FACTORS INFLUENCING LEARNERS' ENROLMENT IN DISTANCE LEARNING PROGRAMMES IN KENYA: A CASE OF UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI

BY

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DECLARATION

This is my Project Report and has not been presented in any other university or institution of higher learning for any award.

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This project report has been submitted with my approval as University Supervisor.

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DEDICATION

This project report is dedicated to my beloved wife Teresia and children Naomi, Leonard and Allan for their support, patience and understanding while I was pursuing this worthy course.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ADEA	-	Association for the Development of Education in Africa
AMREF	-	African Medical Research Foundation
AVU	-	African Virtual University
BAE	-	Board of Adult Education
BOCODOL	-	Botswana College of Open and Distance Learning
DL	-	Distance Learning
EDP	-	External Degree Program
EFA	-	Education For All
ICT	-	Information Communication Technology
MOE	-	Ministry of Education
MDG	-	Millennium Development Goals
ODeL	-	Open, Distance and e-Learning
ODL	-	Open and Distance Learning
SACCO	-	Savings and Credit Co-operative Society
UNESCO	-	United Nations Educational and Cultural Organization

ABSTRACT

The increased demand and need for continuous learning have led to the introduction of Open, Distance, and e-Learning (ODeL) programmes in Kenya owing to their flexibility and convenience and the fact that conventional institutions cannot cope with ever increasing demand of higher education. The focus of this study was to investigate factors influencing learners' enrolment into Distance learning programmes in Kenya: the case of ODeL campus, University Of Nairobi with reference to Diploma in Adult Education and Community Development programme. The study was guided by the following objectives: To assess the influence of learners' characteristics on enrolment of learners in Distance learning programmes in Nairobi University. To assess the influence of Instructional materials on enrolment of learners into Distance Learning programmes in Nairobi University. To assess the extent to which economic factors influence enrolment into Distance learning programmes. To determine the extent to which technology influence learners enrolment into Distance learning programmes. The study adopted a descriptive survey design. The population of this study was learners who had enrolled into Diploma in Adult Education and Community Development programme. The researcher used snow ball technique to select learners enrolled in the programme as well as the graduates of the course. The study mainly utilized one questionnaire for the learners and graduates. A pilot study was conducted with respondents with similar characteristics in all respect to the target population. Each item of the completed questionnaire was discussed with those involved in the pilot study. The researcher also applied content validity to improve the validity of the questionnaires where experts' opinions was sought. Split half method was used to determine reliability of the questionnaires. Data was collected by the researcher. Data was analyzed both qualitatively and quantitatively. Quantitatively, the data was analyzed using descriptive statistics aided by Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) computer application and Microsoft Excel. Quantitative data was presented by use of tables, percentages, mean, mode and frequencies. Qualitative data was analyzed by establishing the categories and themes, relationships/ patterns and conclusions. The study findings revealed that most distant learners are adults employed and with family commitments. Instructional materials mostly used are the modules with little use of online materials. Loan facilities from Higher Education Loans Board were not available to distant learners forcing them to result to their SACCOS and banks for loans to enable them finance their education. University of Nairobi has not fully embraced use of technology in delivery of distance learning programmes resulting to use of print media as the main mode of delivery. The study recommends on improvement of learner support services to cater for the different learner characteristics. There is need to diversify Instructional materials to cater for different needs and situations of the distant learners. The Government should consider financing distant learners through loans from HELB to ease the fees burden and finally there is need to integrate technology in delivery of distant learning programmes.

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 human resource and the economy. Mwalimu Julius Nyerere pointed out that the role of University in developing nations 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 largely be achieved through Distance Education (UNESCO 2004).

Distance education simply refers to the method of teaching and learning where the learner and teacher are separated from each other in time and space (Moore, 1973). It has two features namely, distance teaching and distance learning. Distance teaching refers to printed instruction materials developed for use by distance learners while distance learning on the other hand refers to the same process seen from the learners' perspective (Keegan, 1984). Distance Education is now recognized all over the world as the mode of education which helps large number of learners to access quality education. (Koul & Jenkins, 1990). It makes quality education accessible at low costs to learners whose work and family engagements cannot be overlooked. They bar them from attending college on full time basis (Moore et al, 1990). Due to the fact that Distance Education is less expensive to support and is not constrained by geographical considerations, it offers opportunities where traditional education has difficult operating. It is more flexible in terms of time and can be delivered virtually

everywhere. AS a force contributing to social and economic development, ODL is today one of the most rapidly growing fields of education and training. It is fast becoming an accepted and indispensable part of the mainstream of educational systems in both developed and developing countries with particular importance for the latter. This has been stimulated in part by interest among educators and trainers in the use of new, internet based information technologies, but also by recognition that traditional ways of organizing education need to be reinforced by innovative methods if the fundamental rights of all people to a life of learning is to be realized (UNESCO 2000a) .

Distance Education has been in existence for a long time. The upcoming Asian Tigers have proved that the only visible way for a country to develop is to equip its human resources with the best available knowledge which would in turn be pooled back into the country. Human capital is the greatest investment a country can make for its citizens. According to Caleb (1728), Distance education at least started as early as 1728, where "an advertisement in the Boston Gazette known as Caleb Philips, a teacher of the new method of shorthand was seeking students for lessons to be sent weekly.

Development of distance education relied on Postal services in the 19th century and has been practiced at least since Pitman (1858) taught shorthand in Great Britain through Correspondence in the 1840(s). The University of London claims to be the first university to offer distance learning degree establishing its External programme in 1858. This programme is now known as the University of London International programmes and includes Diploma, Undergraduate and Post graduate progammes. 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. According to Ngeera (2008) Distance Learning programmes can improve access and equity in education by reaching many groups like the secondary graduate who missed University entry; those with family commitments, the marginalized and the poor communities.

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 54% of the secondary graduates who qualified for admission in 1996 were able to be given University entrance while in Nigeria, less than 20% of candidates who applied for university entry in 1996/97 were admitted. With constraints in residential space in universities, university aspirants view DE as 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 Anglo-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) and University of Nairobi (U.O.N.) among others.

In Kenya, Ominde commission of 1964 was the first education commission which recommended that the only way to open for the newly created independent Kenya to overcome her human resource shortfall especially in education was to involve herself in correspondent education. In 1967, USAID together with the University of Minnesota set up a correspondence Course Unit (CCU) at the University of Nairobi's (UON) Institute of Adult studies. This course was to upgrade P3 teachers to P2 grade by giving them a two year secondary education. This could only be done through correspondence as the teachers were required in their schools and in any case majority were well beyond the age where they could fit in conventional secondary schools (Mboroki, 2007).

Other commissions which have highlighted distance education (DE) as a viable option mode of Education included: The Gachathi Report of 1976 which emphasized the need for solving educational problems in large scale by diversifying education to include Distance Learning. 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 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. The report 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). Sessional paper No.1 of 205 contains the latest government initiative which recommends the establishment of an open university and use of ODL in human resource development at all levels.

ODL in Kenya has been at all levels of education and provided by different institutions governed by their own institutional policies. The major providers include: University of Nairobi, the Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD), Kenyatta University, the Kenya Institute of Special Education (KISE), African Medical Research Foundation (AMREF) among others. There are other Institutions hosted in this country that provide and manage distance learning for example African Virtual University (AVU). According to Juma (2003), this uncoordinated ODL practice has made some impact on education and development in the training of adult literacy teachers, primary school teachers, training of teachers in special education, Co-operative practitioners, training of medical professionals and primary school enrichment through the radio programmes and use of electronic modes.

The University of Nairobi Senate in September 1985 approved the establishment of external degree programme (EDP) and admitted the first batch of adult learners for a Bachelor of Education degree program in1986/1987 academic year and this program

has been running successfully to date. Currently, the External Degree programme has been expanded and the following courses are offered among others by distance: Certificate and Diploma in Adult and Community Development, Diploma in Commonwealth Youth Program, Bachelor of Education (Arts), Bachelor of Education(Science), Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Science, Master of Distance Education and most recently Bachelor of Adult Education and Community Development. The DL programs at the University aims at: providing learning opportunities for those aspiring but cannot secure places in the existing internal faculties of the public universities providing an opportunity for the adults to learn at their own pace providing an opportunity to maximise the use of the limited educational resources both human and material by making university education available beyond the lecture halls. Thus Distance Learning programmes have of late become popular with improved enrolment.

1.2 Statement of the problem

Education is a basic human right and the Government of Kenya has the responsibility to provide it to all its citizens. However, the achievement made at primary level following the introduction of free primary education in 2003 is already putting pressure at secondary and tertiary levels, therefore jeopardizing the government‘s effort to meet the Education For All (EFA), one of the Millennium Development Goals’(MDG) targets. The waiver of tuition fees in secondary education is definitely going to increase the pressure on demand for university education which is already experiencing problems of overstretched facilities, overcrowding in the institutions and high learner-lecturer ratios.

In Kenya, there has been a high demand for second chance education by the working class. Distance education is cheaper compared to conventional mode. It can cater for a big household, as they will be reading and doing other things at the same time (Koringura 2004). As a result many individuals who desire higher education end up joining distance learning since most of them are working and cannot leave their work stations, and have family commitments. There is also increased demand for continued education with work and other social responsibilities. Open and distance learning, therefore, is appealing as an option since it relieves the government of the responsibility of constructing or investing in entirely new physical facilities and provides opportunities for continued learning. It has become popular of recent past and thus the need for the study to find out factors influencing adult learners' participation in Distance Learning programmes in Kenya, a case of University of Nairobi Bachelor of Adult Education and Community Development.

1.3 Purpose of the study

The purpose of the study was to establish the factors influencing learners' enrolment in Distance Learning programmes in Kenya, A case of University of Nairobi.

1.4 Research objectives

This research was guided by the following objectives;

i. To assess the influence of learners' characteristics on enrolment of learners in Distance learning programmes.

ii. To assess the influence of Instructional materials on enrolment of learners in Distance learning programmes.

iii. To assess the extent to which economic factors influence enrolment into Distance learning programmes.

iv. To determine the extent to which technology influence learners enrolment in Distance learning programmes.

1.5 Research Questions

This study sought to answer the following questions:

i. How do learners' characteristics influence enrolment of learners in Distance learning programmes?

ii. How do instructional materials influence enrolment of learners in Distance learning programmes?

iii. How do economic factors influence enrolment of learners in Distance learning programmes?

iv. How does technology influence enrolment of learners in Distance learning programmes?

1.6 Significance of the study

This research was vital as it will provide vital information to the Ministry of Education on the key factors influencing learners' enrolment in Distance Learning programmes. This information might help in improvement of these programmes.

The study would also provide vital information to institutions of higher learning on the key determinants of learners' enrolment in Distance learning programmes. This information might help in improvement of distance learning programmes.

This study would equally give an opportunity to the learners to express their opinions concerning the Distance learning programmes and the challenges they are facing while pursuing the programmes thus their demands and concerns will be known to the policy makers who may use them for formulating policies for these programmes. It will also act as future reference source for stakeholders in education.

1.7 Delimitations of the study

Limiting a study is setting its scope .This research was delimited since it was conducted only in University of Nairobi, a public institution, School of Open and Distance learning, on learners pursuing Diploma in Adult education and community Development. The conditions in this Institution might be unique and very different from other institutions of higher learning offering distance learning programmes, middle level colleges and secondary schools and hence caution must be taken while generalizing the findings of this study to the rest of nation's institutions.

1.8 Limitations of the study

The study was limited to University of Nairobi, School of Open and Distance Learning and therefore for a more conclusive result, all institutions of higher learning offering Distance Learning programmes could have been targeted. This however would not have been possible due to financial, time and other logistical factors.

1.9 Assumptions of the study

The research assumed that the study variables would be available and would provide honest responses during the study.

1.10 Definition of significant terms

The following are the significant terms of the study

Enrolment of learners into Open and Distance learning programmes

Enrolment of learners in Distance learning refers to enlisting into Distance learning programmes.

Learner characteristics

This refers to those attributes that vary within a geographic study group, such as age, sexual preference and type of household. They are also defined as facts about the make-up of a population.

Instructional resources

Instructional resources include materials used to facilitate learning for better results. These include Reading materials, charts, maps diagrams, and flash cards among others.

Economic Factors

Economic factors are monetary related factors which influence enrolment into Distance Education.

Technology

Technology is the application of Information communication technology to deliver Distance education. This will include availability of computers and Internet in the delivery.

1.11 Organization of the study

The study is organized into five chapters. Chapter One covers the background of the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, objectives and research questions. It also covers the significance of the study, delimitation, limitations of the study, assumptions of the study, definitions of the significant terms as well as the organization of the study. Chapter Two comprises of the review of relevant literature and also presents theoretical and conceptual frameworks on which the study is based. Chapter Three comprises of the research methodology, research instruments and also data collection procedure and data analysis techniques. Chapter Four offers data analysis, presentation and interpretation of the research findings while Chapter Five includes the summary of the findings, discussion of the findings, conclusion and recommendations of the study.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews literature related to evolution of Distance Education and factors influencing adult learners' enrolment into Distance learning programmes are discussed. The chapter also offers both theoretical and conceptual frameworks on which the study will be based.

2.2 Overview of Distance Education

Distance Learning started as early as the first century AD when St. Paul used his letters or Epistles to the young churches around the Mediterranean. This was a powerful form of Distance Learning as can be judged by the substantial growth of the Christian church. St. Paul epistles are, because they continue to read today, among the most successful applications of Distance Learning in history.

The University of Chicago being the first major correspondence program in the United States was established in the late 1800s where the teacher and learner were at different locations. Before that time, particularly in pre-industrial Europe, education had been available primarily to males in higher levels of society. The most effective form of instruction in those days was to bring students together in one place and one time to learn from one of the masters. That form of traditional education remains the dominant model today. The early efforts of educators like William Rainey in 1890 to establish alternatives were laughed at. Correspondence study, which was designed to provide educational opportunities for those who were not among the elite and who could not afford full time residence at an educational institution, was looked down on as inferior

education. Many educators regarded correspondence courses as simply business operations. Correspondence education offended the elitist and extremely undemocratic education system that characterized the early years in this country (Pittman, 1991). Many correspondence courses were indeed viewed as simply poor excuses for the real thing. The need to provide equal access to educational opportunities however, has always been part of our democratic ideals.

Instruction outside the traditional classroom suddenly found new delivery systems with the development of radio during the First World War and television in the 1950s. For example, Wisconsin's school of the Air was an early effort in the 1920s, to affirm that the boundaries of the school were the boundaries of the state. More recently, Audio and Tele-conferencing have influenced the delivery of instruction in public schools, higher education, the military, business and industry. With the establishment of the Open University in Britain in 1970, and Charles Wedemeyer's innovative use of media in 1986 at the University of Wisconsin, correspondence study began to use developing technologies to provide more effective DE

British Open University in United Kingdom was established in 1969 and this marked the beginning of the use of technology to supplement print based instruction through well designed courses. Instructional materials were delivered on a large scale to learners in three programmes i.e. Undergraduates, Post Graduates and associate students. Although Course materials were primarily print based, they were supported by a variety of technologies. To be admitted to the British Open University, no formal educational qualifications have been required. Courses are closely monitored and have been successfully delivered to over one hundred thousand students. Due to a direct

result of its success, the Open University model has been adopted by many countries in both the developed and developing world (Keegan, 1986). " Researchers in the United Kingdom continue to be leaders in identifying problems and proposing solutions for practitioners in the field"(Harry, Keegan and Magnus, 1993).The British Open University's International Centre for Distance Learning maintains the most complete holdings of literature in both research and practice of International distance learning. These include research studies, evaluation reports, Course modules, books, journal articles, and ephemeral materials concerning distance education through quarterly accessions lists or online.

The United States was slow to enter the Distance education market place, but when it did, a form of distance education unique to its needs evolved, but it had the problem of economy of delivery. However, it did not encounter economic problems or the massive illiteracy problems faced by most developing countries. Shortage of teachers in study areas of Science, Maths and Foreign language combined with state mandate to rural schools produced a climate, in the late 80s conducive to the rapid growth of commercial courses similar to those offered via satellite by the IT-IN network in Texas and at Oklahoma State University. In 1987, fewer than ten states in United States were promoting distance education. This number grew to two thirds of the states a year later and virtually all states were involved in distance learning programmes by 1989. Linking for learning report done for Congress by the Office of Technology Assessment in 1989 is the most important political document describing the state of distance education. It gives an overview of DE, the role of Instructors, and reports of local, state and federal projects. The report describes the state of DE programmes throughout the United States in 1989 and highlights how technology was being used in schools. It

outlines model state networks and telecommunication delivery systems and gives recommendation for setting up local and WAN to link schools. Examples of operating Video networks that are both efficient and cost effective include Panhandle Shared Video Network and the Iowa Educational Telecommunication Network.

Prior to the emergence of DE providers in Africa, many African students obtained various qualifications through DE providers in Europe and North America. Juma, 2003 " University of South Africa (UNISA) is the oldest DE universities which have been offering correspondence courses since 1946. UNISA's success has as a result, spurred the establishment of other ODL providers in the African continent like Universities in Nigeria, Tanzania and Zimbabwe, which started out as providers of residential programmes and have now diversified into providing ODL as well" Commonwealth of Learning is one of the organizations providing assistance to African countries in mainstreaming DE into their educational systems. It is helping governments and institutions to use techniques of DE in the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). It should also be recognized that the African Council for 25 DE (ACDE), established in the year 2005 with its headquarters in Kenya, is expected to play a significant role in the development of DE in Africa. The number of Virtual Online Universities have been on the increase and would continue to grow over the next few years. If this approach to educational development is used properly, new frontiers to learning would be opened by enriching collaborative research among African Universities and between African universities and other parts of the world.

DL techniques are increasingly being employed by a growing number of higher education institutions in Africa. " While most of the ongoing distance education

initiatives on the continent have been used to upgrade the quality of basic education, some countries are taking bold initiatives in piloting internet based and satellite-linked DE programmes in selected courses"(Association for the Development of Education in Africa, 1999). African Virtual University (AVU) project is the most ambitious DE initiative on the African continent. This project is the first satellite based attempt to harness the power of Information Technologies to deliver University education in the disciplines of science and engineering, non-credit/continuing education programmes and supplementary instruction to learners in sub Saharan Africa. "It represents essential instruments for sharing resources at affordable prices to large numbers of people. The AVU project would deliver instructional programmes, strengthen the capacity in African partner institutions, implement a network infrastructure, and implement a digital library programme" (Darkwa and Mazibuko, 2000). Five Anglophone and five Francophone African countries are involved in the pilot phase.

2.3 Distance Education in Kenya

Kenya has perceived the potential of DE. It is thus essential for its educational planning that the opportunities offered by the new mode of learning be realistically examined within the framework of national development plans in general and educational policies in particular. The Act of parliament of 1966 is the first Government policy to address DE in higher education which established the Board of Adult Education. The Kamunge report of 1988, expressed satisfaction that the External Degree Programme offered by the University of Nairobi as an example of a successful Alternative and Continuing Education programme that could be nationally accessed by eligible learners throughout the country. The report also recommended that the printing and recording facilities of educational materials at the College of Adult and DE be updated and expanded to cope

with the growing demand for Adult Education through distance teaching (Republic of Kenya, 1988.The initiation of the Faculty of Distance Education in the 1960s was majorly due to the fact that the need for high level manpower was greatest felt due to responsibilities created soon after independence. The first recommendation for the establishment of the first degree by external studies, University of Nairobi was mad in the Kenya Education Commission report (Republic of Kenya, 1985).

With the continued demand for university education the increasing number of candidates who meet the requirements and the inability of the internal departments, the government through the University of Nairobi sought to look into the possibility of setting up external degree studies programme. This was followed by appointment of a task force committee on 21st June 1983 by the university of Nairobi deans committee. The objectives of the External Degree Programme were to provide: learning opportunities for the qualified Kenyans who cannot secure places in the existing internal faculties of the national universities, an alternative and innovative method of learning which is not limited to a particular time and space.

Another report is the Mungai report of 1995 which recommended the establishment of an Open University similar to the ones operating in Britain, Hong Kong and Tanzania. This was considered as a way of extending university education to as many Kenyans as possible. The report, however cautioned against basing the Open University on the current restrictive system practiced in the public universities but was of the view that it should be based on innovative strategies aimed at meeting the needs of as many Kenyans as possible that desire university education. According to Juma, 2003, public universities were to establish short courses for purposes of skills improvement and a

source of generating income.DE programmes remain tiny components of higher education and government involvement is quite minimal despite the recommendations contained in these important policy documents. According to Juma, 2003, among the various DE degree programmes currently being offered by most of the Kenyan public universities, the External Bachelor of Education Degree programme offered by University of Nairobi was designed and implemented to meet the needs of DL. The course offered in the college of Adult and Distance Education, Faculty of External Degree Studies, was launched in the mid-1980s with financial support from the British Council. As expected, the development, production and dissemination of DL materials required adequate resources if the full potential of the various media is to be realized(Juma, 2003).The preparation of good quality, self-instructional materials for DL can be difficult and at times, time consuming if they have to be pedagogically sound. The course programmes and students materials for this particular programme, however seem to have been so successful that the college of Adult and Distance Education has had to reprint them for use in a number of DE programmes in the Eastern and Southern African region.

2.4 Learners' enrolment into Distance Learning programmes

Due to the flexibility and availability of DE to learners and teachers at any time regardless of geographical location, DL has become popular in higher institutions of learning. Overall, DE is increasingly becoming an alternative to education, industry, large corporation and various government entities by and large when learners, employees are far and widespread geographically within and outside that region in which the course is taking place. There has been arguments that DL might lower the quality of instruction, however various studies show that the benefits are clear and

demonstrable and it continues to gain acceptance. The quality is not compromised. Several reasons play a major role in its growth, first it opens up new opportunities for learners who might otherwise be excluded from participation in the learning process. Second, it allows large enrolment of learners with relatively fewer instructors thus providing a cost effective method of delivering higher education. Third, learners have the chance to prove lifelong learning after graduation regardless of lifestyle or location (Belanger &John, 2004).

"Due to this success, the benefits of DL have led many higher education institutions to implement some DL classes, even if on an experimental basis. Consequently society in general may benefit from an overall increase in literacy through greater access to education" (Belanger & Jordan, 2004). The growing need for adult training, the emphasis at lifelong learning, and the importance and value of DL has become widely recognized (Holmberg, 1994). According to U.S. department of Education(2001) the number of non- traditional students has grown more rapidly than the number of traditional students. The growth of non-traditional adult enrolment in higher education demands a different and more flexible delivery system to meet learners' needs (Chun &Hinton, 2001). "DL is designed to ensure compatibility with the characteristics and needs of the adult learner and by retaining their jobs while attending school , distant learners are able to continue to gain in work experience while pursuing educational goals"(Nafukha, Thompson & Brooks, 2004).

AS stated by Moore and Kearsley (1996), DE means that learners can have access to more and better learning resources than in the past. "Rural and inner-city learners can enrol in courses previously available only to learners in suburban areas. Handicapped

and disabled learners can have access to the same courses as everyone else even if they are homebound or institutionalized. Adults can access specialized training for career development or basic skills without being away from home or their work stations. Learners can learn from teachers and fellow learners in other countries. Generally, DE opens up many new learning opportunities for many people" (Moore & Kearsley, 1996).

2.5 Influence of Learners characteristics' on enrolment of Learners into D.E Programme

Learners' characteristics are defined as the personal circumstances of the learners that may affect their studies. Adult learners are different from traditional college students. Many adult learners have responsibilities (e.g., families and jobs) and situations (e.g. Transportation, childcare, domestic violence and the need to earn an income) that can interfere with the learning process. Many Kenyans join graduate studies when their lives are full of distraction. Part time studies bring to the lecture rooms minds that are entangled in a myriad other distractions (Daily Nation, 23rd February 2017). Most adults enter educational programs voluntarily and manage their classes around work and family responsibilities. Additionally, most adult learners are highly motivated and task-oriented (Merriam & Caffarella, 1999).

Technology have accelerated the growth of DL. The improved access and availability of electronic technology has enabled more learners to participate in the learning process at their convenience. DL is learner centered learning: thus knowing the characteristics and demographic of the distant learners helps us understand the political barriers to learning. Although learners' characteristics and needs may not guarantee success in a

DE course or program, it is easy to defend these factors as contributing to success. Also, knowledge about learner characteristics and motivators helps us understand who is likely to participate in DE and conversely, why others choose not to participate.

According to Knox 1977, "developmental stage orientation of adult life stresses the importance of understanding an individual's contextual situation, that is, he believes their family, work and community roles, physical condition, personality and earning interests all affect the learners' ability and willingness to participate in DE". Further complicating the issue, deterrence to enrolment is exasperated by a prospective student's perception of the magnitude of his problems i.e. "deterrents" is a multidimensional concept. No single factor appears to cause non enrolment; however according to Kerka 1986, "individual student characteristics and life circumstances appear to have the greatest impact on enrolment". A survey done in 1984 on tele-course participants found out that about two thirds were women, and about half of the students were at least thirty years old. Over half had at least one dependent and two thirds were married. Eighty percent were employed, and over half of these were working full time while pursuing their studies (Sheets, 1992). According to Wood 1996, "more recent information seem to confirm these statistics. Over seventy percent of recent graduates who studied by the DL mode are in full time employment. This suggests that a significant proportion were employed while they were involved in the learning process". Most distance education students are adults with age ranging from 25 to 50 (Moore & Kearsley, 2005). Guri-Rosenbilt (1999) reported that the median age for a distance teaching university ranges from age 30 to 34. As most distance learning students tend to be adult Learners, Kaye and Rumble (as cited in Moore & Kearsley,

2005) stated that the more one understands about the nature of adult learning, the better one can understand the nature of distance learning.

One important predictor of student achievement and completion rate is a student's educational background (Moore & Kearsley, 1996; Nesler, 1999). Learners with previously obtained degrees are sometimes interested in receiving a degree in a different field to advance their careers (Nesler, 1999). A possible explanation may be that those with more educational experience have had more experience with success, and thus, have a higher confidence level (Burt, 1996). In one study, Coggins (1989; as cited in Moore & Kearsley, 2005) not only found significant differences in completion rate by the length of time since the student's last course taken. In other words, the longer the time since completing a course, the less likely the student would be to complete the DL course (Moore & Kearsley, 2005).

According to Knowles 1980, "Learner's behaviour is influenced by a combination of the learner's needs plus the learner's situation and personal characteristics. Knowing these personal characteristics is an important aspect of planning DL courseware and strategies. More importantly, knowing the participants can help drive program planning and policy formation, factors that are important to participation and success in DL."

2.6 Influence of Instructional Materials on Enrolment of Learners into D.E Programmes

Instructional materials are essential component in all distance learning systems. Well-designed DL materials may stimulate self-directed learning and thus influence the

quality of the system as a whole. Design, Development and Production of learning materials are often considered as a sub system in Distance teaching organization.

According to Knowles (1978), an adult educator should be innovative enough to gauge the needs of the adult groups and prepare teaching and learning resources which are relevant to the needs. The study materials are prepared for the groups depending on the group level of education and needs. According to Bhola (1984), Soviet Union had a successful literacy campaign which was rated at 87 percent literacy level of population. This success was attributed to efforts in provision of instructional materials. Bhola also argued that communities need to be involved in provision of instructional resources for literacy programme. This will increase level of enrolment among the citizens. 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 enrolment. 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 drop out rates. The materials for study must have pacing techniques rather than being open-ended to ensure higher enrolment 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 enrolment (Tyler, 1949).

2.7 Influence of Economic factors on enrolment of Learners into D.E programmes

Learners in Distance learning programmes differ from the traditional students. They are people who are responsible of their own means of livelihood and those of their family members and other dependants. Darlene Brown (2003) emphasizes that finances are one of the greatest challenge that face adult learners. The financial challenge is not only associated with having sufficient funds to pay for the cost of tuition and books, but often extends to a simple question as: how will I have money to get to school and back or to eat lunch? Therefore one of the challenges accompanying the growing demand of adult learning is how to raise tuition fee. Families from low economic status as Graham and Walsh, (1996) observed are less likely to have resources to support their education.

According to Germundesn (2010) for each road block an adult learner encounters in access to education, there is a greater chance that the person is to drop-out and not acquire the education desired. Accommodation and meals expenses are some of the challenges that learners face. These challenges are related to their upkeep, accommodation and meals when at school. These learners have got families at home who depend on them. Therefore choosing to return to school can be a life changing decision. Institutions are now realizing the increasing importance of making learning accessible to everyone, Jenkins (2008). They are consequently offering more flexible options for learners who have family and work commitments. The economic factors play a very big role on the enrolment of learners in Distance learning programmes. However it is not clear from the literature review on the extent of the effects. This research will therefore fill the missing gap to understand why economic factors affect enrolment of learners.

2.8 Influence of Technology on Enrolment in Distance Education

One obvious trend affecting Distance Education is the advancement of technology. Infrastructures are expanding, commputers are doubling in speed. While decreasing in cost and high speed network connections are continuing to increase. Computer, Picture phone, dulpications and other modalities are merging and becoming available at evr cheaper price(Centron, 2003). Information technology fucntionalities not imagined ten years ago are bieng realized.Not only is technology becoming more ubiquitous, it is being used more competently by more people from all nationalities, age groups and socio economic levels.

Research has found out that over the past few decades the economies 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, (2007) observes that technology has contributed significantly to acceleration of Distance learning opportunities.

Although integration of digital technology learning has taken baby steps, Distance education delivery is mainly multimedia (Wambugu, 2008). Technology is an integral part to the enrolment of Distance Education. 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 Distance Education, where affordability and geographical distance are barriers to education access.

Saitoti (2007) asserts that a shift to traditional teaching method to e-learning would solve 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 materials in Distance Education 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 enrolment in distance education courses is still minimal because of lack of dialogue of intercourses 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 enrolment 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 have been drawbacks ranging from unenthusiastically demotivated staff and negative altitude 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-economic 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 have revolutionized Distance education in the 21st century in that it offers online enrolment and off campus courses. Not only is Online learning more common now, but it is increasing 40% annually. (Gallagher, 2002).

2.9 Theoretical framework

The study was guided by the Classical Liberal Theory of Equal Opportunity advanced by Horace Mann (1796). This theory asserts that each person is born with a given amount of capacity which to a large extent is inherited and cannot be substantially changed. Thus whoever plays the role of education provider, be it the state, or society must design the system in such a way that all hindrances to social, economic development of the person from humble background, whether geographic, cultural, political or historical should be removed. According to this theory, education access and participation should only be determined by the individual's merit and ability, not their social, geographic or economic background.

This theory is relevant to this study as it implies that by removing all barriers hindering proper enrolment of learners in Open and Distance learning programmes conducive environment could be created to enhance enrolment of learners. This in effect improves attendance and completion rates thus improving literacy levels among the adults. This study will establish the major factors that influence learners' enrolment in Open and Distance learning programmes and hence make recommendations to the relevant stakeholders for effective learners' enrolment.

2.10 Conceptual Framework

A Conceptual Framework is an analytical tool with several variations and contexts. It is used to make conceptual distinctions and organize ideas. Strong conceptual frameworks capture something real and do this in a way easy to remember and apply. The conceptual framework for this work is presented in Fig.1

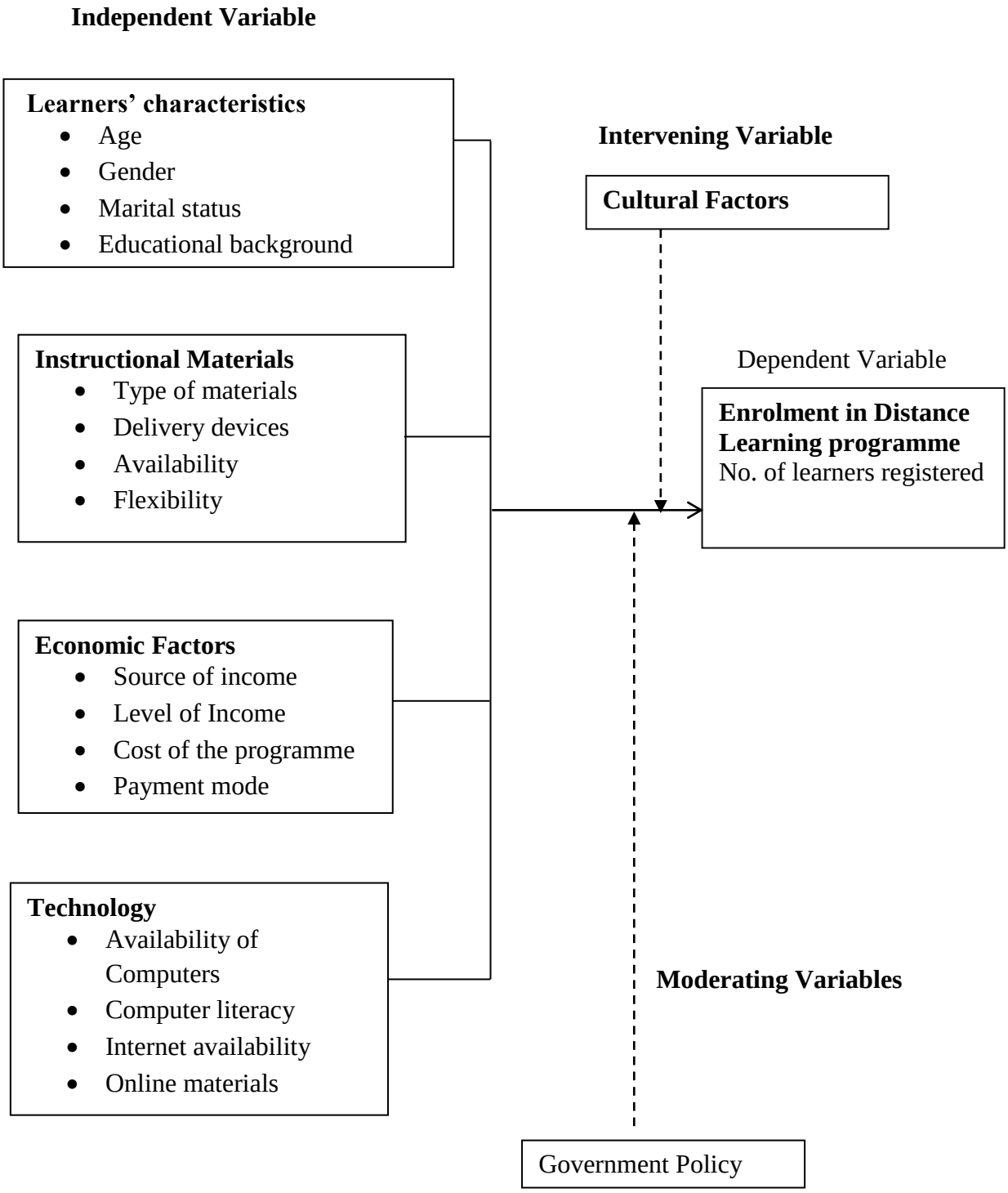

Fig.1 Conceptual Framework

2.11 Summary and Research Gaps

Chapter two reviewed accounts, theories and findings from accredited scholars in Distance Education. An assessment of DE programmes in other countries and factors influencing enrolment in DE which comprised learners' characteristics, Instructional materials, Economic factors, Technology, Theoretical and conceptual framework were discussed and illustrated. The literature reviewed has shown that DE plays a key role in promotion of human resource development through meeting the increased social demand of education and training in a cost effective way, a key path to achievement of the country's goal of being industrialized. It was found out that there were research gaps in research and knowledge especially on learners, Instructional materials, economic factors and technology on what is documented and publicized and the actual status on the ground. This study was set to bring out the actual status of DE in University of Nairobi in a bid to improve the delivery of DE.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the research design and methodology to be employed in the study. The following areas are discussed: research design, research variables, population and sample, instrumentation, data collection techniques, pilot study and data analysis

3.2 Research Design

Research design is a scheme, outline or plan that is used to generate answers to research problems (Orodho, 2003). The study adopted descriptive survey design that is deemed ideal for collecting information about people's attitudes, opinions, perceptions, habits or any of the variety of education or social issues (Orodho & Kombo 2002).

3.3 Target Population

The target population of this study consists of eighty (80) learners pursuing Diploma in Adult Education and Community Development at School of Open and Distance Learning, University Of Nairobi.

3.4 Sample size and Sampling Procedure

The researcher used Snowball sampling technique to select forty (40) distant learners pursuing Diploma in Adult Education and Community Development who will be involved in the study. According to Gay (1976) a sample of 10% of the larger population is considered minimum while the sample of 20% may be required to be for

smaller populations. The excluded population was used for piloting the research instrument and therefore did not appear in the main research.

Table 3.1 Sampling Frame

	Total Population	Percentage (%)	Sample
Learners	80	50	40

3.5 Research Instruments

The researcher used one questionnaires to collect data. The Questionnaire was designed and administered to distance learners pursuing Diploma in Adult Education and Community Development at School of Open and Distance Learning.

3.6 Data collection Procedures

Data collection is the process of acquiring subjects and gathering information needed for a study; a method of collection varies depending on the study design, (Kothari, 2004). The researcher obtained a research permit from Ministry of Education and presented to the institution where data was collected. The researcher used questionnaires, reviewed documents and participant observation to collect the required data. Questionnaires were hand delivered to the respondents and collected by the researcher.

3.7 Instrument Validity

Instrument Validity refers to whether an instrument is measuring what it is intended to measure (Edward et al, 1994). For the purpose of this study, the researcher consulted his University supervisor to test and agree on relevance and suitability of various test items in the data collection instrument.

3.8 Pilot Study

Piloting was conducted with three respondents pursuing Diploma in Adult Education and Community Development with the aim was of improving the research instruments in collecting the intended data. A pilot study was conducted to 3 learners. The subjects included in the pilot study have similar characteristics in all respects to the target population as recommended by (Mulusa 1990). The respondents involved in the pilot study were not included in the actual study.

Each item of the completed questionnaire was discussed with those involved in the pilot study respectively in order to find out difficult and ambiguity in the items and also establish whether there are any confusing items. The researcher also applied content validity to improve the validity of the questionnaires where experts' opinions will be sought. This approach assumed that the instruments had a good detailed description of the content domain. Through the comments of the experienced researchers some items were modified and others disregarded.

3.9 Reliability of Research Instruments

According to Frankel and Wallen (2000) reliability of a measure refers to its reproducibility i.e. the measure's consistency in producing similar results in different but comparable conditions. The split-half method was used to establish the coefficient of internal consistency of the questionnaire. According to Roscoe (1969), this method involves splitting the statements (items) of a test into two halves (odd and even numbered items). The odd numbered and even numbered items are placed in two subtests and the scores of the two sub tests are computed for each individual and correlated using the Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient formulae. The

obtained value(r) however represents reliability of only half of the test. In order to obtain reliability of the whole test, the Spearman Brown Prophecy formulae was used. Reliability of 0.97 was obtained hence the instrument was deemed sufficient for the study to be concluded.

3.10 Data Analysis Methods

According to Kombo et al (2006), data analysis refers to examining what has been collected in a survey or experiment and making deductions and inferences. The researcher double-checked the instruments to ensure completeness. The data received was categorized into information that answered the researcher's research questions. Quantitative data was presented by use of tables, percentages, mean, mode and frequencies. Stratified Package for Social Science (SPSS) computer application was applied in data analysis. Qualitative data was analyzed by establishing the categories and themes, relationships/patterns and conclusions in line with the study objectives (Dalen, 1962).

3.11 Ethical considerations

The study adhered to appropriate research procedures and all sources of information were acknowledged. Before administration of the questionnaires consent was sought and given by the respondents. Participation in the study was free and voluntary. The researcher was open and explained the purpose of the study to the study subjects and assured them of confidentiality and anonymity. Personal information was used only for purposes of the study and the respondents were not revealed to any other source. Participants were informed of any limitations to the confidentiality of information supplied. Procedures were put in place to protect the confidentiality of the information

and the anonymity of the participants in all research materials. The participants were offered access to the results of the study.

Table 3.11 Operationalization of Variables

Research objective	Type of variable	T	Measure	Data collection	Level of scale	Approach of analysis	Level of analysis
To assess the influence of learners' characteristics on enrolment into D.E. Programmes	Independent: Learners' characteristics	Age	Number of years	Questionnaires	Nominal	Quantitative and Qualitative	Descriptive
		Gender	Sex	Questionnaires	Nominal	Quantitative and Qualitative	Descriptive
		Marital status	Single or married	Questionnaires	Nominal	Qualitative	Descriptive
		Educational background	Qualifications	Questionnaires	Nominal	Qualitative	Descriptive
To establish the influence of instructional materials on enrolment into D.E. programmes	Independent: Instructional materials	Types	Number	Questionnaires	Nominal	Quantitative and Qualitative	Descriptive
		Flexibility	Different modes	Interview	Ordinal	Quantitative and Qualitative	Descriptive
		Availability	Adequacy of instructional materials	Questionnaires	Nominal	Quantitative and Qualitative	Descriptive
		Quality	Relevance	Interview	Ordinal	Qualitative	Descriptive

To establish how economic factors influence enrolment into D.E. programmes .	Independent :Economic factors	Source of Income	Types	Questionnaires	Nominal	Quantitative and Qualitative	Descriptive
		Level of income	Economic status	Questionnaires	Ordinal	Quantitative and Qualitative	Descriptive
		Employment status	Type	Questionnaires	Nominal	Quantitative and Qualitative	Descriptive
To assess the influence of technology on enrolment into D.E. programmes.	Independent: Technology	Availability of computer	Number	Questionnaires	Nominal	Quantitative	Descriptive
		Computer literacy	Skills	Questionnaires	Nominal	Quantitative and Qualitative	Descriptive
		Internet	Availability	Questionnaires	Ordinal	Quantitative and Qualitative	Descriptive
		Online materials	Availability	Questionnaires	Nominal	Quantitative	

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION

4.1. Introduction

This chapter presents the results of the research findings and analysis of the data collected in view of the stated research objectives. The analysis of the data has been presented under different headings grouped together according to the research objectives of the study for descriptive and inferential statistics in narrative, graphical and tabular form.

The purpose of this study was to assess the factors influencing learners' enrolment into Distance learning programmes, University Of Nairobi. Responses were received from 40 respondents (Distant Learners) and making a return rate of 100%.

4.2 Demographic Information of Respondents

This section presents the demographic information of respondents sampled for this study. The findings are as presented in the successive sub-sections.

4.2.1 Gender of Distance Learners

The researcher asked the distant learners to indicate their gender. The findings are as presented on Table 4.1

Table 4. 1 Gender of Distant Learners

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	10	25
Female	30	75
Total	**40**	**100.0**

The findings presented in Table 4.1 showed that majority of learners (75%) were female. These findings were an indication that the Distance learning programme seem to be more attractive to females than to their male counterparts.

4.2.2 Age of the Distant Learners

The researcher asked the respondents to indicate their age range. The findings are presented in Table 4.2

Table 4. 2 Age of Distant Learners

Age Range	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Below 35	5	12.50
35-44	28	70
45-54	5	12.5
55-59	2	5
60 and above	0	0
Total	**40**	**100**

The findings indicate that most of Distant Learners are aged between 35 – 44 years (70%) indicating that these are Adults who have been given a second chance of pursuing education. None of the learners is aged 60 years and above indicating that this qualification is required for their career progression.

4.2.3 Academic Qualifications of the Distant Learners

The researcher asked distant learners to indicate their highest academic qualifications. The findings are shown in Table 4.3

Table 4.3 Academic Qualifications of the Distant Learners

Academic Qualification	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Degree	0	0
Diploma	2	5
Certificate	24	60
A'Level	0	0
O'Level	14	35
Total	**40**	**100**

The findings indicate that most of the learners (60%) are holders of Teachers Certificate in Adult Education (TCAE) followed by Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) (35%) then this was followed by Diploma Holders (5%) indicating that distant learners meet the set requirement for pursuing Diploma.

4.3.4 Marital status of Distant Learners

The researcher sought to find out the marital status of distant learners. The findings are shown in Table 4.4 below

Table 4.4 Marital status of Distant Learners

Marital Status	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Single	10	25
Married	30	75
Total	**16**	**100**

The findings in Table 4.4 indicate that most of distant learners are married (75%), employed and with family commitments and hence the only friendly option of pursuing further education is through distance learning.

4.2.5 Profession of Distant learners

The researcher asked the distant learners to state their profession. The results are shown in Table 4.5.

Table 4.5 Profession of Distant learners

Profession	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Adult Education Instructor	40	100

The findings indicate that all the respondents enrolled in this programme are Adult Education Instructors. The reason behind this is that the course is mandatory for upward movement in their career.

4.4 Influence of Instructional materials on Enrolment of learners into DL programmes

The research wanted to establish the influence of Instructional materials on enrolment of learners into Distance Learning progammes. The findings are as presented in the successive sub-sections.

4.4.1 Type of Instructional Materials

The researcher asked distant learners to indicate the type of Instructional materials used in their progamme. The responses are as presented on Table 4.6

Table 4.6: Type of Instructional Materials available to Distant Learners

Instructional material	Frequency	Percentage
Modules	30	75
Text Books	0	0
Internet	5	12.5
Lecturers Notes	5	12.5
Total	**40**	**100.0**

The findings on Table 4.6 show that in majority of the learners (75%) indicated that they use modules as the main Instructional material while 12.5% indicated that they use Internet and Lecturer's notes. The findings imply that the programme mostly depend on Modules as the main instructional material and there is need of diversifying the Instructional materials.

4.4.2 Adequacy of the Instructional Materials for Distant Learners

The study sought to establish adequacy of Instructional materials to distant learners. The findings are as presented in Table 4.7

Table 4.7 Adequacy of Instructional Materials for Distant Learners

Instructional material	**Frequency**	**Percentage (%)**
Adequate	15	37.5
Not Adequate	25	62.5
Total	**40**	**100.0**

Majority of the learners (62.5%) felt that the Instructional materials were not adequate and some even stated that in some instance they were not there while 37.5% of the learners felt that the Instructional materials were enough.

4.4.3 Forms of Instructional Materials available to Distant learners

The study sought to establish the forms of Instructional materials available to distant learners. The findings are as presented in Table 4.8

Table 4.8 Forms of Instructional Materials available to distant learners

Forms of Instructional material	Frequency	Percentage
One	15	37.5
More than one	25	62.5
Total	**40**	**100.0**

Majority of the learners (62.5%) reported that the Instructional materials are available in more than one form while 37.5 % of the learners said that instructional materials are available in one form only. Learners were also required to express their opinion on the quality of Instructional materials used in DE programmes. Majority of the learners (62.5%) said that the materials are of average quality while 37.5% said that the Instructional materials are of good quality.

4.5 Influence of Economic Factors on Enrolment of learners into DL programmes

The researcher wanted to establish the influence of Economic factors on enrolment of learners into Distance Learning progammes. The findings are as presented in the successive sub-sections.

4.5.1 Reasons for opting for DL as opposed to Traditional method of Instruction

The study sought to find out the reasons that made learners opt for distance learning as opposed to traditional methods. The outcome is as shown in Table 4.9 below.

Table 4.9 Reasons for opting for DL as opposed to Traditional Method of Instruction

Reason	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Flexibility	28	70
Cost effective(friendly	10	25
Others	2	5
Total	**40**	**100.0**

Majority of the learners (70%) opted for distant learning due to its flexibility while 25 preferred the mode as it was cost effective compared to the traditional method of instruction. 5% cited various reasons for choosing DL .Therefore most of the learners prefer DL as most of them have work related and family commitments and hence the programme can accommodate them.

4.5.2 Cost of Distance Learning programmes Versus Traditional method

The researcher asked the distant Learners to compare the cost of Distance Education as opposed to Traditional method of Instruction. Their responses are as presented on Table 4.10

Table 4.10 Cost of DL versus Traditional Method of Instruction

Cost of DL	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Expensive	0	0
Friendly	40	100
	40	100

The results in Table 4.10 show that Distance Education is cheaper compared to the traditional mode of instruction.

4.5.3 Source of Income for Distant Learners

The researcher asked distant learners their source of income. Their responses are as presented in Table 4.11

Table 4.11 Source of Income for Distant Learners

Source of Income	Frequency	Percentage
Employment Income	40	100
Others	0	0

The outcome in Table 4.11 shows that all the learners under study depend on employment as their source of income.

4.5.4 Level of Income of Distance learners

The researcher asked distant learners their level of income. Their responses are as presented in Figure 4.12

Table 4.12 Level of Income of Distant Learners

Level of Income(Ksh.)	Frequency	Percentage
Below 10,000	0	0
10,000 – 19,000	35	87.5
20,000 -29,000	0	0
30,000 – 39,000	5	12.5
40,000 – 49,000	0	0
Above 50,000	0	0
Total	**40**	**100**

The findings in Table 4.12 show that majority of the learners (87.5%) receive employment income of between 10,000 – 19,000 shillings while only 12.5 % of the learners receive employment income of between 30,000 – 39,000 shillings. The

findings imply that majority of the learners are newly employed and require the diploma for their upward mobility.

4.5.5 Loan Facilities available to distant learners

The researcher asked distant learners to indicate whether they have loan facilities for Tuition, Research expenses and Accommodation and meal expenses. The findings are as presented on Table 4.13.

Table 4.13 Loan Facilities available to distant learners

Loan Facilities	Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Tuition	Yes	30	75
	No	10	25
Research Expenses	Yes	30	75
	No	10	25
Accommodation and Meals expenses	Yes	30	75
	No	10	25

According to the results on Table 4.13, majority of distant learners (75%) indicated that they have access to loan facilities while 25% indicated that they do not have access to loan facilities to cater for their studies.

4.5.6 Source of Loan Facility of Distant learners

The researcher asked distant learners to indicate their source of loan facility. The findings are as presented on Table 4.14.

Table 4.14 Source of Loan facility of Distant Learners

Source of Loan Facility	Frequency	Percentage (%)
SACCO Loan	21	70
Bank Loan	7	23.3
Others	2	6.7

The researcher established that majority of the distant learners (70%) fund their studies using SACCO loans, 23.3% use Bank loans while 6.7% use other sources of loan facility to cater for their studies.

4.5.7 Mode of payment of University Fees

The researcher asked distant learners to indicate how they are required to pay their university fees. The findings are as presented on Table 4.12

Table 4.15 Mode of payment of university fees by Distant Learners

Mode of Payment	Frequency	Percentage
Once	0	0
Instalments	40	100

According to the findings in Table 4.15, all the distant learners (100%) indicated that they pay their University fees through instalments. This implies that the university embraces a friendly way of university fees management.

4.5.8 Cost Effectiveness of the Programme

Learners were also asked to state whether their programme of study is cost effective. Majority (95%) of them confirmed that the programme is cost effective while 5% said that it is not.

4.6 Influence of Technology on Enrolment of learners into DE programmes

The study sought to establish the influence of technology on enrolment of learners into Distance Learning progammes. The findings are as presented in the successive sub-sections.

4.6.1 Whether University of Nairobi has Embraced technology

Distant learners were asked to state whether university of Nairobi has embraced the use of technology in enrolment and delivery in Distance learning. The findings are presented in Table 4.16

Table 4.16 Whether University of Nairobi has Embraced Technology

Technology	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	35	87.5
No	5	12.5
Total	**40**	**100**

According to findings on Table 4.16 majority of the learners (87.5%) felt that the university has embraced the use of technology in enrolment and delivery in Distance learning programmes. However 12.5% of the learners felt that the university has not embraced technology in its programmes.

4.6.2 Availability of Computers to Distant Learners

The researcher sought to know whether computers were available to distant learners. The findings are shown in Table 4.17.

Table 4.17 Availability of Computers to Distant Learners

Availability of computers	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	35	87.5
No	5	12.5
Total	**40**	**100**

From Table 4.17 above, most of the learners (87.5%) felt that computers were available to the learners while only 12.5% who felt that computers were not available to learners.

4.6.3 Computer Literacy requirement to distant learners

The researcher asked the learners whether computer literacy was a requirement when enrolling for the course. The findings are shown in Table 4.18

Table 4.18 Computer Literacy requirement to distant learners

Computer Literacy	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	10	25.0
No	30	75.0
Total	**40**	**100.00**

From the findings on Table 4.18 majority of the distant learners said that computer literacy was not a requirement when applying for the course while only 25% of the learners said it was a requirement.

4.6.4 Types of media used

The researcher sought to find out the types of media used in the delivery of Distance learning. The following were mentioned:

1. Print media and

2. Online

Most of the learners 38 (95 %) indicated that the main media used was the print media in the form of modules. Only 2(5%) learners indicated the use of online materials in the delivery of the programme.

4.6.5 Availability of Internet to Distant Learners

The researcher asked the distant learners to indicate whether they have access to internet in their areas. The findings are presented in Table 4.19

Table 4.19 Availability of Internet to Distant Learners

Availability of Internet	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	33	82.5
No	7	17.5
Total	**40**	**100**

According to the findings in Table 4.19, majority of the learners (82.5%) indicated that they have access to internet while only 17.5% of the learners indicated that they do not have access to internet.

4.6.6 Use of Online Materials by Distant Leaners

The researcher asked the learners whether they use online materials in their programme. Their findings are presented in Table 4.20

Table 4.20 Use of Online materials by Distant Leaners

Use of online materials	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	35	87.5
No	5	12.5
Total	**40**	**100**

According to the findings in Table 4.20, majority of distant learners 35 (87.5%) indicated that they use online materials in their programme while only 5 (12.5 %) indicated that they do not use online materials.

4.6.7 Description of the usage of the media in the provision of distance education progammes

Distant Learners were asked to describe the extent in which the provision of specific media is used in the provision of distance education programmes. Their findings are presented in Table 4.21

Table 4.21 Description of the usage of the media in the provision of Distance Education progammes

Type of media	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Totals
Internet	10	20	10	**40**
Audio cassette	0	7	33	**40**
Video conference	0	0	40	**40**
Print media	40	0	0	**40**

According to the findings in Figure 4.21, 25% of the learners described Internet as often used, 50% said it was sometimes used while 25% said it was rarely used. On Audio cassettes, 17.5 % of the learners said it was sometimes used while 82.5% said it

was rarely used. On Video conferencing all the learners (100%) said it was rarely used while all the learners (100%) said print media is often used.

4.6.8 Challenges encountered by distant learners while pursuing Distance Education

Distant learners were asked to highlight the challenges they encounter while pursuing distance learning programmes. The main challenges mentioned included Isolation where the learners felt that they were isolated from their colleagues and lecturers and when they required some feedback it was not forthcoming. The learners also reported that the learner support services were poor. They said that in most cases some of their issues took long to be addressed especially those who were writing their projects. Learning materials were inadequate and sometimes the learners reported that they could miss some of the modules. This really inconveniences their studies. Finally, the learners highlighted lack of proper internet network in their rural areas hence they could not be able to access materials online.

4.6.9 Possible Suggestions to overcome these Challenges

The researcher asked the distant learners to highlight solutions to the challenges facing distant learners pursuing distant learning programmes. The possible suggestions highlighted by the learners were as follows: First they called for improved online communication between the institution and the learners. This would reduce their isolation. Secondly learner support services to be improved especially on feedback on issues affecting the learners. Thirdly the institutions of higher learning to provide adequate learning materials to the learners and in good time. Finally, the learners called for improved network connection especially in the rural areas.

From the findings it is evident that the learners enrolled in distant learning programmes are adults with employment and family commitment who have received a second chance to improve their academic status. The courses mostly pursued are relevant to their work and in most cases are necessary for their upward mobility in their career. Secondly the instructional materials used are not adequate and mostly are in print media. Online materials have not been embraced fully. Thirdly, the learners use their resources to pay for their university fees. Loans from HELB are not available to them and as a result they end up in their SACCOs or banks for financial resources. Finally, it is evident that technology has not been fully embraced though it greatly influences enrolment into DE programmes and this inconveniences the learners when the Instructional resources are not available in the print media.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, DISCUSSIONS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. Introduction

This chapter summarizes and gives conclusions of the results reported in chapter four. Implications of the results and recommendations are also provided in this chapter.

5.2. Summary of the Findings

This study sought to assess the factors influencing learners' enrolment into distant learning programmes at School of Open and Distance learning, University of Nairobi examining the demographic factors, instructional materials, economic factors and technology. The study adopted the descriptive survey design and targeted eighty (80) distant learners pursuing Diploma in Adult education and Community Development at University of Nairobi from which forty (40) learners were sampled for the study. This was done through snow ball sampling technique and the Gay (1976) recommendation of a sample of 20% for smaller populations for determining Sample Size for Research Activities.

As revealed by the study, majority of distant learners (81.25%) are adults, 75% married, 75% female and all of them (100%) employed. Some of these learners are adults who cannot afford to enroll on a full time basis because of work, family responsibilities and business commitment. The study also revealed that most of the learners enrolled in this programme are adult education practitioners.

The institution mainly rely on print media as the main instructional material in the form of modules. The study confirmed that the instructional materials are adequate and are available in more than one form. Respondents indicated that they opted for Distance learning as opposed to traditional method due to its flexibility thus enabling them attend to other engagements while pursuing higher education. The study also established that the cost of DL is friendly to the learners in terms of the mode of payment and the cost of the programme.

The study established that the institution has not fully embraced technology as a mode of delivery despite the learners having access to computers and availability of internet in the areas. Thus online materials has not being fully embraced. Video conferencing is rarely used in the provision of Distance Education programmes confirming that technology is not fully embraced.

5.3 Discussions of the study

As revealed by the study, majority of distant learners are adults, married and most of them female learners. These Distant learners cannot afford to enrol on a full time basis because of work, family responsibilities and business commitment. They have children to feed, clothe and send to school, mortgages and insurance premiums to pay, and business to run. This agrees with Magagula & Ngwenya, 2004. This confirms the necessity of distant learning programmes being more flexible so that they can accommodate this category of learners who are the majority.

The revelation by the study that the main media used is print media (modules) and these materials are inadequate denies the learners access to variety of materials. This

reduces the learners' ability to compare literature from various media. This revelation agrees with Gakuu (2008) who asserts that few lecturers embrace the use of other forms of media.

From the findings, most learners depended on SACCO and bank loans to finance their studies. This in addition to their family commitment created economic burden on them. The reason was that majority are married and are responsible for family upkeep like education, food, health and shelter. Their earnings are not adequate to cater for distance education. They had to struggle to make ends meet in order to finance distance education. Most of the respondents indicated that the Government or university does not provide funds in forms of loans or bursary to distance learners. However the respondents indicated that they have a friendly way of paying university fees. This agrees with Jenkins, 2008 who asserts that Institutions of higher learning are now realizing the importance of making learning accessible to everyone.

According to the results, the fact that computer literacy is not a requirement when enrolling for distant programme is an indication that technology is not fully embraced by the university. This is also supported that the main media used is print media with minimal use of online materials. Also absence of video conferencing is an indication that the university has not made use of technology in delivery of programmes. This is supported by Gakuu (2008) who asserts that the University of Nairobi does not 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.

5.4 Conclusions of the Study

Recent trends 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. Generally Learners' characteristics, Instructional materials, economic factors and technology are critical factors that influence enrolment into Distance Education.

There are more female learners enrolled in Diploma in Adult Education and Community development programme because of its flexibility and accommodative aspects that allows women to multitask. Majority of the enrolled learners are middle aged with family commitment

The University of Nairobi should diversify the Instructional materials so as to have a variety of media instead of over relying on print media. With the advancement in technology the institution should embrace online materials. Economic factors are very vital as they influence enrolment into Distance learning programme. Majority of the learners are employed although their earnings are not adequate to cater for university fees. The institutions of higher learning should embrace a friendly way of handling fees issue to enable the learners continue with their programme uninterrupted.

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

The findings of this study point to the following recommendations:

1. There is need to improve on learner support services to cater for the different learner characteristics. As a result learner isolation would be minimized.
2. There is need to diversify Instructional materials to cater for different needs and situations of the distant learners. The Institution should make use of other media in programme delivery instead of over relying on Print media
3. The Government should consider financing distant learners through loan from Higher Education Loans Board to ease the burden of looking for university fees.
4. There is need to integrate technology in delivery of distant learning programmes. Learners should be ready to adopt use of ICT in their teaching.

5.5. Further Research

The following suggestions are offered for future research as a result of this investigation:

1. A similar study should be conducted in other Institutions of Higher learning in Kenya offering Distance learning programmes so as to get their views on factors influencing learners' enrolment into Distance Learning programmes.
2. A Further study should be done on motivating factors associated with learners' participation in distance learning programme.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Letter of Introduction

STEPHEN WANYOIKE MBURU
TEL: +254 733 967529
P.O. BOX 853 – 00600
NAIROBI
EMAIL: stephenmburuw@gmail.com

Dear respondent,

RE: RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE

This is to inform you that I am carrying out a research study for my Master of Distance Education at the University of Nairobi. The study is on "Factors influencing Adult learners' participation in Open and Distance Learning Programmes in Kenya, The Case of Nairobi University, School of Continuing and Distance Education, Kenya".

I kindly request for your assistance in filling the attached questionnaire to enable me complete my research. The questionnaire is for academic purposes only and any information given shall be treated with strict confidentiality; please give the information as accurately as possible.

Thank you in advance.

Yours sincerely,

STEPHEN WANYOIKE MBURU

APPENDIX ii: Questionnaire to the Distant Learner

INTRODUCTION

This questionnaire is purely designed for academic purpose. You are kindly requested to provide answers to these questions as honestly and precisely as possible. Responses to these questions will be treated confidentially. Do not write your name on this questionnaire. Please answer all the questions.

Section 1: Learner characteristics

1. What is your gender?

Male ☐ Female ☐

2. What is your age bracket?

Below 35

35-44

45-54

55-59

60 and above

3. Tick your academic qualifications

KCSE ☐ A' Level ☐ Certificate ☐

Diploma ☐ Degree ☐

3. Your marital status

(i). Married ☐ (ii) Single ☐

4. What is your profession……

Section ii: Instructional Materials

1. What are the Instructional materials used in Distance learning instruction?

☐ ☐ ☐

(i) Modules (ii) Textbooks (iii) Internet

(iv) Others (Please specify)……

2. Are the Instructional materials adequate? (i) Yes ☐ (ii) No ☐

3. If 'No' briefly explain

……

……

4. Instructional Materials are available in how many forms?

One ☐ More than one ☐

5. What is your opinion on the Instructional materials used in the delivery of Distance learning?

Good ☐ Average ☐ poor ☐

Section iii: Economic Factors

1. What are some of the reasons that made you opt for distance learning as opposed to traditional method of instruction.
   i. ……
   ii. ……
   iii. ……
   iv. ……
2. How do you compare the cost of Distance education as opposed to the traditional method of Instruction?

……

……

3. What is the source of your income?

……

……

……

4. What is the level of your income?(put a tick against your income)

S/no.	Income in Ksh.
1	Below 10,000
2	10,000 – 19,000
3	20,000 – 29,000
4	30,000 – 39,000
5	40,000 – 49,000
6	Above 50,000

5. Are there loan facilities for the following:

   i. Tuition Yes ☐ No ☐

   ii. Research expenses Yes ☐ No ☐

   iii. Accommodation and meal expenses Yes ☐ No ☐

6. If Yes to '4' above please indicate the source of the loan facility below

……

……

……

7. How do you pay your university fees?

   i. Once ☐ ii. Instalments ☐

8. Is your programme of study cost effective? Yes ☐ No ☐

Section iv: Technology

1. Has University of Nairobi has embraced use of technology in enrolment and delivery in Distance learning? Yes ☐ No ☐
2. Are computers available to the learners? Yes ☐ No ☐
3. Is computer Literacy a requirement when enrolling for this programme?

   Yes ☐ No ☐

4. Mention the types of media used in the delivery of Distance learning?

   i. ……

   ii. ……

   iii. ……

   iv. ……

5. Do you have access to internet in your area?

   Yes ☐ No ☐

6. Do you use online materials in your Programme?

   Yes ☐ No ☐

7. Tick the extent in which the following is used in providing learning by distance in your programme

	Media	Often	Sometimes	Rarely
1	Internet			
2	Audio cassette			

3 Video conference

4 Print Media

9. What are some of the challenges that you encounter while pursuing your course by distant mode?

i……

ii……

iii……

iv. ……

10. What are the possible suggestions to overcome the challenges mentioned above?

……

……..

……