn over	44.44	25.93	29.63	100

*Those who responded 'inadequate' for item 1, Table X

As can be noted from the table, 51.85 per cent and 44.44 per cent of the respondents indicated that budget constraint and lack of desired applicants respectively had affected the manpower needs of the woredas studied very seriously. It was also affirmed by the interviews conducted with woreda administrators and/or their representatives. Six of the interviewees claimed that budget constraint was the major problem for the unfilled/vacant positions in their respective organizations and lack of applicants in the required fields of specialization.

About 37.04 and 33.33 per cent of the respondents also indicated that unattractive salary scale and the on going decentralization process respectively had affected the manpower needs of the woredas studied seriously. The single factor that affected the manpower needs of the woredas less seriously was staff turn over.

Budget constraint seems to be the main problem for the inadequacy of human power in the woredas. This is a common feature of developing countries. Lack of desired applicants in the market is also another problem that affects the human supply. The reason for this might possibly be that applicants did not want to go to remote areas for fear of the hardship of rural life and lack of educational opportunities. This is a common phenomenon that has been existed

for decades. For example, the prominent Ethiopian educator Aklilu (1976: 39)) concluded that lack of educational opportunities coupled with the hardships of rural life were among the critical factors for which teachers quit their jobs. Another possible reason for the inadequacy of manpower needs may be shortage of educated personnel in the required fields of specializations.

Respondents were asked if there was staff turn over in their organization. Twenty (62.50 per cent) of the 32 respondents said “yes” and the remaining twelve (37.5 per cent) said “no”. Following this question, subjects were also asked how they could rate the staff turn over. Eight (40 per cent) of the 20 respondents who replied “yes” to the preceding question rated “high” while seven (35 per cent) rated “medium”. Only 1 (5 per cent) rated it as “very high”. This implies staff turn over is not a major problem

Furthermore, the next question posed to respondents was to indicate, from a list of alternatives, the reason(s) for the staff turn over in their woredas. In view of that, many (15 of them or 75 per cent) attributed the cause to staff turn over to lack of educational opportunities around, others 7 (35%) to lack of appropriate training incentives and others 7 (35%) to low salary. The reason for staff turn over seems lack of educational opportunities around.

The manager respondents were asked to point out the efforts being made by their respective institution with regard to the training of the employees. Most of them said no significant effort is made so far. In fact some indicated that an effort was made to participate employees in short-term training.

Finally both groups of respondents were asked to write recommendations that would help to solve the problems of distance learning programme. In response to the question the following recommendations were forwarded:

- Course/learning materials should be clear and be prepared in simple language and be available on time (27)
- Tutorial programmes and other supports should be arranged in as much as possible (21)
- Tutor Marked Assignments (TMA) should be returned on time (20).
- There should be well organized and coordinated management system (10)
- Institutions should not focus merely on money. Fees must be fixed on the basis of the paying capacity of learners (32)

CHAPTER FOUR

4. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter comprises the summary of the findings of the study, conclusions and recommendations that would help to solve the problems identified.

4.1. Summary

As stated in chapter one, the research topic is “*The training of Local Government Functionaries through distance Education: Opportunities and Challenges - The Case of South Wollo Administrative Zone.*” The main purpose of this study was to scrutinize the opportunities and challenges of training local government functionaries through distance education. To determine the opportunities that the local government functionaries would get and the challenges they would be faced with, the study made an attempt to find answers for the basic questions raised in chapter one of this study.

The study was conducted using a descriptive survey approach. The survey was carried out in six woredas of the South Wollo Administrative Zone. The six woredas were randomly selected. The subjects of the study were local government functionaries that are categorized as employees and managers. The employees include middle and first level managers and non-supervisory employees; whereas the managers are members of the Woreda Administrative Council, the highest executive body in the woreda.

Two sets of questionnaires were prepared and distributed to respondents that comprise 180 employees and 40 managers. The questionnaires had closed and open ended items. The rate of

return of the distributed questionnaires was 146 (81.11 per cent) for employees and 32 (80.00 per cent) for managers. The combined rate of return is 80.56 per cent. In addition to the questionnaires, structured interview questions were prepared and used to gather data from six managers. Available documents were reviewed and observation checklists employed. Furthermore, related literature on distance education was also reviewed and organized from available sources.

The collected data were, then, tabulated and analyzed using frequency percentages, mean, t-test, and Spearman's Rho (r_s) correlation. Based on the data analysis and interpretations, the following major findings were obtained:

1. As stated in chapter one, one of the basic questions was the extent of the gap between the actual and the required manpower in the woredas. The result of the study revealed that the required number of employees was 3578; but the existing personnel at the time of data collection were 2112. The difference between the required and the existing human power was 1466, which accounts for more than 41 per cent of the required number of employees. Four out of the six manager interviewees reaffirmed that there were 243 vacant positions that require qualified personnel. Therefore, it was found out that there was a big gap between the actual and desired number of civil servants at the woreda level.

2. Another basic question raised was the training need of employees and employers. In line with this, both the employee and manager respondents expressed their view that their previous qualifications were not adequate enough to accomplish their jobs effectively and efficiently. In addition to this, the majority 27 (84.38 per cent) of the manager respondents affirmed that the performance of the employees was unsatisfactory. The possible reason for low performance of

employees, as indicated by the respondents seems to be lack of adequate knowledge and skills. This implies that there is great need for education and training of local government functionaries to upgrade and update to the level the jobs require of them.

3. The results of the data on the availability and accessibility of infrastructural facilities indicate that the majority of the employee and manager respondents have greater accessibility to telephone (87.67 % and 100%) than to postal service (85.62 and 96.88) respectively. In both cases, the majority of the respondents have no access to internet, email and fax. It appears from the data that the majority of the respondents of both categories have greater access to postal and telephone services, but less access to internet, email and fax.

4. Generally, the finding indicates that both categories of respondents show similar and positive attitude towards distance education. This result matches with the studies conducted by various researchers like Boswell, Mocker, and Hamlin, 1968; Christopher 1982; Hoyt and Frye, 1972 cited in Willis (1993: 12) that the attitude of adults towards distance education is positive. Nevertheless, there are some aspects on which respondents did not agree. This is, perhaps, due to the fact that the distance learning approach is a new concept in Ethiopia as a whole and they might have some misunderstanding or lack of information about the system of distance learning approach.

5. The results of the study revealed that shortage of time to study due to workload is the first factor that hinders the learning of distance learners followed by lack of money to afford tuition fee and difficulty levels of study materials. As per the average ranks of the factors, irrelevant content of the subject matter to the learner, motivation to learn, lack of

encouragement from families, heavy social commitments and problem of isolation from one's group/institution are considered 4th to 8th in that order. A similar study by Shomaker (1998: 57) confirmed that contents of study materials, finance, readiness to study (motivation to learn), time and employment affect students learning at a distance. Shortage of time, inability to pay tuition fee, difficulty level of course materials appear to be the major problems for both employees and managers.

6. As the overall results disclose, employees have the desire to continue their education. To this effect, distance learning mode seems very important for the local functionaries for various reasons. These reasons may possibly include: helps employees earn while learning; minimizes absence from families and it may also enable them to immediately apply what they have studied to their work and meets their educational needs (improves their qualifications relevant to their work).

7. Factors such as quality of the learning materials, adequate support from the teaching institution and support from families are vital for successful distance learning. On the other hand, factors like lack of time to study and complete assignments on time, delay in getting feedback on the assignments responses and other inquiries from the teaching institution would hold back the success of learners of distance education.

8. As the results reveal, the present qualifications of the employees (managers and employees) are not adequate to effectively and efficiently discharge their duties and responsibilities. This has resulted in poor performance. The main causes for poor performance of employees, as reported by the respondents include: lack of adequate knowledge and skills and the

qualification of employees being below the jobs require. Therefore, it may possibly be inferred from the data that there is an increased need for education and training in order to increase the performances of employees.

9. The study confirms that, despite its challenges, distance learning is an appropriate way of training civil servants, In other words, distance learning has both challenges and opportunities. The challenges that civil servants could face are the lower value the public gives to distance learning, unavailability of adequate infrastructures, time and financial constraints. However, respondents believe and accept the fact that distance learning offers a wide range of educational opportunities to civil servants, among which the major ones include:

- Distance learning meets their educational needs (enhances their qualifications and professional skills)
- It enables them to look after their children while studying (avoids family disruptions)
- It helps them learn while working and earning money
- It helps them learn on their own time and pace (avoids pressure from teachers)
- It enables them to immediately practice what they have learnt.
- It reaches employees at home as a result avoids family disruption that might come from leaving ones home for education,

Furthermore, the result of the study also shows that distance education is of paramount importance to both the government as well as the individual employee in that:

- It is relatively of low cost since it does not require buildings and furniture as the conventional schools do
- Enable employees to study their education while undertaking their functions

- Enables them to learn in their own time and in their own home

10. Results of the study show that most of the organizations have a training policy, but are constrained by an inadequate, or lack of budget. This implies that budget constraint appears to be one of the major impediments to train civil servants in the woredas studied. Furthermore, all the six interviewees asserted that shortage of budget was one of the major problems for the unfilled positions in their woredas. However, employees who are pursuing their education obtain limited support like time for examination, stationery materials etc. Those who complete their education also get promotion and/or salary increment.

4.2. Conclusions

The finding shows that all the woredas studied are subject to personnel and financial constraints. The devolution of power to the woredas together with budget constraint has aggravated the acute shortage of trained human power. It is possible to say that no sector of the economy has adequate number of qualified and trained manpower. In this context, upgrading and updating the local government functionaries is not an option, but a must.

Though respondents have similar and positive attitude towards distance education in most of the aspects, they also show significant difference in some of the aspects. This difference might come from lack of awareness about distance education.

Likewise, what the investigator observed from the respondents and others whom he talked to was that learners seemed to require face-to-face teaching and support frequently like the

conventional classes. This itself indicates there is lack of awareness about the purpose of tutorial sessions in particular and distance education in general. Thus, there is lack of awareness about distance learning among civil servants.

The result of the study reveals that there is increased demand for education and training which is not being met by the conventional colleges/universities. In this regard, distance education has the potential of contributing to increased access to education. But, despite the huge potential of distance education in providing access to education and improve the quality of the education system of a country, distance education in Ethiopia is not fully exploited; even not touched.

Woredas are implementing the on going decentralization process. Local capacity is one of the most important factors to implement the decentralization process. Capacity includes responsibility, motivation, and authority to act on resources such as human, economic organizational. They have at present more power, resources, responsibilities and decision-making autonomy than ever before. To successfully implement the decentralization process their capacity in terms of trained human resource must be built. One way of enhancing local capacity is through education and training. Distance education has an immense contribution in this regard.

The results disclose that there was shortage of manpower in the woredas studied. The reasons for the scarcity of manpower in the woredas were shortage of budget, inadequate applicants for a specific job, the decentralization process were

As the study showed there was poor performance in the woredas. The main reason for the poor performance, as indicated by the respondents, is lack of adequate knowledge and skills and shortage of human power. This implies that employees need education and training to upgrade their knowledge and skills as a result their productivity will be enhanced/boosted.

4.3. Recommendations

1. The researcher believes that distance education will have an immense contribution to the training of the civil servants in particular and the education system of the country in general. For one thing, it can equip learners, particularly civil servants, with the necessary knowledge, skills and attitudes without displacing them from their work places and families. For another, it can increase access to education and maintain the quality and efficiency of the education system of the country in general by giving support to classroom teaching. All or most students of the same grade level can receive education from renowned expertise in the area using state of the art. Therefore, distance learning must be one of the central priority of the government's strategies for the future; and in collaboration with the government agencies, NGOs and private institutions, the Ethiopian Government should make every endeavour to exploit the potential of distance education.
2. As indicated in the literature, there are a number of distance education providing institutions (both government and private) in the country. In order to maintain the quality and standards of distance education, there needs an autonomous institution, separate or otherwise, that can coordinate all distance learning activities run in the country. It is recommended that the Government should establish a National Regulatory body for distance education programme

that will play a positive role in the development of distance education for the development of the country. Besides its regulatory activities, the body should organize incessant training on the preparation of distance learning course materials and provide training to tutors.

3. The main purpose of training is to improve the performance of the individual and ultimately to increase the productivity of the organization. Performance does not take place in vacuum. It is determined by the individual's ability to do the work (knowledge and skill he/she has) and willingness (effort) to apply that ability on the job. Put differently, performance is the result of three things: effort, knowledge and skill. The former is acquired through motivation, the latter two through education and training. In fact, provision of training opportunity can also boost employees' motivation. This means that training can improve individuals; as a result productivity will be enhanced.

In this regard the researcher strictly recommends that woredas must pay particular attention to distance education to train their employees because the employees can accomplish their work while learning. Organizations do not need substitute persons while employees are studying through distance as distance education avoids absence from work, In fact, employers should give encouragement and support like study time, material as well as financial in as much as possible.

4. The human resource is the first and foremost asset of a nation. It is the human resource that can bring about sustainable development of a country. That is why developed countries invest on human capital. In other words, the human capital can be enhanced by the further investment on education and training. In a country like Ethiopia, with large size and

diversity, it is difficult to meet the educational needs and demands for higher education of the population through the conventional means alone. Put differently, the formal education system cannot meet all the needs and demands of the country within the required time and pace. It is hoped, then, that distance education would play a pivotal role in promoting national economy by producing competent, committed and more skilled human power to the public. Policy makers should, thus, realize and appreciate the economic benefits of distance education in providing access to higher education and in producing the required skilled human power to all sectors of the country. In a nutshell, the development objective of Ethiopian Government is to bring about sustain and rapid growth – economic, social political and technological. The experiences of other countries show that it is difficult, if not impossible, to achieve the objective without investing in its people.

5. The monthly salary of the majority of the employees is less than Birr 1000. In addition to the paucity of their salary, they have a family size of more than three heads, which implies more mouths to feed, more clothes to wear. On top of that, the cost of living is skyrocketing. Taking all these factors into account, the researcher recommends that the tuition fee for employees be subsidized by the state and for this policy be adopted that the employee enters into obligation to serve for certain period of time after graduation.

6. Instructional materials are essential inputs needed for running instructional activities at all level and in all modes of the educational system. The effectiveness and efficiency of an education system, particularly distance learning, to a great extent, depends on the amount and quality of instructional materials available and on the timely receipt of the materials by the earners so that the learners would be able to study at their own pace and at their own

convenience. Needless to say, distance learners are studying independently for most of the study time. So distance education providing institutions should:

- Prepare learning materials in such a way that learners can easily and fully understand them. They must also be designed in attractive, rewarding and motivating way so that learners will not feel loneliness and insecure. They must reflect the three domains/objectives of learning: cognitive, psychomotor and affective
- distribute course and other supplementary materials to learners on time and with the required number.

7. It is evident that policies guide our actions. They provide a framework within which organization make decisions. Therefore, there must be training policy within which organization select employees without any bias.

8. There is no clearly defined national policy on the development of distance education in Ethiopia. As More and Kearsely in Shomaker (1998: 49) state “Distance education cannot grow on the back of existing educational structures and policies. Policies must be created and for that purposes policy making organizations must be set up.” The researcher, therefore, recommends that the concerned government bodies should prepare a well thought staff development policy through the distance education mode and the concomitant budget to realize this policy.

9. As mentioned in chapter one, this paper has not studied the problem in great depth due to various limitations. The researcher, therefore, recommends that further and detail study must be made on the subject.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Akililu Habte, (1996). "Brain Drain in Elementary Schools" **Ethiopian Journal of Education**.
Vol. 1, No. 1.
- Armstrong, M. (1977). **A Handbook of Personnel Management**. London: Kogan Page Ltd.
- Bartholomew, D.J. (1976). **Manpower Planning**. Great Britain: Hazel Watson and Viney Ltd.
- Bowman, C. and Janett, M. G. (1996). **Management in Practice: A Framework for
Managing Organizational Change (3rd ed.)**. Oxford/Boston: Butter worth-
Heinemann
- Cowling, A. and chloe, M. (1992). **Managing Human Resource (2nd ed.)**. London: Edward
Arnold.
- Eshetu Chole (1994). **Fiscal Decentralization in Ethiopia**. Addis Ababa: Addis Ababa
University Press.
- Evans, Terry. (1997). **Understanding Learners in Open and Distance Education**. London:
Kogan Page Limited.
- Federal Negarit Gazeta (2002, January 3). **Federal Civil Servants Proclamation (No.
262/2002)**. Berhanena Selam Printing Enterprise: Addis Ababa.
- Florestal, K. and Cooper, R.. (1997). **Decentralization of Education: Legal Issues**.
Washington, D.C.: The World Bank.
- Gould, W.T.S. (1993). **People and Education in the Third World**. Malaysia: Longman
Scientific and Technological Ltd.
- Gruberg, M. (Ed.). (1997). **Decentralization**. Encyclopedia Americana, Vol. 8. Danbury:
Grolier Incorporated.

- Guyette, S. (1996). **Planning for Balanced Development: A Guide for Native American and Rural Communities**. SANTA FE, New Mexico: Clear Light Publications.
- Hardon, A. and Hayes, E. (eds.) (1997). **Reproductive Rights in Practice: A Feminist Report on the Quality of Care**. New York: Zed Books Ltd.
- Holmberg, B. (1995). **Theory and Practice of Distance Education**. London: Routledge.
- _____ (1989). **Theory and Practice of Distance Education**. London: Routledge.
- _____ (1982). **Status and Trends of Distance Education**. New York Nichols Publishing Company.
- Howe, S. (1995). **Essential Elements of Human Resource**. Great Britain: Guernsey Press Ltd.
- ILO. (1986). **Training Needs Assessment and Monitoring**. Geneva: ILO Office.
- Inglis, A. et.al. (1999). **Delivering Digitally: Managing the Transition to the Knowledge Media**. London: Kogan Page Limited.
- James, V. U. (ed.) (1998). **Capacity Building in Developing Countries: Human and Environmental Dimensions**. London: Westport, Connecticut.
- Kaufman, R. and Herman, J. (1991). **Strategic Planning in Education: Rethinking, Restructuring, Revitalizing**. New Holland: Technomic Publishing
- Kaye, A and Rumble, G. (1979). **An analysis of Distance Teaching Systems**. Milton Keynes: Open University.
- Keegan, D. (2000). **Distance Training: Taking Stock at a Time of Change**. London: Routledge Falmer Company, Inc.
- _____ (1996). **Foundations of Distance Education** (3rd .ed) London: Routledge Chapman and Hall, Inc.
- _____ (1993). **Theoretical Principles of Distance Education** London: Routledge Chapman and Hall, Inc.

- Koul, L. (1988). **Methodology of Educational Research (2nd ed.)**. New Delhi: Vikas Publishing House LTD.
- Latchem, C. and Lockwood, F. (1998). **Staff Development in Open and Flexible Learning**. London: Routledge.
- Lussier, R. N. (1990). **Human Relations in Organizations: A Skill – Building Approach**. Boston: IRWIN.
- Manjulika, S. and Reddy, V. (1996). **Distance Education in India: A Model for Developing Countries**. New Delhi: Associates Business Corporation.
- Melton, R. F. (2002). **Planning and Developing Open and Distance Learning: A Quality Assurance Approach**. London: Routledge Falmer Studies in Distance Education.
- Milkovich, G. T. and Boudreau, J. W. (1991). **Human Resource Management (6th)**. Boston: IRWIN.
- Mondy, R.W. and Noe, R. M. (1990). **Human Resource Management (4th ed.)**. USA: Allyn Bacon.
- Middleton, J., Ziderman A. and Adams A. (1993). **Skills for Productivity: Vocational Education and Training in Developing Countries**. New York: Oxford University Press.
- MOE. (1994). **Education and Training Policy**. Addis Ababa: EMPDA
- Moore, M.G. and Thompson, M.M. (1991). *The Effects of Distance Learning*.
- Murphy, et.al. (2000). **Enhancing Learning Opportunities in Africa: Distance Education and Information and Communication Technologies for Learning**. Washington, D.C. The World Bank.

- Paul, R. H. (1990). **Open Learning and Organizational Management. Leadership and Integrity in Distance Education.** London: Kogan Page
- Perraton, H. (2000). **Open and Distance Learning in the Developing World.** London: Routledge.
- Psacharopoulos, G. and Woodhall, M. (1995). **Education for Development: An Analysis of Investment Choices.** Washington: Oxford University Press.
- Reid, M. and Barrington, H. (1997). **Training Interventions: Managing Employee Development (5th ed.).** London: Institute of Personnel Development.
- Robin, S.P. (1996). **Organizational Behaviour: Concepts and Controversies, Applications (7th ed.).** Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall.
- Rowntree, D. (1992). **Exploring Open and Distance Learning.** London: Kogan Page Limited.
- _____ (1999). **Preparing Materials for Open and Distance Flexible Learning: An Action Guide for Teachers and Trainers.** London: Kogan Page Limited.
- _____ (1997). **Teaching Through Self-Instruction: How to Develop Open Learning Materials (Revised ed.).** London: Kogan Page Limited.
- Rue, L.W. and Byars, L.L.. (1997). **Management: Skills and Application (6th ed.).** Boston: IRWIN.
- Rumble, G. (1992). **The Management of Distance Learning Systems: Fundamentals of Educational Planning.** Paris: UNESCO, International Institute of Education Planning.
- _____ (1997). **The Costs and Economics of Open and Distance Learning.** London: Kogan Page Limited.

- Rumble, G. and Oliveira, J. (Ed.) (1992). **Vocational Education at a Distance: International Perspective**. London: Kogan Page.
- Scott, W.E. and Podsakoff, P.M. (1985). **Behavioral Principles in the Practice of Management**: New York: John Wiley and Sons.
- Seyoum Tefera (1996). "Attempts at Educational Reform in Ethiopia: A Top-down or Bottom-up Reform?" **The Ethiopian Journal of Education vol.1, No.1**.
- Shomaker, D. (1998). **Distance Learning in Professional Education**. Jesses Farm (UK): Mark Allen Publishing Limited.
- Shrestha, G. (2000) **Utilization of Information and Communications Technology for Education in Africa**. Addis Ababa: IICBA
- Srivastava, M.P. (1997). **Human Resource Planning: Approaches, Needs Assessment and Priorities in Manpower Planning**. New Delhi: MANAK Publications Ltd.
- STRIDE. (1999). **Growth and Philosophy of Distance Education: Socio-Academic Issues**. New Delhi: Aravali Printers and Publishers Pvt. Ltd.
- _____. (1995). **Growth and Philosophy of Distance Education: Philosophical Foundations**. New Delhi: Soma Printers Pvt.Ltd
- _____. (1995). **Growth and Philosophy of Distance Education: Growth and Present Status**. New Delhi: Soma Printers Pvt.Ltd
- _____. (1995). **Support Services: Need and Mechanisms**. New Delhi: IGNOU.
- Swart, D.; Keegan, D. and Holmberg, B.. (1983). **Distance Education: International Perspectives**. New York: St. Martin's Press.
- Tyson, and York. (1996). **Human Resource Management** (3rd ed.).
- Verduin, J.R. and Clark, T.A. (1991). **Distance Education: The Foundations of Effective Practice**. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

- Watson, C. (1979). **Management Development Through Training**. London: Addison – Wesley Publishing Company.
- Williams, L. (1995). **Human Resources in a Changing Society: Balancing Compliance and Development**. London: Quorum Books.
- Willis, B. (1993). **Distance Education: A Practical Guide**. New Jersey: Educational Technology Publications.
- World Bank. (2001). **World Development Report 2001: Attacking Poverty**. New York: Oxford University Press.
- _____ (2000a). **Higher Education in Developing Countries: Peril and Promise**. Washington, D.C.: The World Bank.
- _____ (2000b). **City Strategy and Governance: Urban and City Management Programme, Distance Learning Course**. Washington, D.C. The World Bank.

Internet

- Jeffries, Michael (2001). <http://www.ihets.org/consortium/ipse/fdhandbook/resrch.html>
- Greville, Rumble (1992). File:/C:\floppy\Management-why and which distance education. The planner's perspective.htm
- IIT Delhi, WBLN and IGNOU (2000). Distance Learning Selected Readings: Background Reading Material (compiled exclusively for participants of the program) on Management of Distance Learning Centers. 28th February – 10th March 2000.

Unpublished Materials

- Abebe Ghedai and Taye Demissie (1967). Correspondence Education: Report, Addis Ababa University.
- Adekanmbi, G. (2000). Distance Learning Selected Readings. Paper presented to the workshop on management of distance learning centers, 28th February – 10th March 2000, New Delhi.
- Ayalew Shibeshi. (1995). “Decentralization in Education: Some Notes”. Addis Ababa University, Faculty of Education, Department of Educational Administration, November 1995. Handout for the Course Ed.Ad.342.
- Daniel, J. (2000). “Open Learning at a Point of Turning” Asian Regional Conference, 3 – 5 November 2000, New Delhi India
- Federal Civil Service Commission (2003). Personnel Statistics of 2001/02 (1994 EC). Addis Ababa
- MCB. (2002). “Rural Woreda Capacity Building (District Level Decentralization) Program. Five -Year (2003 – 2007) Action Plan” Unpublished.
- ME.URT. (1990). Report of the Committee on the Establishment of Open University of Tanzania, 1990
- Ramanujam, P.R. (2000). “Distance Learning in Developing Countries: Prospects and Challenges” Distance Learning Selected Readings New Delhi.
- Solomon Inquai (1992). “Distance Education In Ethiopia: A Rejoinder” Distance Education 13(2)
- Swamy, V.C. (2000). Open and Distance Learning in the Millennium, Asian Regional Conference, 3 – 5 November 2000, New Delhi India

Tilson, T. and Getachew Kelemu. (1998). "Decentralizing Distance Education: Challenges and Opportunities – Experience of Ethiopia." In Proceedings of the Workshop on Quality Education in Ethiopia: Visions for the 21st Century, Awassa 12 – 18 July 1998, pp 77-86, Addis Ababa, Institute of Educational Research.

UNESCO. (2002). The Sub-Regional Workshop Proceedings on Peace, Governance, and Education for Sustainable Development. June 19 – 21, 2002, Addis Ababa

IICBA. (2000). IICBA Newsletter. March 2000 Vol. 2, No. 1 Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

APPENDIX - A

ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT

PART - 1

Survey Questionnaire: To be filled out by Employees

I am a graduate student at the Addis Ababa University, College of Education, Department of Educational Planning and Management.

The main purpose of this questionnaire is to collect data on the *Training of Local Government Functionaries through Distance Education in South Wollo Administrative Zone*. The study will attempt to investigate the opportunities and challenges of distance education programme in the Zone. The trustworthiness of the study is based on the accuracy of the information you will provide. Please note that the data you supply will only be used for research purpose; and will be kept *strictly confidential*.

On the pages to 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 enter 'X' in the appropriate box () wherever the question has alternatives to choose from. Wherever you are required to write the responses, kindly write it clearly on the space provided either in Amharic or in English.

Thank you for completing this questionnaire

PART ONE: PERSONAL DATA

Direction: Put an 'X' mark in the box of your choice or write your answer on the space provided

1. Sex:

Male

Female

2. Age (in years):

20 - 29

40- 49

30 - 39

50 and above

3. Work experience (in years):

1 – 5

6 – 10

11 – 15

16 – 20

21 and above

4. Educational level:

12th complete

TTI

College Diploma

First degree and above

Others (Please specify): _____

5. When did you complete your highest educational level?

In _____ E.C

6. Family size (number of persons living with you):

Less than 3

3 –5

6 – 8

more than 8

7. Monthly basic salary (excluding other income such as allowance):

Birr 200 – 342

Birr 360 – 560

Birr 595 - 990

Birr 1040 – 1635

8. Marital status

Single

Married

Divorced

Widowed

PART TWO: About Distance Learning

2.1. Factors Affecting the Learning of Distance Learners

Below is a list of possible factors, in random order, which can hinder distance learners from pursuing their education through distance learning programme. Please write their rank order, from the most serious (1st) to the least serious (8th or so).

No.	Factors	Rank
1	Lack of money to afford tuition fee	
2	Shortage of time due to workload	
3	Lack of encouragement from families	
4	Irrelevant content of the subject matter to the learner	
5	Difficulty level of study materials	
6	Motivation to learn	
7	Heavy social commitments	
8	Problem of isolation from one's group and/or the institution	
Others (please specify and rank)		
9		
10		

2.2. The Accessibility of Infrastructural Facilities

The accessibility of the following infrastructure facilities is believed to be very important for effective provision of distance education. Which of the following infrastructural facilities are available in your woreda? Please Mark 'X' in the box indicated.

No.	Infrastructural Facilities	Available	Not available
1	Postal service		
2	Telephone facilities		
3	Internet facility		
4	Fax		
5	E-mail		

2.3. Attitude towards Distance Education

Direction: Please express your opinion on the following statements pertaining to distance learning programme by marking 'X' in the box of your choice.

1 = Strongly Disagree

3 = Uncertain

4 = Agree

2 = Disagree

5 = Strongly Agree

No.	Statements	1	2	3	4	5
1.	Distance learning is a suitable way of training civil servants.					
2.	There is increased need for distance education in your woreda.					
3.	The attitude of the society towards distance learning is positive.					
4.	Learning through distance mode can be as effective as learning through regular mode.					
5.	Distance learning opens up access to educational opportunities for disadvantaged societies.					
6.	Learning through distance is not at all inferior to any other mode.					
7.	Distance learning is more useful for civil servants to upgrade their qualifications.					
8.	The diplomas and degrees obtained through distance learning are not valued as those obtained from the formal education system.					
9.	Distance learning is less expensive than that of the regular one.					
10.	Employees trained through distance learning mode can perform equally as their counter parts that trained in the conventional mode.					

2.4. The Importance of Distance Education for Civil Servants

Direction: Put an 'X' mark in the box of your choice or write your answer on the space provided

1 Do you think that distance education is important for civil servants in your woreda?

Yes

No

2. If 'Yes', in what way (s) is it important for civil servants? (More than one response is possible).

To remain on job while learning.

To get promotion in job.

To get a diploma or degree

To upgrade and update themselves

Others specify: _____

3. Do you have a plan to continue your education?

Yes

No

4. If 'Yes', through which mode do you want to continue your education?

Distance learning

Extension/evening

a. Regular/day program

Summer programme

5. If your response for question 4 above is 'distance education', why did you select it?

It enables me to study at my own time and pace.

It fits in with my work.

It avoids family disruptions.

There is no course available locally other than through distance.

Others (please specify): _____

2.5. Factors that Can Facilitate or Constrain Distance Learning Programme

Direction: Put an 'X' mark in the box of your choice or write your answer on the space provided

1. Have you ever been enrolled/attended in distance learning programme?

Yes

No

2. If 'Yes' have you completed the programme successfully?
 Yes No
3. If 'Yes', which of the following factors helped you to complete the programme successfully? (More than one response is possible)
- Support from my employer
 - Support from family
 - Adequate support from the teaching institution
 - The quality of the learning materials
 - Others (specify) _____
4. If your response for question 2 is 'No', which of the following factors hinder you to complete your study? (More than one response is possible)
- Lack of access to peer group support
 - Lack of time to study and complete assignments on time
 - Lack of immediate feedback from the teaching institution
 - Lack of study skill to cover the learning materials and do assignments on time.
 - Others (please specify): _____
5. How do you feel the programme fees charged by the distance education institutions in your woreda?
- Very expensive
 - Expensive
 - Less expensive
 - Cheap

2.6. Training Need

Direction: Put an 'X' mark in the box of your choice or write your answer on the space provided

1. Did you receive any training related to your present job in the last two years?
- Yes No
2. How many times did you receive training in the last two years?
- Once Twice
- Three times More than three times

3. What benefit did you get from the training? (More than one answer is possible)
- Salary increment (Remuneration)
 - Promotion in job
 - Competence
 - Self confidence
 - Upgrade my educational qualification
4. Who do you think benefits from training of employees?
- The individual trainees
 - The organization where the trainees work
 - The people of that particular community
 - All of the above
- 5.. If you do have an opportunity to pursue your education through distance mode, will you accept it?
- Yes No
6. If your response for Question 5 is 'Yes', what kind of courses do you want to study?
- Courses relevant to my present occupation (job).
 - Courses that have high demand on the market
 - Courses related to my personal academic development
 - Any course available
- Other (please specify) _____
7. If your response to item No.5 is 'Yes', what percent of your salary can you afford for your education and training per month?
- 5 % and below
 - 6 – 10 %
 - 11 – 15 %
 - Above 15 %
8. If your response to item No. 3 is 'Yes', please write down the particular field of study you want to study? _____

2.7. Problems that Affect the Performance of Civil Servants in the Woredas

Direction: Put an 'X' mark in the box of your choice or write your answer on the space provided

1. Which of the following is a major problem that affects the performance of civil servants in your woreda? (More than one response is possible)

- Lack of adequate knowledge and skills
- Engagement in other activities
- Lack of motivation in the job
- Lack of defined roles and responsibilities

Others (please specify): _____

2. What suggestions/strategies would you recommend as solutions to the main problems of distance education program?

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____
- d. _____

Thank you once again!

APPENDIX - B

ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT

PART - 2

Survey Questionnaire: To be filled out by Top Management

I am a graduate student at the Addis Ababa University, College of Education, Department of Educational Planning and Management.

The main purpose of this questionnaire is to collect data on the *Training of Local Government Functionaries through Distance Education in South Wollo Administrative Zone*. The study will attempt to investigate the opportunities and challenges of distance education programme in the Zone. The trustworthiness of the study is based on the accuracy of the information you will provide. Please note that the data you supply will only be used for research purpose; and will be kept *strictly confidential*.

On the pages to 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 enter 'X' in the appropriate box () wherever the question has alternatives to choose from. Wherever you are required to write the responses, kindly write it clearly on the space provided either in Amharic or in English.

Thank you for completing this questionnaire

PART ONE: PERSONAL DATA

Direction: Put an 'X' mark in the box of your choice or write your answer on the space provided

1. Sex:
 Male Female
2. Age (in years):
 20 - 29 40- 49
 30 - 39 50 and above
3. Work experience (in years):
 1 – 5 6 – 10
 11 – 15 16 – 20
 21 and above
4. Educational level:
 12th complete TTI
 College Diploma First degree and above
Others (Please specify): _____
5. When did you complete your highest educational level?
In _____ E.C
6. Family size (number of persons living with you):
 Less than 3 3 – 5
 6 – 8 more than 8
7. Monthly basic salary (excluding other income such as allowance):
 Birr 200 – 342 Birr 360 – 560
 Birr 595 - 990 Birr 1040 – 1635
8. Marital status
 Single Married
 Divorced Widowed

PART TWO: About Distance Learning

2.1. Factors Affecting the Learning of Distance Learners

Below is a list of possible factors, in random order, which can hinder distance learners from pursuing their education through distance learning programme. Please write their rank order, from the most serious (1st) to the least serious (8th or so).

No.	Factors	Rank
1	Lack of money to afford tuition fee	
2	Shortage of time due to workload	
3	Lack of encouragement from families	
4	Irrelevant content of the subject matter to the learner	
5	Difficulty level of study materials	
6	Motivation to learn	
7	Heavy social commitments	
8	Problem of isolation from one's group and/or the institution	
Others (please specify and rank)		
9		
10		

2.2. The Accessibility Infrastructural Facilities

The accessibility of the following infrastructural facilities is believed to be very important for effective provision of distance education. Which of the following infrastructural facilities are available in your woreda? Please Mark 'X' in the box indicated.

No.	Infrastructural Facilities	Available	Not available
1	Postal service		
2	Telephone facilities		
3	Internet facility		
4	Fax		
5	E-mail		

2.3. Attitude towards Distance Education

Direction: Please express your opinion on the following statements pertaining to distance learning programme by marking 'X' in the box of your choice.

1 = Strongly Disagree

3 = Uncertain

4 = Agree

2 = Disagree

5 = Strongly Agree

No.	Statements	1	2	3	4	5
1.	Distance learning is a suitable way of training civil servants.					
2.	There is increased need for distance education in your woreda.					
3.	The attitude of the society towards distance learning is positive.					
4.	Learning through distance mode can be as effective as learning through regular mode.					
5.	Distance learning opens up access to educational opportunities for disadvantaged societies.					
6.	Learning through distance is not at all inferior to any other mode.					
7.	Distance learning is more useful for civil servants to upgrade their qualifications.					
8.	The diplomas and degrees obtained through distance learning are not valued as those obtained from the formal education system.					
9.	Distance learning is less expensive than that of the regular one.					
10.	Employees trained through distance learning mode can perform equally as their counter parts that trained in the conventional mode.					

2.4. The Importance of Distance Education for Civil Servants

Direction: Put an 'X' mark in the box of your choice or write your answer on the space provided

1 Do you think that distance education is important for civil servants in your woreda?

Yes

No

2. If 'Yes', in what way (s) is it important for civil servants? (More than one response is possible).
- To remain on job while learning.
 - To get promotion in job.
 - To get a diploma or degree
 - To upgrade and update themselves
- Others specify: _____
-
3. Do you have a plan to continue your education?
- Yes No
4. If 'Yes', through which mode do you want to continue your education?
- Distance learning Extension/evening
 - Regular/day program Summer programme
5. If your response for question 4 above is 'distance education', why did you select it?
- It enables me to study at my own time and pace.
 - It fits in with my work.
 - It avoids family disruptions.
 - There is no course available locally other than through distance.
- Others (please specify): _____

2.5. Factors that Can Facilitate or Constrain Distance Learning Programme

Direction: Put an 'X' mark in the box of your choice or write your answer on the space provided

1. Have you ever been enrolled/attended in distance learning programme?
- Yes No
2. If 'Yes' have you completed the programme successfully?
- Yes No
3. If 'Yes', which of the following factors helped you to complete the programme successfully? (More than one response is possible)
- Support from my employer
 - Support from family

Adequate support from the teaching institution

The quality of the learning materials

Others (specify) _____

4. If your response for question 2 is 'No', which of the following factors hinder you to complete your study? (More than one response is possible)

Lack of access to peer group support

Lack of time to study and complete assignments on time

Lack of immediate feedback from the teaching institution

Lack of study skill to cover the learning materials and do assignments on time.

Others (please specify): _____

5. How do you feel the programme fees charged by the distance education institutions in your woreda?

Very expensive

Expensive

Less expensive

Cheap

2.6. Training Need

Direction: Put an 'X' mark in the box of your choice or write your answer on the space provided

1. Did you receive any training related to your present job in the last two years?

Yes

No

2. How many times did you receive training in the last two years?

Once

Twice

Three times

More than three times

3. What benefit did you get from the training? (More than one answer is possible)

Salary increment (Remuneration)

Promotion in job

Competence

Self confidence

- Upgrade my educational qualification
4. Who do you think benefits from training of employees?
- The individual trainees
- The organization where the trainees work
- The people of that particular community
- All of the above
- 5.. If you do have an opportunity to pursue your education through distance mode, will you accept it?
- Yes No
6. If your response for Question 5 is 'Yes', what kind of courses do you want to study?
- Courses relevant to my present occupation (job).
- Courses that have high demand on the market
- Courses related to my personal academic development
- Any course available
- Other (please specify) _____
7. If your response to item No.5 is 'Yes', what percent of your salary can you afford for your education and training per month?
- 5 % and below 11 – 15 %
- 6 – 10 % Above 15 %
8. If your response to item No. 3 is 'Yes', please write down the particular field of study you want to study? _____

2.7. Problems that Affect the Performance of Civil Servants in the Woredas

Direction: Put an 'X' mark in the box of your choice or write your answer on the space provided

1. Which of the following is a major problem that affects the performance of civil servants in your woreda? (More than one response is possible)
- Lack of adequate knowledge and skills
- Engagement in other activities
- Lack of motivation in the job
- Lack of defined roles and responsibilities

Others (please specify): _____

2.8. Staff Development

Direction: Put an 'X' mark in the box of your choice or write your answer on the space provided

- 1 Does every employee have the required qualification in relation to the job assigned?
 Yes No
2. Does every employee accomplish the assigned duties and responsibilities according to the given time and standards?
 Yes No
3. If your answer is 'No', then what do you think would be the cause(s)?
 Lack of adequate knowledge and skills
 Lack of motivation
 Carelessness of the employee
 Other (please specify). _____
4. Is there a staff training/development policy?
 Yes No
5. Does the policy cover both full and part time staff?
 Yes No
6. Does your organization have budget for staff training?
 Yes No
7. Does a staff member get any support while learning?
 Yes No
8. If 'Yes', what kinds of support do you give him/her?
 Material Financial Time
Others (please specify) _____
9. Does a staff member get salary increment and/or promotion after completing training?
 Yes No
10. Do your employees need on the job training?
 Yes No

11. If 'Yes', what kind of training is most suitable for the employees?

- Short term Diploma Degree

12. Which mode of training do you prefer (is most suitable) to train employees?

- Regular Extension/evening
 Distance Summer

13. Do employees leave (quit) their jobs as a result of lack of educational opportunities in their locality?

- Yes No

2.9 Human Resources Status

1. How do you rate the adequacy of the present human power of your organization?

- More than adequate Adequate
 Inadequate I do not know

2. Is there staff turn over in your organization?

- Yes No

3. If 'yes' how do you rate it?

- very high High Medium Low

4. What do you think would be the reason(s) for the staff turn over in your woreda?

- Lack of appropriate training incentives Low salary
 Lack of educational opportunities around

Other(s) please specify: _____

5. Which of the following do you think would be a problem that affects the decentralization process going on at your woreda? (More than one answer is possible).

- Lack of adequate resources
 High staff turn over
 Lack of established system
 Hardship

Other (please specify): _____

6. If your response for question No. 2 above were “**inadequate**”, how would you indicate the seriousness of each of the following items, which are considered as the reasons for the inadequacy of human power in your woreda? Please tick in the box.

1. Less seriously

2. Seriously

3. Very seriously

No.	Items	1	2	3
1	Budget constraints			
2	Lack of desired applicants in the market			
3	The salary fixed for posts is not attractive			
4	The decentralization process creates many new jobs			
5	High staff turn over			

7. Please state the efforts being made to train employees so as to prepare them for better performance?

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____
- d. _____

8. What suggestions/strategies would you recommend as solutions to the main problems of distance education programme?

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____
- d. _____

Thank you once again!

APPENDIX – C

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. How many vacant positions are there in your organization that requires qualified personnel?
2. What is /are the reason(s) for the unfilled positions, if there are?
3. What do you think would be the reason for leaving their jobs?
4. What was/is the effect of the decentralization process with regard to human resource?
5. What is your opinion about the importance of distance education visa vis the decentralization process?

APPENDIX – D

OBSERVATION CHECKLIST

No	Infrastructure Facilities	Woredas					
		Dessie	Dessie Zuria	Kalu	Tehuledre	Legambo	Woreilu
1	Electricity	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
2	Postal service	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
3	Telephone facilities	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
4	Internet facility	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	X
5	All weather road	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
6	Road transport	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
7	Computer facilities	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	X
8	Fax	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	X
9	E-mail	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	X
10	Secondary school	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
11	College	✓	X	X	X	X	X

Key: ✓ = Available

 X = Not Available

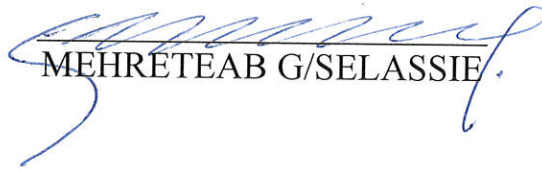
APPENDIX - E

FIELD OF STUDIES IDENTIFIED BY RESPONDENTS

No.	Field of Study	Freq.	Remarks
1	Social Science		
1.1	Supply Management	1	
1.2	Material Management	1	
1.3	Human Resource management	2	
1.4	Urban management	2	
1.5	Health Services Management	1	
1.6	Development studies/Rural development	1	
1.7	Business Administration	2	
1.8	Educational Administration	15	
1.9	Planning and Policy	1	
1.10	Public Health Administration	3	
1.11	Geography	2	
1.12	History	1	
1.13	Sociology	2	
1.14	Anthropology	1	
1.15	Law	9	
1.16	Economics	6	
1.17	Accounting	14	
1.18	Social Research	1	
1.19	English	3	
2	Natural Science		
2.1	Biology	2	
2.2	Organic Chemistry	1	
2.3	Mathematics	2	
2.4	Horticulture	1	
2.5	Computer/Information Science	8	
2.6	Animal Science	1	
2.7	Medicine	3	
2.8	Public Health	2	
2.9	Environmental Health	3	
2.10	Pharmacy	2	
2.11	Civil Engineering	4	
2.12	General Mechanics	1	
2.13	Electronics	2	

DECLARATION

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


MEHRETEAB G/SELASSIE.

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


YALEW INGIDAYEHU (PhD)