

**INSTITUTIONAL FACTORS INFLUENCING ENROLLMENT IN DISTANCE
LEARNING PROGRAMMES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI: A CASE
OF BACHELOR OF EDUCATION (ARTS) IN MERU REGION, KENYA.**

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**RESEARCH PROJECT REPORT SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT
OF THE DEGREE OF MASTER IN DISTANCE EDUCATION OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI.**

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DECLARATION

This project report is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other University.

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DEDICATION

This project report is dedicated to my children and my wife Mary, the entire family especially my late father Thomas and my mother Pasckalina who understood my state and inspired me to climb the academic ladder.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I wish to acknowledge the Almighty Lord for giving me good health and strength to complete this course. I also wish to express my sincere gratitude to my supervisors Dr. Harriet Kidombo and Dr. Naomi Gikonyo for their guidance and advice throughout the course. I further sincerely thank my wife Mary Karimi and my children for their encouragement and support; the entire staff of Meru Extra Mural Center (UON) for their co-operation and assistance in completing this research project. I express my appreciation to all the lectures and the staff in the Department Of Distance Studies for their support. A lot of thanks goes to my principal and my colleagues for their understanding and patience during my absence in course of my studies. Lastly I wish to thank all the people who may have assisted me in one way or the other.

May God bless us all.

ABSTRACT

Distance learning programmes have gained prominence in the 21st Century owing to their flexibility and convenience and the fact that conventional institutions cannot cope with ever increasing demand of higher education. The research project was out to investigate institutional factors influencing enrolment on Distance learning programmes in the UON with reference to Bachelor of education (Arts) in the Meru Region, Kenya. The study was guided by the following objectives: To examine the relationship between management practices and enrolment in distance education. To establish relationship between marketing strategies and enrollment in D. E. To establish the extent in which LSS relates to enrolment in distance education. To determine the influence of use of technology to enrollment in D.E. The conceptual framework shows that above variables are interrelated and are all key to distance learning programmes. The study adopted a descriptive survey design. The questionnaire consisted open and structured questions targeting Bachelor of Education (Arts) students in the University of Nairobi in Meru Region. A sample study comprised 80 respondents out of 303 that formed the target population. The researcher administered questionnaire to B.Ed (Arts) studying by distance. The findings were used to make recommendations on factors influencing enrollment in D.E programmes in the U.O.N., a case of B.Ed (Arts) in the Meru Region. Chapter four focused on the response rate, presentation of the data, interpretation and discussion of the research findings. The data was analyzed and presented in form of percentages and mean based on the objectives of the study. Chapter five outlined the summary of the findings, conclusions and recommendations. The findings of the research was that pertinent issues of management practices, marketing, LSS and technology influences enrolment in D.E learning programmes. Recommendations were floated; these included the need for UON to have a blue print strategic plan of marketing D.E in the Meru region and the need to integrate ICT in the mainstream teaching among others. Further research on provision of LSS and generally on the factors influencing offering of D.E programmes across the board in all Kenyan universities were suggested.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ADEA	Association for Development of Education in Africa
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
BCODOL	Botswana College of Open and Distance Learning.
DE	Distance Education
EDP	External Degree Programme
HIV	Human Immune Deficiency Virus
ICT	Information Communication Technology
LSS	Learners Support Services
KCSE	Kenya certificate of secondary education
NAMCOL	Nambian College of Open Learning.
ODL	Open Distance Learning
SSA	Sub-saharan Africa
UNESCO	United Nations Education Scientific and Cultural Organization.
UNISA	University of South Africa
UON	University of Nairobi
UK	United Kingdom
USA	United States of America

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

University education is viewed as the main instrument for development of human resource necessary for any meaningful growth and development of the human resource and the economy. Mwalimu Julius (1967) pointed out that the role of university in developing Nation is to contribute to ideas, manpower and service for furtherance of human equality, dignity, and human development. University is an essential tool for bringing social revolution. It should seek for truth and use its findings to serve the society and liberate man from ignorance. This can be largely achieved through distance education (UNESCO, 2004).

Distance education has witnessed tremendous growth worldwide in the 21st Century. The underlying philosophy of this growth is attributed to the fast development and growth of communication technology and learner support services which has resulted to rapid explosion of knowledge leading to great demand of distance education (Keegan, 1990). According to paratton (1982), parents throughout the world continue to view education as a route to mastering of technology and accumulation of wealth.

Distance Education Programmes can increase educational access and equity by reaching many groups. The secondary graduate who missed University entry; the married with household responsibilities and the geographically isolated or uprooted student (e.g. refugees) and the economically disadvantaged communities (Ngeera, 2008)

According to Ngeera (2008) there is considerable low enrolment of students in both tertiary and university education in Africa. In Ghana 6,088 students were admitted in

the University Education in 1996, of which 22,477 qualified (27%). In Uganda 6,000 out of 11,000 secondary graduates who qualified for admission in 1996, were able to be given University entrance (54%). In Nigeria less than 20% of 475,923 candidates who applied for university entry in 1996\97 were successful. With residential space at a premium, University aspirants view D.E a viable alternative route to higher education.

The Association for the Development of education in Africa (A.D.E.A) and common wealth association report (2004) notes that there is increasing demand for access to education opportunities at all levels but there is decreasing budgetary allocations for provision of educational, in sub-Saharan Africa (S.S.A.). The report notes significant growth of distance educational in Franco-phone Africa compared with Aglo-phone countries with consideration distance education activities in operation amongst its providers. These includes University of South Africa (UNISA), Open University of Zimbabwe, The Namibian College of open learning (NAMCOL), Botswana college of open and distance learning (BOCODOL), University of Nairobi (U.O.N.), just to mention but a few . In the Kenya context a number of commissions have highlighted distance education (DE) as an alternative mode of Education. These are;- The Ominde commission of 1965 which recommended the establishment of an advisory commission of distance education(Republic of Kenya, 1965).

The Gachathi Report of (1976) which emphasized the need for solving educational problems in large scale by diversifying education to include DE. It established the Board of Adult education (Republic of Kenya, 1976).

The Mackay commission (1981) recommended that the college of adult and distance education be restructured and its capacity expanded to adopt a more cost – effective method of offering education (Republic of Kenya, 1981).

The Mungai report on its part recommended the establishment of an open University similar to the one in Britain, Hong Kong and Tanzania. It recommended strongly that this should be considered as a way of extending University education. The Koech report (1999), hailed the external degree programme of the University of Nairobi as being particularly beneficial to serving teachers and other Kenyans in employment that would otherwise not have been enrolled for University education on full-time basis. It recommended that the programme be expanded in order to meet the demand of many deserving and qualified Kenyans who were otherwise barred from public University owing to rigid admission criteria. (Republic of Kenya, 1999).

Despite all these reports and policy documents distance education programmes remains a tiny component of higher education and the government involvement is quite minimal. Nonetheless the Government is planning to open an Open University so as to fast track university admission and open doors to many deserving students seeking higher education. This is expected to triple admission through distance learning (standard newspaper, April 30,2010).

Enrollment figure in the University of Nairobi (U.O.N.) indicate that in the academic year 2004/2005 out of 2,400 females were admitted. Only 11 or 0.6 per cent of the total enrollment were from arid and semiarid land. In fact, only 386 or 16.2 percent of the total enrollment were from arid district (A.D.E.A 2004)

The A.D.E.A report further suggest that there is great potential for distance education owing to the flexibility in provision of education to people wherever they are, when and how they want it. In particular provision of life long educational opportunities to the adults and especially women whose life circumstances preclude participation in institutions that demand full time attendance at places far away they live and work.

Makau (1993) quoted by Wanjala (2007) observes that the establishment of the external degree programme in the UON was due to demand for skilled labour and more importantly to open more doors for the people to benefit from university education.

The potentiality of D.E. in all sectors has not been sufficiently explored. There is little distance education infrastructure and expertise let alone the absence of D.E policy in place. The general public attitude and perception towards distance education is not encouraging. These constrain poses serious challenges in the enrollment of distance education in Kenya. It is therefore needless to say that effective enrolment strategy is paramount as critical success factor (A.D.E.A 2004). The new constitution has significantly given Distance Education prominence as the main vehicle to stimulate economic development. In order to achieve this Kenyans will be required to develop their abilities through acquisition of knowledge and development of skills through continuous learning (Republic of Kenya, May 2010)

1.2. Statement of the Problem

The Central problem was to investigate institutional factors influencing enrollment of Distance learning programmes at the U.O.N: A case of Bachelor of Education (Arts) in the Meru region (Kenya). This is an attempt to improve literacy levels and sharpen professional skills among the communities living in the area and more importantly try to satisfy the high demand of graduate teachers in the country. It is worthy to note that distance education is placed in the periphery as compared with convectional education. Distance education has helped to stimulate economic growth in a number of nations that have fully embraced the system as a vital channel of transmitting knowledge, skills and attitudes to their citizenly. Top in the list are China New Zealand, Canada and India just to mention but a few (Paratton, 2000).

Available literature indicates that there have been noted annual variations in the enrollment of B.Ed (arts) studying in the external degree programme (E.D.P) in the region in the last four years. This was an investigation of how institutional factors influence enrolment in DL programmes at the University of Nairobi with independent variables being management practices, marketing strategies, LSS and technology. Proper establishment of the five pillars affects the dependent variables that will address effectively enrolment needs of B.Ed (Arts).

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate institutional factors influencing the enrollment of Distance Learning programmes at the U.O.N, the case of Bachelor of Education (Arts), in the Meru region.

1.4 Research Objectives

- i. To examine the relationship between management practices and enrollment in Distance learning programmes.
- ii. To establish the relationship between marketing strategies and the enrolment in Distance learning programmes.
- iii. To establish the extent in which learner support services relates on enrollment in Distance learning programmes.
- iv. To determine the influence of technology on the enrollment in distance education.

1.5 Research Questions

- i. To what extent do management practices influence enrolment in distance learning programmes?

- ii. How does marketing strategies influence enrolment in distance learning programmes?
- iii. What is the relationship between learner support services and the enrolment in distance learning programmes?
- iv. What is the relationship between use of technology and the enrollment of distance learning programmes?

1.6 Significance of the Study

It is hoped that the study will provide an insight to appropriate enrolment strategies of Distance learning programmes that will stimulate its growth. It is hoped that the research will help to establish a new marketing paradigm shift to address student enrollment. It is hoped that this study will form basis of bench – marking for the growth of Distance learning programmes; in the country and help to correct and adjust the lop-sided view in the public domain about distance Education. It is hoped that the study will enhance advocacy and promotion of open and distance learning programmes that will translate to increased enrollment and will assist in the realization of the vision 2030.

1.7 Limitations of the Study

The study faced limitations of scarce financial and time constraints owing to heterogeneous population of students and their geographical locations. Sampling was subject to errors since some respondents were un-co-operative and gave incorrect information. Some respondents were unwilling to say all they know about the issue with the researcher.

1.8 Delimitations of the Study

The research was conducted in the Meru region which comprises Embu, Tharaka-Nithi, Isiolo and Meru Counties. Owing to the vastness of the region and for convenient of data collection, the researcher sub-divided the area into five sub regions comprising; Embu, Isiolo, Meru and Tharaka Nithi and Meru. Data was collected at the University of Nairobi (U.ON), in the college of Education and external studies at kikuyu Campus and Extra Mural Center in Meru town. It was centered in the school of Continuing and Distance Education. Specifically, the study was anchored in the Department of Education Studies and more so in the disciplines of Bachelor of education (Arts) by distance learning.

1.9 Basic Assumptions

It was assumed that there were few trained distance educators in the region. It was assumed that basic distance education structures were established in the region. It was assumed that learners were motivated to further their education and would therefore give useful information.

1.10 Definition of Significant Terms

Enrollment – number of students registered to study in a given programme.

Distance education – Refers to a family of instructions whereby the learners is separated from the teacher in space, pace, time and environment and that learning is facilitated by print, electronic and other mechanical devices.

Influence – To cause effect or change of something.

Institution – Center of learning where various study programmes are undertaken.

Programme – Planned learning, teaching and training.

University – An institution of higher learning.

1.11 Organization of the Study

The study was organized into five chapters. Chapter one included introduction which comprised the background of the study; statement of the problem, the purpose of the study, limitations of the study, delimitation of the study, basic assumptions of the study, significant terms and the organization of the study.

Chapter two focused on review of the related literature that had some sections. Chapter three dealt with research methodology which included research design, target population, sample and sampling procedures, research instruments and operation of valuables, instruments validity, instruments reliability, data collection procedures, data analysis and techniques. Chapter four dealt with data analysis and discussions of the findings. Chapter five consisted of summary of the findings, conclusions, recommendations and suggestions for further research.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter accounts, theories and findings from accredited scholars and researchers were reviewed. Precisely institutional factors influencing enrollment in D.E comprising of management practices, marketing strategies, learner support services and technology were thematically discussed.

2.2. The Concept of Distance Education

Sherry-(1996) says that the term distance education has been applied interchangeably by many different researchers to a greater extent by variety of programmes, audience and media. Its hallmark is the separation of the teacher and the learner in space and time. According to Keegan (1980) distance education is an industrialized form of teaching and learning. It involves the method of using electronics devices in assimilation of information. He calls it a non-contiguous communication between students and the teacher mediated by print and technology.

Humbergy (1986) assets that distance education is form of study at all levels which are not under continuous immediate supervision of the tutor but students benefit from planning, guidance and teaching of a supporting institution. It is a democratized system that allows the learner to choose what to learn, whenever, wherever and however they want. Wedmeyer (1971) called this form of learning independent study. Moore (2003) argued that learners have autonomy of their learning. It is self directed.

Universities use D.E to increase access and enrollment to high education while companies use it to upgrade their workers' skills and keep them abreast of rapidly advancing technologies. (William et al, 2003).According to Gallagher (2003) institutions offering D.E are fast growing.

2.3 Assessment of the Enrollment in Distance Learning Programmes in Other Countries

Historians have suggested that distance education has been with man since time immemorial. The early cave painting, St. Paul's letter in the Christian gospel and tribal talking drums were form of earliest distance education. However, it became conventionally an acceptable practice in the period 1950's and 1960's. Sherry (1996) suggest that the earliest correspondence course took place in Europe was as early as 1720. Correspondence education was the accepted form until the middle of the last century when instructional radio and T.V became popular. Correspondence education dates back to the advertisement in the Boston Gazette on March 1728. (Moore, 2003). American universities followed suit and embraced distance education mode which included state of Iowa, Ohio, Perry Sanio, Wisconsin and Colner in 1900. Moore (2003) says most of the correspondence courses were non – credit courses. One of the notable institutions was the United States Armed Forces which trained armed personnel.

In France, correspondent education was used by state to continue schooling for the displaced children during the First World War (1939). In 1995, enrollment had grown to 350,000 students from 170 countries. In Australia, Distance education was seen as an emergence measure for universities and colleges, which provided continuing education to armed service personnel adults and children. (Ngechu, 2007).

In Britain Cambridge and London Universities offered and continue to provide correspondence distance education to former colonies in the commonwealth even in the post independence period.

In China distance education can be tracked from the provision of correspondence courses in the early 1900. T.V. based programmes were started in 1960's but were

disbanded during the Cultural Revolution and were re- opened with the establishment of National China central television. Today the current system of ODL comprising of central universities in Beijing develops courses to open universities spread in the provinces and municipalities. The radio and Telephone Universities plays a big role in offering professional training courses of teachers for all cadres (Moore, 2003)

In South Africa the first distance education institution – UNISA was founded 1947. The freedom charter of 1954 demanded opening door of learning; and since then there had been a marked growth of distance education institutions. The education white paper Gazette of 1995, encouraged a national educational system and training that provided increased range of learning possibilities that would be flexible. In 1997 124,000 distance education students both locally and internationally were enrolled at UNISA (Mackenzie et al, 1998). Else where in Botswana, College of Distance and Open Learning (BOCODOL) was created by an act of parliament. It replaced a government department which has been running school equivalency course at a distance for over 20 years. BOCODOL aims to provide high quality learning that is accessible to out of school youth national- wide. (ADEA, 2004)

In Uganda Makerere University runs an external degree programme with the help of the donor fund though it is hampered by inadequate locally developed learning materials. The ministry of Health in Uganda runs non – formal (non – credit) courses aimed at providing high quality health services. They are run by satellite centre based at Fort Portal, Kasese among others. (Magero 2005).

In Tanzania Open University came into the scene in 1994. Correspondent courses are offered through the institute of adult education. Today distance education is no longer peripheral but a mainstream form of supplying education which has played a major role in the country's national development. Worldwide Mega universities today offer

DE programmes. These includes: China T.V. University system, Indra Gandhi National Open University in India, University of South African (U.N.I.S.A.), Open University in Britain just to mention but a few.

In Kenya the government is planning to establish an Open University so as to fast track and open doors to many deserving students seeking higher education. This plan is expected to triple university admission through distance learning programmes (Standard newspaper, April 30, 2010).

2.4. Influence of Management Practices on enrolment into DL programmes

Distance education is applicable to all levels of education including the primary level. Nonetheless much of D.E programmes success or failure can be attributed to how it is organized and managed (Hickman, 2003). Henry Fayol defines management as focusing, planning, organizing, coordinating and controlling the organization. Holistically managers need to re-consider the new paradigm shifts in managing distance education courses. Moore (2003) suggests Total Quality management policy should be embraced so that they can achieve their objectives to ensure customers satisfaction and maximize stakeholders' value. It is imperative therefore to consider the following elements in the management of D.E. so as to attract high enrollment.

2.4.1 Career prospects

Gakuu (2006) , Assets that institutions need to start courses that will jump- start customers careers by allowing one to get a head with his/her current job role if meaningful enrollment is to be realized . Hence there is need for:-.

Flexibility - This will allow to advance in career without taking a break and allow one to fit studying in their individual life style and learning approach. **Support:** There is need to start courses with immense staff experience in the delivery of curriculum.

Value: Should offer programmes that allow flexible payments by spreading the cost of courses. Learners should get value of their money. **Quality:** There is need to have quality assurance to the customers. For instance they need to know the ranking of the university vis –a-vis other world universities (The Standard on Sunday July 21, 2013).

Assey (2004) observes that distance education in the University of National has taken route in Kenya and therefore there is an urgent need to make it more effective through good management practices. Her further research on management and effectiveness of external degree programme of the University of Nairobi revealed that the programme was faced with multiple hiccups such as poor library services, inadequate of skilled administrative staff, high attrition rate, increased cases of HIV/AIDS coupled with high cost of tuition.

2.4.2 System Theory of Managing Distance Education Programme;-

Distance Programmes are managed through a system model approach. A system is defined as a set of interdependent parts that work together as a whole towards certain goals in which performance of the whole is greater than the sum of performance of its parts. The systems theory can be traced back from the classical times of Aristotle and Hegel who suggested that the system actually behave as a whole part and any change in one system somehow affect the entire system.

The functions of a system are controlling, directing. Supervising and administration. According to Wedemeyer (1971) the underlying philosophy of a system is actually to put mechanisms in place to ensure practical social- economic changes in an organization. The organization in this context is considered supra system. D.E institutions have many operational systems which includes; Administration sub-systems, charged with policy and implementation, course development, delivery, administration and examination. Media sub-system and library sub-system among

others. Each of these sub-systems operates separately. However, anything affecting one affects the entire system (Assey, 2004)

2.4.3 Study centers

Extra Mural centres play a crucial role in management of programmes because services are brought near the students. A good example is Indira Gandhi National and Open University which has 5 regional centres and 32 study centres. The University of Australia has a two – way radio system that is used by tutors to provide needed services to the students. (Paratton, 2000). The UON has opened study centres in Extra Mural Centres in Meru, Kisumu, Mombasa, Nyeri, and Nakuru among others. They provide support services which include; enrollment, distribution of learning materials, receipt of student assignment and general record keeping. (UON student information Handbook, 2007/2008).

2.4.4 Strategic Planning

Strategic planning is long term and short term commitment of improving quality of products by the management. The management should not expect the organization to reach to high quality overnight but step by step in D.E. Strategic planning is simply a road map. Strategic planning aims at assisting the institution organize their resources in a manner to minimize cost and maximize gains. It begins with the period of exploration and discussion. From these discussions we develop mission statements and vision. (Were, 2008)

Becker et.al (1993) considers strategic planning as concerted effort to achieve and assemble decisions and actions which guide an organization to be what it will be. What it wants done, how and when. When making a strategic plan. Shaik (2005) argues that we need to know the market gaps and the gap between the desired future and current reality, and also the gap between perception and experience. In so doing

we need to undertake a SWOT analysis. Swot analysis is very significant in corporate management since it helps to focus on key issues which are:-

(i) The gap in the market- This is the market that is not currently served within the customers' needs. (ii) Strategic vision, mission and objectives. These help to give the organization view of value and acceptance. Mission statement will simply describe what the product look like. A vision is like the stars. We never reach them, but determine our direction. (iii) The gap between the desired future and the current reality. This is moving the present position to a desirable but uncertain future position. Mission and visions are less utopian but serve as a source of motivation and inspiration. They are enshrined in the institution service charter. The service charter enhances public awareness and empowers clients to be able to enroll on of courses and programmes offered by the institution. Strategic planning is a product that should be marketed to the stake holders. (Were, 2008 P. 21).

2.4.5 Role of communication in management and the enrollment of D.E programmes

Communication is the giving, receiving or exchanging of information, opinion or ideas by writing, speech, or visual means. Effective communication in an organization is paramount in management since it facilitates coordination and control of activities. It builds team work and creates positive attitude in an organization (Aylan Yilmaz, 2004) In fact the ability to communicate effectively has a great impact on the organization success in its enrolment endeavors.

2.5 Influence of Marketing on Distance Learning Programmes

In the recent years marketing concepts has been gaining importance in all sections of the economy throughout the world (Gupta, 2005). Nonetheless, it has been noted with

concern that one of the impediments of institutional enrolment in distance education programs is inadequate strategies for promoting marketing.

The American association has defined marketing research as the systematic gathering, recording and analyzing of data. Marketing is future oriented in that it is concerned with providing information as guide to the future. It is imperative for the institutional managers and administrators to know the market for their products and keep in touch with information of their customers, products competitor dealers and suppliers in order to make reasonable decisions. In additions, they need information about economic, demography, social-cultural, political, legal technological and physical environment within which they operate. To obtain this information the institution must conduct a market survey. (Gupta, 2005)

The recent economic intelligence unit survey carried in East Africa on business states that 79% of decision makers and managers believe that marketing is a key part of the business. Managers are challenged to redefine their understanding of the micro-environment and conduct in-depth surveys of other competitors and the latest consumer trends. (Business Daily, Oct, 2009).

Berkowlz at el (1997) quoted in Ayham Yilmaz states that the underlying philosophy in marketing design should be the ultimate principal benefit of trying to accomplish approach to improve the enrolment of students and attraction of employees, volunteers, donations and grants besides other needed resources.

Marketing comprises of 4pcs namely: product, price, promotion and place.

Products: Some scholars have argued that education is a product, a good, service or idea that is to satisfy the customers need. In order to use our resources efficiently customers (students) need should be identified and assessed. This approach will help distance education planners to learn from the students and apply the knowledge to

improve upon the services offered to the current students and attract enrollment. (Butcher, 2005).

Price: Price is what is exchanged for the product. It must have value and benefits to warrant the payments. Prices change with different situations. Distance Education institution should have pricing policy to enhance enrolment rates.

Place: Place is a means of getting the product into the consumer's hands. Distance education institutions should strive to provide their products right at the consumers' door. Graphically designed logo, name and colour are important physical attributes.

Promotion: Promotion is a means of communication between the seller and the buyer. Its main components are advertising, public relations, publicity and sales promotions. In the D.E this is done by use of communication tools such as brochures newspapers and websites. It should be enhanced to attract enrollment (Ayham Yilmaz, 2005)

2.6 Influence of Learners Support Services on enrolment into DL programmes

Basically education is defined as an enterprise of supplying the conditions which ensures growth or adequacy of life. The factors responsible for this are self-support services.

According to Parraton (1988) an effective distance education system should focus on the student needs in view of their ages, cultural and socio economic backgrounds, interest, experience level of education, besides familiarity in the distance education methods of delivery. Learner support services (LSS) are comprised of tutoring whether face to face, by correspondence, telephone and counseling in the study centers, through interactive teaching by radio or T.V among others. These encompass academic support personal/emotional and administrative support (Tait, 2003).

Purposefully LSS are geared at widening the student's participation, recruitment and retention (A.D.E.A 2004). In some cases the government have set enrollment target for institutions to receive any funding, U.K the targets is 50% participation in higher education by 2010. (Roger Miler 2003, cited in Tait, 2003). it is imperative that the faculty uses money in advertising and creating awareness about the programmes using L.S.S. Nonetheless LSS are regarded less central than provision of learning materials (Tait, 2003). There is every need for distance education institutions to assist students from suffering isolation from the institutions. Student needs tutors and academic planners to act as support system when stress becomes a problem

Moore (2003) asserts that rural free delivery in the USA led to the development of correspondence counseling both in the universities and colleges. Australian government embraced correspondence to provide quality education. Similarly France did so after the Second World War by opening correspondence centres of excellent for post war victims to perpetuate their education dreams.

There are learners who suffer illness or war effects, who are characterized by inadequate confidence and poor study skills who may be isolated and procrastinated; they require administrative support. It is imperative that the institution targets at risk students who include marginalized groups of women and the disabled. Psychosocial counselor should deal with anxiety, withdraw, family relationships and finance difficulties among others, to help restore their career and retention of the enrolled students.

2.6.1 Personal counseling

Moore (2003) says that curriculum should be built alongside the students' real needs. Research findings have found that personal factors contribute immensely to the student's enrollment and attrition rate .According to the American Psychological

Association., the counselor should conduct therapeutic interview to assist individual learners to gain insight into personal problems, define goals and plan action reflecting his/her interest, abilities and needs. This will propel the learner to formulate realistic education and vocational plans. It will assist him develop competencies to solve special problems (Gakuu, 2006). The counselor should focus on valid individual differences to make the student active in learning process.

2.6.2 Telecommunication counseling

The rapid proliferations of distance education learning programmes have triggered a more vibrant counseling service via telecommunication technologies. Wills (1993) points out that the success or failure of distance education is the institution capacity to adapt to new technology. E-mail counseling is very effective because it provides a forum where the learner exchanges formal and informal information amongst themselves and the teachers. It provides opportunities for synchronous communication. According to Omwenga (2006) teleconferencing broadens enrollment with its geographical coverage bringing people of walks of life in conversation regardless of their cultural barriers based on income brackets.

2.6.3 Instructional materials

According to Dick and Carely (1966) the instructional materials should be field tested to determine their effectiveness. They should meet the needs of the learners and create confidence to attract enrollment. Teacher and site coordinators need to be trained in instructional message design (US Congress, 1989).

It is imperative to take cognizance of epistemological, physical, political and technological factors. Knowing personal characteristics and their needs is an important aspect of planning learning courseware and strategies (Shiundu and Omulando, 1992)

A study carried at California state university revealed that poorly designed course materials are key contributors to students' attrition rate. The materials for study must have pacing techniques rather than being open-ended to ensure higher enrollment and completion rates. The instructional designer should adjust the curricular to make it relevant in the light of rapidly changing education trends for the institution to attract high enrollment (Raph w. Tyler 1949).

2.7 Influence of Technology on Enrollment in Distance Education

Research has found out that over the past few decades the economy of the developed nations have grown tremendously largely because of technological innovations. Information communication technologies (I.C.T) are a major factor in shaping the new global economy and producing rapid changes in the society. Studies have it that within the past decade the new ICT has fundamentally changed the way people communicate and do business. (Rajesh, 2003).The world has become a global village. It has produced significant transformation in industry , agriculture, business , engineering and other fields, Wambugu (2008) notes that in today's economy and every profession , we need computer skills just like reading, writing and arithmetic proficiency. (Ngare, 2007) observes that Kenya is trying to catch – up with other countries using digital technology to boost learning. In industrialized countries digital technology has been integrated into education system and has become a key teaching tool in school. Karani, D. (2007) observes that technology has played a major role in the acceleration of Distance learning opportunities.

Although integration of digital technology learning has taken baby steps Distance education delivery is mainly multi media (Wambugu, 2008). Technology is an integral part to the enrollment of D.E. We must focus on instructional needs of the learners rather than technology per se. It is essential to consider demographic factors and familiarity with the type of technology tool applied. Mugenda (2006) observes that

ICT has been applied to improve efficient, accessibility and quality of learning process in the developing countries through D.E, where affordability and geographical distance are barriers to education access.

Saitoti (2007) asserts that a shift to traditional teaching method to e-learning would address the problem of access to education. Currently the transition rate from primary to secondary stands at 60% while at the university is about 30% of those who qualify for admission. Kidombo (2007) noted that distance education at the University of Nairobi is multi-media that combine print, face to face teaching, audio cassettes and teleconferencing.

Garrison (1990) argued that the quality and integrity of distance education process is compromised when it degenerates into the old model of independent study. The student becomes isolated, procrastinated and eventually drops out. Students should be exposed to a variety of media materials to enhance active learning and participation which will make them to research and develop a sense of ownership (savey and Buffy 1995). Print material in D.E remain most common media for learning in commonwealth countries. Parraton (2000) stated that distance education relies heavily on multimedia broadcast and face to face study to provide quality education. McNabb (1994) noted that enrollment in distance education courses is still minimal because of lack of dialogue of intercours when compared to face to face.

Recent study done in the sub-Sahara Africa has given an impetus on distance courses in that there has been rapid enrollment compared to hitherto correspondence post secondary education. Students participating in the internet based learning network have greater curiosity and interest. This has increased motivation making them self – driven even to tackle difficult tasks. However there has been drawbacks ranging from

unenthusiastically demotivated staff and negative attitude coupled with lack of ICT governing policy (Gakuu, 2006)

According to A.D.E.A. (2004) study carried in African schools barrier of ICT is the fact that they are jeopardized by inadequate infrastructure, power and connectivity is a nightmare in some areas. In other countries ICT takes a periphery position as they prioritize to deal with more acute and pertinent social-economical and political problems related to poverty eradication, drought menace and HIV/AIDS pandemics among others. Nevertheless, technology has broadened access for distance education in the globe.

Bubbles and Calister (2000) affirms that on – line education actually has broadened opportunities for exploratory and discovery oriented learning. The world has 800 million illiterate adults of which 137 million being in Africa (UNESCO 2004).

UNESCO studies suggest that for quick realization of massification of education in Africa technology is paramount. It further notes that internet has revolutionized distance education in the 21st Century. In that it offers online enrollment and off-campus courses. Institutions should think of using or adaptive technology and introduce computers that are designed particularly for the disabled which includes wheel chairs, and switch that respond to voice commands and computer programmes besides an on – line curriculum (ADEA, 2004)

2.8 Theoretical Framework

The study was grounded on the constructive theory. Constructivism theory involves learners re-organizing content and mapping out their path. The learner is in control. According to Burbules and Calister (2000) D.E promotes social interaction which enhances a high degree of interaction amongst learners, instructor and the institution. D.E is autonomous for learners decide where, what, why and how to study. D.E

institution usually employs meaningful learners-centered and self directed approach. This is a shift from traditional classroom mode to constructivism mode which affects enrolment rate. Constructivism encourages learners engagement and teamwork which is a good strategy for enrollment. Constructivism is based on dynamic nature of knowledge and interactions via learners explanations, collaboration, critical evaluation, comments and sharing information. Knowledge constructed can be political, economic, or social knowledge. Most adults learners use constructed knowledge to make rational decisions to arrive at critical solutions; and more importantly make informed choices of course enrollment and training programmes. This can be gotten through electrical media, self experience, society, print or interpersonal communication with others (Berge, 2000)

Prawat and Floden (1994) stated that to implement constructive theory, one must shift the focus from traditional transmission model to one which is more complex, interactive and transformative. Several D.E institutions have tradition of combining mediated distance teaching with local face to face. Savery and Duffy (1995) says that physical interactions plays a big role in enrollment and learning.

The teacher is able to adjust the curriculum to suit preferences of the learners and their learning styles (Charp, 1994). It allows individualized learning and the learners to purpose their learning. Bright students are able to accelerate ahead and more importantly accommodates students with special needs. These aspects help to boost enrollment and completion rates (Shiundu and Omulando, 1992). By constructivism learners construct their own knowledge experience and interpretation. (Meaning). It is a social process encompassing all ways of problem solving and interaction. In essence social learning is facilitated by exposure, limitation and curiosity. In this respect, we are presented with situations that suits study at home, community and workplace. This is a big impetus to enrollment. More importantly, learners interact amongst

themselves, department and the faculty they develop communications networks which are ideal for enrollment in distance education programmes (Sherry, 1996).

2.9 Conceptual Framework

Independent variable

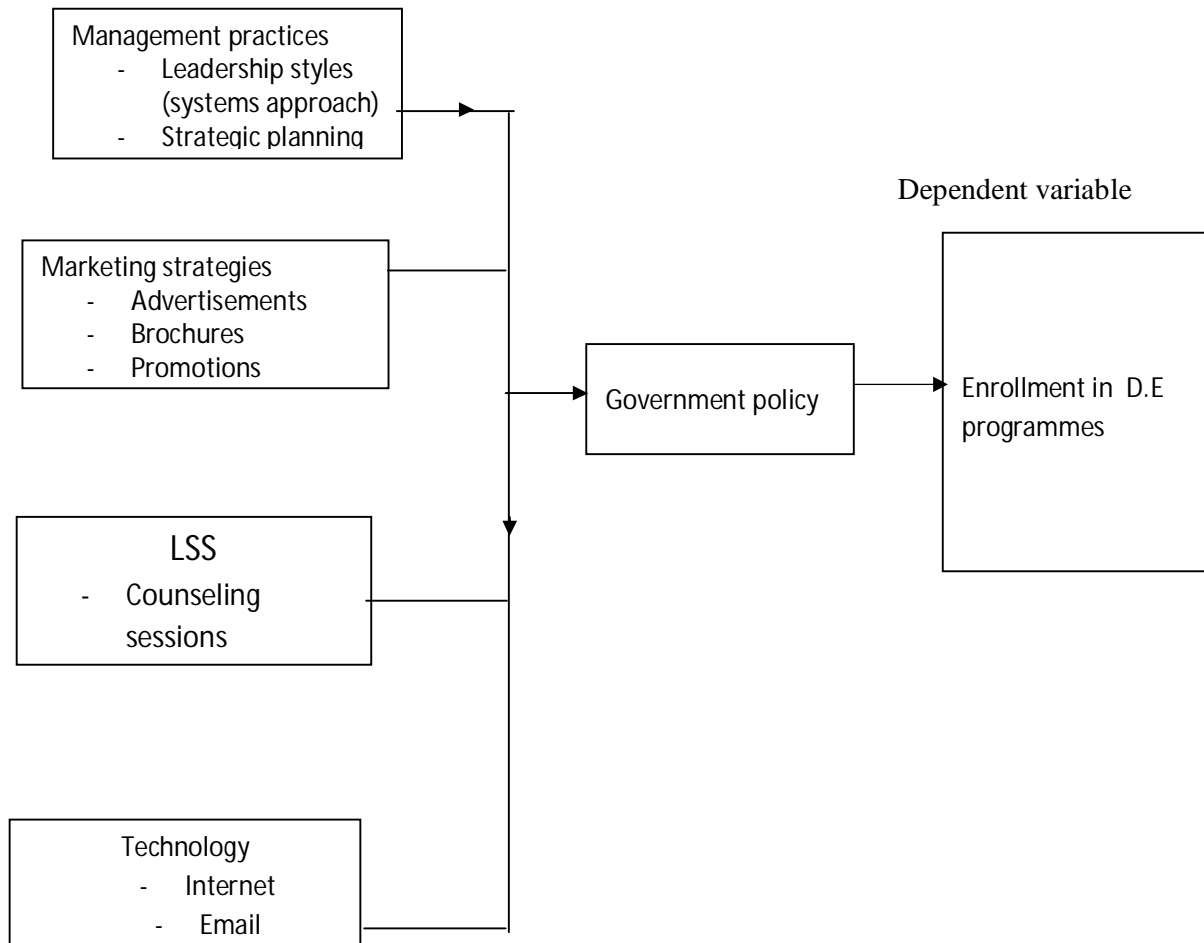


Figure 1: Conceptual framework

Figure 1 suggests that management practices, marketing strategies, learner support services compliment each other in enrollment of distance education programmes. The management operate through a system theory that relates to structure, operation and functions. It must ensure good curriculum delivery, flexibility, accessibility, value career prospects and quality assurance. It should establish strategic plan to meet

diverse needs of student by carrying out situational analyses so as to meet market demands. Effective marketing programmes calls for 4ps i.e product, prices and promotion besides marketing promotion. Provision of leaner support services is critical to enrolment of DE. They help students overcome learning difficulties. This can be done through corresponding counseling, face to face , electronic and through instruction materials in curriculum. DE largely employs technology which help student to shop for courses which meet their schedule and their learning styles in that it can accommodate all sort of people including full time and family people with pressing needs. The government formulates policies that guide enrollment in DE programmes. All in all, effective establishment of the five pillars of management practices, marketing, LSS and technology translates to vibrant enrollment of distance education programme

2.10 Summary and Research Gaps

Chapter two reviewed accounts, theories and findings from accredited scholars in DE. An assessment of DE programmes in other countries and institutional factors influencing enrollment in DE which comprised management practices, LSS, technology theoretical and conceptual frame work were discussed and illustrated. It was found out that there were research gaps despite the fact that there have been studies carried out on factors affecting D.E in the UON; there is none that has been specifically undertaken in the Meru region.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This section covered aspects of research methodology. It was organized under the following headings, research design, target population, instruments, reliability, validity, data collection procedures and data analysis techniques.

3.2 Research Design

Research design refers to the structure of the whole research, Orodho (2003) defines it as the scheme, outcome or plan. It is the glue that holds all the elements in a research project together. It is the conceptual structure which the purpose is grounded. It constitutes the blue print for the collection, the measurement and analysis of data.

The study research adopted descriptive survey. The descriptive survey describes the state of affairs as it exists. In this regard the researcher had no control over the variables and only reported what happened or what is happening. Kerlinger (1973) says that descriptive survey is not restricted to fact finding but also may offer recount in the formulation of important principles of knowledge and solution to significant problems.

3.3 Target Population

The target population comprised 303 students undertaking Bachelor of Education (Arts) in the Department of Education studies from the Meru region. The researcher employed random sampling to pick B. Ed (Arts) students respondents from every county.

3.4 Sampling Size and Sample Procedures

Berg. (2000) has defined a sample as a small proportional target population selected for analysis. Sample size of 30 percent randomly selected is recommended. Random sampling is one of the best statistical methods as it is free from bias (kombo and Tromps 2006). The sampling procedure refers to the process of selecting subject or cases to be included in the sample (Mugenda 1999). The basic idea of sampling is selecting the element on population and conclusion can be drawn about the entire population. In this regards a sample of 30 per cent was selected from the entire population of students. This means that 90 student were sampled. Nonetheless the return rate was 80. Therefore the researcher used 80 as his sample size. The student were drawn from all parts.

3.5 Research Instruments

Research instruments refer to questionnaires, interview schedule, observations and group discussion (Kombo and Tromp, 2006). Open ended and closed questions, type of question give respondents a set of options while open-ended questions require free responses. The researcher used questionnaire as the main instrument. The respondent were guaranteed confidentiality of their responses. The researcher posed questions and discussions on pertinent issues of; management, marketing strategies, learner support services and technology in distance learning programmes. A set of information was applied to elicit information relevant to this study. A questionnaire was administered for students enrolled in the B.ED (Arts) both at Kikuyu campus and on the sites (centers) in Meru. This comprised part A and B. part A contained questions on demographic information, part B were questions designed to get accurate responses on issues pertaining to management, technology learner support, services and marketing. The objectives of the study and responses generated were used to analyze

institutional factors influencing enrollment in distance Learning programmes in the U.O.N; A case of B. Ed (Arts) in the Meru Region. (Kenya)

3.6 Reliability of the Research Instrument

Reliability refers to the research and effect which the studies can be replicated. Kombo and Tromp (2006) discusses reliability as a measure of how consistent the results from a test are cited. Reliability of the research instrument was determined from the test items used during the pilot study. Reliability also refers to the extent to which a test is internally consistent after testing and re-testing. The researcher applied split half method in finding the reliability of the instrument. The split half method involves splitting the test into halves (odd items and even items). This was obtained through a pilot test that took care of reliability and validity.

3.7 Validity of the Research Instrument

According to Mugenda (2003) validity is the accuracy and meaningfulness of inferences which are based on the research results. It is actually the technical truthfulness or technical soundness of a research. For a research to be valid, it must be reliable. Instrument Validity represents the extent to which a test measures purports to measure. To validate the area of study, my supervisor was consulted. Another step in validating the instrument was the fact that the researcher carried out interviews where he tried to avoid incorrect responses that impacted negatively to the findings. He took care of psychological and demographic factors such as age, marital status occupations e.t.c. Another step in validating the instrument was to sample out on student in each county with whom to do piloting with.

3.8 Data Collection Procedures

The researcher requested and collected a letter of introduction from the Department of Distance Studies, (U.O.N). The researcher distributed sets of questionnaires to various

parts in the region. The researcher collected the data during in-campus and regional meetings. He distributed research questions and used cell phone to reach out to target group. Data was then analyzed and finally the final copies of the project research were submitted to the Department of Distance Studies, UON.

3.9 Data Analysis Techniques

The purpose of this stage is to render the data into a form which is simply enough for the purpose of deciding whether effect we are looking for is present. This chapter presented the data and major findings as they relate to each other. The result were presented in tables. It was segmented into sectors, relating to management practices, marketing strategies, learner support services and technology. The purpose of analysis and synthesizing data was to make disaggregated information, showing relationship, the root causes and possible solution (Behere and Julia , 2005).

The researcher heavily relied on tables to analyze the data through descriptive statistics in form of percentages and mean. The researcher then classified and coded the data that was given by the respondent in the questionnaire and responses during the interview. The information obtained helped the researcher to draw the conclusions as per the objectives.

3.10 Summary

The chapter on research methodology dealt with research design, target population, sampling and sample procedures, research instrument ,instrument reliability, validity, data collection procedures and data analyzes techniques

Table 3.1. Operational Definitions of the Variables

No	Objective	Variable	Indicators	Measure	Scale
1	To examine out the relationship between management practices and enrollment in distance learning programmes	Dependent variable Enrolment of D.E Programmes.	Enrolment in DE Programmes.	What is the number of students enrolled in the programme? (Part 1 to VI)	Ratio
		Independent variables management practices	Leadership style(system s approach)	To what extent do leadership styles facilitate enrollment?	Ordinal
2	To establish the relationship between marketing and enrollment strategies in Distance learning programmes	Marketing strategies	Types of strategies applied	What types of strategies are used? - Advertisement - Brochures - Exhibition etc.	Nominal
3	To establish the impact of LSS on the enrollment of distance learning programmes	LSS	Types of LSS	What are the types of LSS found? - Correspondence personal and administrative - Mentoring. - Technological (E-mail, Internet)	Nominal
4	To identify the effect of use of appropriate technology on the enrollment in distance programmes.	Technology	Types of technology used	What types of technologies are used to communicate with students? - Mobile - E-mail - Internet - Print e.t.c	Nominal

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the data analysis, presentation and the interpretation. It is defined by Kerlinger (1973) as categorizing, ordering, manipulating and summarizing of the data to arrive at answers to research problems. The primary aim of this study was to investigate Institutional factors influencing enrollment in D.E Learning programmes at the University of Nairobi; A case of Bachelor of Education (Arts) in the Meru region, (Kenya).

4.2 Response Rate

Response rate is the proportional of the sample that was involved in all research procedures. In this study 90 student were sampled from all levels of the study. 80 (88%) of them returned the questionnaire. This return rate was deemed adequate for the study.

4.3 Characteristics of the Respondents

The researcher sought to establish demographic information and general characteristics of the respondents in terms of gender, age, marital status among others.

Table 4.1 Gender Distribution

Level of study	Year/ month	Female	Males	Total	%
Part six	Dec. 2008	19	22	41	13.5%
Part five	Aug/Dec 2009	31	22	53	17.5%
Part four	April/Aug 2010	32	31	63	20.8%
Part three	Dec.2010	25	20	45	14.9%
Part two	Aug/Dec 2011	31	28	59	19.4%
Part one	April 2011	20	22	42	13.9%
Total	-	159	144	303	100%
%		52.4%	47.6%	100%	100%
Mean		1.9	2.1	-	-

The research established that there were more women (52.4 %) enrolled than men (47.6%). Percentage of women is higher because of flexibility and accommodative quality of DE that allows them attend full time jobs and family responsibilities

4.2: Marital Status /Age.

Table 4.2 Ages/Marital Status

Age bracket	Married	Single	Total
Below 20	Nil	Nil	-
21-30	12	06	18%
31-40	29	25	54%
41-50	03	04	0.7%
Above 50 years	01	Nil	1
Total	45	35	80
%	56.2%	43.8%	100%
Mean	1.8	2.3	

It was established that majority of the students fall under the age of 31-40 (54%) with those in the age of 21-30 being (18%), 41-50) (0.7%) and a negligible figure above 50 years. Fairly aged and married people prefer D.E mode because of its flexibility which allows them to study as they carry on other duties.

Table 4.3 : Academic/Qualifications

Academic/qualification	Sample	Percentage
P1	61	76.2%
A1 level	02	25.0%
KCSE (C+ and above)	02	2.5%
	15	18.8%
Total	80	100%

The researcher established that most of the enrolled student were p1(76.7%) with S1/ Diploma (18.8%). Many of the students want to improve their pay slips and sharpen their professional skills.

Table 4.3.1: Level Study

Table 4.4 Level of Study

POP	PART 1	PART 2	PART 3	PART 4	PART 5	PART 6
303	41	53	63	45	59	42
%	13.5%	17.5%	20.8%	14.9%	19.4%	13.9%
Mean	1.9	1.5	1.2	1.8	1.3	1.9

It was established that part six were 41 (13.3)% part five 53 (17.5)%, part four 63 (20.8%) part three 45 (14.98%), part two 59 (19.4)% and part I 42 (13.9%). Majority of the students had enrolled in the programme because of economic and promotion necessity

4.4 Factors Influencing Enrolment in D.L Programmes

The dependent variable of this research was institutional factors influencing enrolment of distance learning programmes which necessitated for descriptive statistics using the mean and percentages to analyze the factors that influence enrolment of Distance Education at the UON with regard to management, marketing, LSS and technology factors.

4.4.1 Management Factors

Table 4.5 Rating of the Management of Distance Education course

POPULATION	YES	NO	TOTAL
80	26	54	80
%	32.5%	67.5%	100%
MEAN	3.0	1.4	-

The study sought to establish whether distance Education courses are well managed.

54 (67.5%) of the respondents felt that they were not well managed, 26 (32.5%) of the respondents said they were managed.

The researcher also sought to establish managerial hindrances and their solutions. Most of the respondents cited inadequate feedback with the lecturers and administrations. There is a limited daily or weekly contact with the students. The separation of the student and the teachers imposed by distance removes a vital link of communication between the two parties. Students have trouble in self-evaluation.

The researcher required the respondents to suggest solutions to managerial hiccups. Majority of the respondents suggested that the institution should enhance and promote interactions between students and lecturers.

4.4.2 Marketing Factors

Critical issues of marketing are career prospects accessibility, value and quality assurance. Respondents were asked to state how they had learnt about the programme. 24 (30 %) stated they had learnt from a brochure, 22 (27.5%) from a colleagues, 0.8 (10%) from the parent. D.E. course and programmes are usually advertised in the media especially in the daily newspaper and brochures. There is need to use effective mass media such as the radio, TV and even road shows so as to reach out its target audience in terms of enrolment.

TABLE 4.6 Rating Of The Marketing Strategy

	Team work and advertisement	Quality career prospects	Quality teaching and materials	Sound strategic planning
Population	80	80	80	80
Sample	10	20	12	4
%	12.5%	25.0%	15.0%	5.0%
Mean	8.0	4.0	6.7	2.1

They were required to express their considered opinion on the best marketing strategy of Distance Education programmes. 10 (12.5%) considered team work and advertisements, 20 (25%), viewed quality career prospects and 12 (15 %) choose quality teaching and learning materials. Yet 4 (5%) considered sound strategic planning.

Respondents were requested to offer suggestion on the appropriate and effective methods of marketing B.Ed (arts) programme 55 (69%) of the respondents felt that opening classes at the extra rural centre would be best option. This would be convenient and would drastically reduce the distance. Students enroll for courses that are flexible and meet their schedule, time and circumstances such as full time jobs and family chores.

4.4.3 Learner Support Services

Table 4.7: Rating of adequacy of LSS

Population	True	False
80	04	76
%	5.0	95
Mean	20.0	1.1

Table 4.8: Rating of whether LSS trigger enrollment

POPULATION	TRUE	FALSE
80	72	08
%	90%	10%
Mean	0.9	10

The researcher asked the statement whether LSS trigger enrollment. 72 (90%) agreed and only 08 (10%) disagreed with the statement. Learner support services LSS are critical to enrolment of D.E courses. They range from counseling guidance, library services administrative assistance besides other intellectuals, cognitive and knowledge support.

The researcher sought to establish whether LSS are adequate. 76 (95%) of the respondents disagreed and only 4 (5.0%) concurred with the statement. LSS are critical to successful recruitment and enrolment in D.E courses. Any denial of them leads to students being procrastinated and eventually drops out. To arrest this phenomena adequate LSS should be provided to the students.

4.4.4 Technology Factors

Table 4.9: Extent in which Technology has Influenced Enrolment of Distance Education Programmes.

POPULATION	YES	NO
80	34	46
%	42.5%	57.5%
Mean	2.4	1.7

The respondents were asked to agree or disagree whether technology has assisted in the enrollment of distance education programs in the main region. 34 (42.5%) of the respondents agreed and 46 (57.5%) disputed. Similarly they were required to mention the type of media applied in the curriculum delivery. They gave print, face to face and electronic among others. They were also asked to describe the quality of media used. 52 (65%) of the respondents said they were of fair quality. Technology is an integral part of the success of distance learning. Print media is the commonest media applied in most D.E programmes. There is need to diversify the use of other media in D.E programmes.

Table 4.10: Description of the usage of the media in the provision of distance education programmes.

Type of media	Usually	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Totals
Print media	76	01	001	02	80
Audio cassette	14	10	20	36	80
Computers	08	12	26	34	80
Face to face	76	12	01	01	80
Video conference	05	10	21	34	80

Learners were asked to describe the extent in which the provision of specific media is used in the provision of distance education programmes 76 (95%) of the respondents described print media as usually used. 36 (45%) said radio cassette was rarely applied, 20 (25%) said it was sometimes used, 12 (15%) said it was often used and 08 (10%) describe it as usually used. On computers 08 (10%) said they were usually applied 12 (15%) felt they were often used and 34 (42%) described as rarely used majority of the respondents :76 (95%) described face to face as the media usually used with a negligible number describing face to face as often, sometimes and rarely used.

On video conference 05 (4%) said it was usually used, 10 (12.5%) said it was often applied 21 (26.2%) said it was sometimes used and 34 (42.5%) described it was rarely

used. Print media is the commonest media applied in most D.E programmes. There is need to diversify the use of other media in D.E programmes.

TABLE 4.11: The Likert Scale

Managerial factors	Strongly agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly disagree
studies in distance education are well polished	01	07	03	25	44
Faculty issues are handled effectively by authorities	05	10	10	20	35
Planning and quality of the programmes is high	05	15	05	25	30
Marketing factors	02	02	04	17	45
Marketing distance education in the UON is aggressive					
The strategy of using brochure is effective in marketing	20	15	05	20	20
LSS	40	35	00	04	01
Quality of the curriculum delivery is high					
LSS are adequate	05	15	05	35	20
Personal and administrative counseling are offered	02	15	20	28	15
Technology factors					
Multimedia technology is widely used	00	05	10	35	30
Electronic enrollment is used to recruit students	00	25	20	20	15

The respondents were required to express their opinion about distance education in the UON using the linkert scale in terms of management marketing, LSS and technology. Firstly the researcher sought to establish whether studies are well published, 44 (55%) strongly disagreed, 25 (31.2%) agreed, 03 (3.8%) were uncertain, 07 (8.8%) disagreed and a negligible number strongly disagreed.

On whether faculty issues are effectively handled by the management: 05 (6.3%) strongly agreed, 10 (12.5%) agreed, 10 (12.5%) were uncertain, 20 (25%) disagreed and 35 (43.8%) strongly disagreed. On whether planning and quality of the program is high 05 (6.3%) strongly agreed, 15 (18.8%) agreed, 05 (6.3%) were uncertain, 25 (31.5%) disagreed and 30 (37.5%) strongly disagreed.

The researcher wanted to establish whether marketing of distance education programs was aggressive. 02 (2.5%) strongly agreed, 04 (5%) were uncertain, 07 (33.8%) disagreed and 45 (56.2%) strongly disagreed.

On whether the strategy of using brochure was an effective method 15 (18.8%) agreed, 05 (6.3%) were uncertain and 20 (25%) strongly disagreed.

On LSS the researcher wanted to establish whether the quality of curriculum delivery is high 40 (50%) strongly agreed, 35 (43.8%) agreed, 04 (5%) disagreed and only a negligible number strongly disagreeing on whether personal and administrative counseling are offered 02 (2.5%) strongly agreed, 15 (18.8%) agreed, 20 (25%) were uncertain, 28 (35%) disagreed and 15 (18.8%) strongly disagreed.

LSS are vital to the moral, physical and academic growth of the student. Denial of the same turns out to be catastrophic since many students drop out.

On technology the researcher wanted to establish whether multi-media technologies are widely used. 05 (6.2%) agreed, 10 (12.5%) were uncertain, 35 (43.8%) disagreed and 30 strongly disagreed. On when, whether electronic enrolment is applied to recruit students 25 (31.2%) agreed, 20 (25%) were uncertain, 20 (25%) disagreed, 15 (18.8%) strongly disagreed. Management, marketing, LSS and technology factors are the four critical basic pillars of D.E and proper establishment of the same will definitely influence high enrolment of students in the DL programmes.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS, DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter attempts to give highlights of the study in a summarized form. It gives the conclusion of the study as well as recommendations and suggestions for further research. Specifically, this research sought to establish institutional factors influencing learning programmes at the UON: A case of B.Ed (arts) in the Meru region. The objectives of the study were achieved through presentation of a literature review on institutional factors influencing enrolment of distance learning program. Analysis and interpretation of the data collected from the respondents was done.

5.2 Summary of the Findings

This research sought to establish institutional factors influencing enrolment of distance learning programs in UON. A case of B. Ed (arts) in the Meru region. This was done through following the objectives: To examine the relationship between management practices and enrolment in distance learning programs. To establish relationship between marketing strategies and enrolment in distance learning programmes. To establish the extent in which LSS relates to enrolment in distance learning programmes and lastly to determine the influence of use of technology in distance learning programmes. The findings of the study were presented in tables in form of Percentages and mean. It was established females (52.4%) are far more than men (47.6%). Indeed flexibility of distance education attracts women since they can combine their studies with home duties. On professional and other qualifications P 1(76.2%) teachers are the majority enrolled. Primary school teachers are undergoing

academic transformation in their quest to sharpen their skills and avoid feeling under qualified by gaining higher competence which will help them to improve their pay slips and remain relevant in the face of rapidly changing curriculum and syllabus.

Majority of the students were found to be married and in the age bracket of 31-40. Distance education is reputed of its accommodative aspects of all ages. Gakuu (2006), predicts that distance education will be the main vehicle of instructions in the 21st century.

5.3 Discussion of the Findings

It was observed that there was a relationship between management practices and enrolment in distance learning programs. It was evident that distance education programs were not properly managed. This agrees with Mutahi (2008) who observes that management of universities need to be re-looked afresh. It also agrees with Shaik (2005) who argue that managers need to re-consider a new paradigm shift in managing distance education to ensure value, quality, flexibility and support and training on marketing factors. There are managerial hiccups such as insufficient funds and feed backs which can be addressed by crafting a sound strategic plan to foresee enrollment trends and challenges in the institution. This agrees with (Were,2008), who argue that strategic planning is a prerequisite to successful marketing.

It was observed that, communication was paramount in management in that, it facilitates coordination and control besides building teamwork and creating positive attitude in an organization. Gakuu (2006) asserts that managers must change their leadership styles to attract high enrolment. In actual fact the greatest obstacle of Distance Education is the perception and attitude of the university management and the political class let alone lack of an elaborate policy framework. This has impacted negatively on enrolment. Keegan (1986) further argues that more institutional efforts

need to be put to enable teaching / learning transaction, to be re—integrated so as to avert drop-out. This can be achieved through telephone and electronic communications. It was evident that marketing factors are critical to enrolment. It is worthy noting that the UON service charter (2012) has outlined the fact that the institution strives to offer courses which are responsive to the market need so as to produce graduates who meet their career needs and expectations.

Part time and full time marketers are necessary in this day and age of cut-throat competition for distance education students. These may comprise students or the alumni Keegan (1986) observes that the hallmark of the Distance Education is the separation of student from the tutor for than usual time. It is therefore imperative that marketing is carried on enrolment of courses. Aggressive enrollment of Distance education requires relationship marketing. It is based on mutual trust and commitment by transforming students into Alumni. This is a social bond based on loyalty from the students. Mutahi (2008) observes that higher learning institutions should address challenges of access, equity and relevance which are critical to marketing.

It was observed that decentralization of B.Ed (arts) to the regional centre was wanting. It was open secret that students enrolled for courses that meet their convenience and needs. Majority of D.E students found in the age bracket of 31-40 want to improve their level of education they received in their yesteryears. It is also out of economic necessity in the rapidly competitive changing job market in the current world market economy.

It was found that LSS play a crucial role to the student academic life. Education is a service and therefore the university has the obligation to provide all learning facilities which enables the learner to overcome learning difficulties. These include counseling, guidance, medical services, library services among others. This will significantly helps

them to cope with academic and other forms of stress and more significantly assist to check attrition rate. It was observed that an effective LSS will definitely stir up high enrolment. Tait (1995) observes that LSS play a pivotal role in distance education. Eshwan (1999) observes that guidance and counseling helps students to alleviate stress which may be social, economic or academic. This agrees with Gukuu (2008) who observes that LSS are central to DE

It was observed that technology has widens access to distance education. Students can enroll for courses that suit their schedule. Gakuu (2008) asserts that the UON doesn't have adequate media equipment and technology. He observes that the biggest impediment is the attitude of the lecturers not to fully embrace ICT in teaching. He calls for behavior change for the adoption of Technology in audiolological and pedagogical skills. This agrees with Wambugu (2008) who argue that technology has only made baby steps in Kenya. Face to face and print media were popular media of curriculum delivery. There is inadequate equipment and technology infrastructure in place. The UON is fairly involved in the latest ICT. There is need to decentralize the facilities in the regional centre to attract more enrolment. Keith (1999) points out that many governments have invested in distance education due to demand in the labour market or their expectations about economic progress. Ochieng (2005) says countries of Taiwan, Tanzania, Bangladesh have primarily invested in distance education to widen, access and equity in their education sector.

The internet allows unlimited interactions between the students, administration and the institution. This is through video conference, email among others. The learners can find information like fees requirements, courses, outlines, modules, syllabus among others. Baker (2000) suggests that the biggest challenge in distance education is the insufficient vision to use appropriate technology strategically. However this can be dealt by identifying enrolment trends of students. Karani (2007) observes that the

rapidly changing technology has played a major role in the acceleration of distance education learning opportunities. Technology has erased historical classroom boundaries and now provides education opportunities to those previously without access. Muema (2004) argue that the internet technology in Kenya is at its infancy owing to inadequate infrastructure. This has hampered growth of technology in higher institutions which to some extent influences enrollment in Distance Learning Programmes.

5.4 Conclusion of the Study

Recent trend in the education sector depict distance education as a popular and alternative mode of access of higher education. On the basis of this research findings the following conclusions were drawn. Holistically management, marketing, LSS are critical success factors to enrolment of distance education programs.

There are more female students enrolled in B.Ed (Arts) program because of flexibility and accommodative aspects that allows schooling women to multi task. Majority of the enrolled students are middle aged due to economic and social needs. Primary school teachers form the bulk of the students due to scramble for promotion and better paypacks.

Institution administrations ought to re-define their leadership styles. There is need of new paradigm shift in management to fully embrace distance education programme as central in the university learning. Marketing of courses is a key component in enrolment of distance learning. This can be done by intensifying relationship marketing through incorporating royal alumni students and teachers. There is need to diversify strategic planning of marketing of D.E courses to understand the new trends of students enrolment

It was observed that adequate LSS trigger enrollment. Nonetheless, it is difficult to offer adequate LSS in dual mode universities like The University Nairobi because they don't devote enough attention and commitment to distance education programmes.

Distance education caters for students with diverse background and needs through LSS. Guidance and counseling together with administrative support to assist students to cope with all manner of stress. Technology has completely transformed distance education landscape in that it has opened opportunities to under-privileged and marginalized groups. There is limited use of audio and video conference in the curriculum delivery. Face to face and print media are the two commonly media used. However there is need to intensify use of multi-media technologies and electronic enrolment in distance learning programs.

5.5 Recommendations

Undoubtedly the four key pillars of management, marketing, LSS and technology play a pivotal role in the enrolment of distance education programs. From the findings of the study the following recommendations were made. There is need for managers in UON to carry out a situation analyses aimed at producing a blue print strategic plan document of marketing distance education specially in Meru region. There is need for UON to priorities LSS in order to address issue of equity and accessibility of DE. There is need to launch an aggressive marketing campaign of DE programmes offered by UON so as to compete favorably with other key players in the region. There is need to intergrate technology (ICT) in the main stream teaching. Student should adopt use of ICT in their learning. All in all, there is an urgent need to fast track the establishment of an Open University, considering the impact of free day primary and secondary schools. Following this phenomenon, it is assumed that the demand for DE courses will skyrocket which will increases enrollment by distance mode of all

qualified K.C.S.E candidate with a minimum of C+. Finally the replication of this study is recommended to ascertain whether different instrument will yield similar results.

5.6 Suggestions for Further Research

Following the research findings of this study; the following suggestions for further study were floated:-

1. A study ought to be carried out on the assessment of the capability of the regional centre in the marketing of Distance Education Programmes and provision of LSS.
2. A further research should be carried on institution factors influencing Distance Education Programmes in all Kenyan Universities offering distance education programmes.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: Letter of Introduction

SUBJECT: Participation in Research

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

I am a post graduate student in the University of Nairobi carrying a research on:

Institution Factors influencing enrollment in Distance learning programmes at the University of Nairobi: A case in Bachelor of Education (Arts) in the Meru Region (K). You have been randomly selected to participate in this study. Attached find and fill the questionnaire to assist me gather relevant information .please respond to the questionnaire to the best of your knowledge and honestly as possible. Take my assurance that the information obtained from you will be treated with strict confidentiality and will not be used beyond this study. Please don't write your name on the questionnaire

Yours faithfully



JOSEPH NKAMANI

APPENDIX B: Questionnaire to the Student

INTRODUCTION

The questionnaires is aimed at collecting data on factors influencing enrollment of distance learning programmes at university of Nairobi; A case of Bachelor of Education (Arts) in Meru region. Please respond to the questionnaire to the best of your knowledge and honestly as possible. Your information will give the researcher facts which will assist him accomplish the study. The information you give will be treated with strict confidentiality and will not be used behold this study. Please respond to all the items as instructed. Don't write your name in the questionnaire but respond by ticking. Note there no correct or wrong answers

PART I: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

1. What is your gender?

Male

Female.

2. Tick your academic qualifications

KCSE

A' LEVEL

PI

DIPLOMA

3. What is your occupation/ profession.....

4. Your marital status

a. Married

b. Single

5. Indicate your age blanket

a) Below 20 years

b) 21-30 Years

- c) 31-40 Years
 - d) 41-50 Years
 - e) Above 50 years
6. What is your level of your studies
- a) 1st Year c) 3rd Year
 - b) 2nd year d) 4th Year

MANAGEMENT FACTORS

1. Are D.E course well managed?
- a. Yes
 - b. No

2. If No list down some of the hindrances

.....

.....

3. Suggest solutions to the above problems

.....

.....

MARKETING FACTORS

1. How did you learn about your programme?
- a) Through a brochure.
 - b) From the media
 - c) From a colleague
 - d) From parents

2. In your view what do you consider as the best marketing strategy of distance learning programme (Tick)

- a. Team work and advertisement
- b. Quality career prospects
- c. Quality teaching / learning materials
- d. Sound strategic planning

3. Suggest other appropriate and effective methods of marketing B.ED (art) programme offered by the UON.

.....

.....

LEARNING SUPPORT SERVICES

1) Mention learner support services offered by your centre/institution/ department (List them).

.....

2) Learners support services are adequate

- a. True
- b. False

3) Effective learners support services can trigger high enrollment.

- a. True
- b. False

TECHNOLOGICAL FACTORS

1) Technology has assisted in the enrollment of D.E programmes in the Meru region.

a. True

b. False

2) Mention the types of media used in the curriculum delivery.

a.

b.

c.

d.

3) Describe the quality of the media used.

a. Excellent

b. Very good

c. Fair

d. Poor

4) Tick the extent in which the specific media is used in providing learning by distance in your programme.

Type of media	Usually	Often	Sometimes	Rarely
Print media				
Audio cassette				
Computers				
Face to face				
Video conference				

The likert scale

The statement below refers to distance education in the UON

Use the tick to indicate the extent you agree with the statements.

Key.

- SA- Strongly Agree A-Agree
- Uncertain D- Disagree.
- Strongly disagree

	1	2	3	4	5
Managerial factors					
My studies in the Distance education are well polished					
Faculty issues are handled effectively by the authorities/management					
Planning and quality of the programme is high					
Market factors					
Marketing of DE programme by the UON is aggressive					
The strategies of using media and brochure are effective in marketing					
Learners support services					
Quality of curriculum delivery is high					

Learners support services are adequate					
Correspondence personal and administrative counseling are offered					
Technological factors					
Multi media technologies are used widely					
Electronic registration /enrollment is used to enroll /recruit students					

Thanks for your co-operation

APPENDIX C: Letter of Authorization



**UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND EXTERNAL STUDIES
SCHOOL OF CONTINUING AND DISTANCE EDUCATION**

Telegram: "CEES"
Telephone: KARURI 32117 & 32021

P.O. Box 30197, NAIROBI
or P.O. Box 92,
KIKUYU, Kenya

Our Ref:

5 July 2012

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

RE: JOSEPH NKAMANI - L45/9123/2006

The above named person is a registered student in the School of Continuing and Distance Education, College of Education and External Studies, University of Nairobi where he is pursuing a master's course in Distance Education.


he is currently carrying out a research project entitled:

"Institutional factors influencing enrolment of Distance Learning programmes in the University of Nairobi. The case of Bachelor of Education (Arts) in the Meru Region, Kenya."

The student has identified your organization for data collection to understand the practice of distance learning. The information given will be treated with strict confidentiality and will only be used for academic purposes.

Any assistance given to him as he collects data will be appreciated.

Yours faithfully,


DEPARTMENT OF DISTANCE STUDIES
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND EXTERNAL STUDIES
UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI

**MRS. ANNE NDIRITU
AG. CHAIRMAN,
DEPARTMENT OF DISTANCE STUDIES**

DM/lin