FACTORS INFLUENCING COMPLETION OF BACHELOR OF EDUCATION DISTANCE LEARNERS AT KENYA METHODISTS UNIVERSITY: A CASE OF NYERI MUNICIPALITY

BY

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DECLARATION

This research project is my own original work and has not been presented for any degree award in any other University or Institution.

..... Date.....

Jemimah Gachugi

L45/71100/08

This research project has been presented for examination with my approval as the appointed University Supervisor.

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DEDICATION

This research project is dedicated to my husband Mr. Gachugi, my children, Muthoni , Ciku and Wambugu.

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First and foremost my special gratitude goes to my Lord whom I owe the strength and sense of purpose that has enabled me to complete this research project.

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TABLE OF CONTENT

DECLARATION ..... **i**
DEDICATION ..... **ii**
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT ..... **iii**
TABLE OF CONTENT ..... **iv**
LIST OF TABLES ..... **vii**
LIST OF FIGURES ..... **viii**
ABBREVIATIONS ..... **ix**
ABSTRACT ..... **x**
CHAPTER ONE **1**
INTRODUCTION **1**
1.1Background to the Study 1
1.2 Statement of the Problem 3
1.3 Purpose of the Study 4
1.4 Objectives of the Study 4
1.5 Research Questions 5
1.6 Significance of the Study 5
1.7 Scope of the Study 5
1.8 Limitations of the Study 6
1.9 Assumptions 6
1.10 Definition of Significant Terms 7
1.11 Organisation of the Study 8
CHAPTER TWO: **9**
LITERATURE REVIEW **9**
2.1 Introduction 9
2.2 Distant Learning 9
2.3 Accessing learning materials 10
2.4 Coping with the Roles of Adulthood and Distance Learning 13
2.5 Cost of Education 15
2.6 Learner Support Services 17

2.7 Theoretical Framework 19
2.7.1 The Theory of Independent Study 19
2.8 Conceptual Framework 21
2.9 Summary 23
CHAPTER THREE 25
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY 25
3.1 Introduction 25
3.2 Research Design 25
3.3 Target Population 25
3.4 Sample Size and Sampling Procedures 26
3.5 Research Instruments 26
3.6 Pilot Study 27
3.6.1 Instrument Validity 27
3.6.2 Instrument Reliability 28
3.7 Data Collection Procedures 29
3.8 Data Analysis and Presentation 29
CHAPTER FOUR 32
DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION 32
4.1 Introduction 32
4.2 Response Rate 32
4.3 Demographic Information 33
4.3.1: Genders representation of the respondents 33
4.3.2 Marital Status of the Respondents 33
4.3.3: Ages of the Respondents 34
4.3.4: The Respondents Level of Schools Taught 35
4.4 Access to Learning Materials 36
4.4.2: Provision of Help by the Learning Materials 36
4.4.3: Problems Encountered in Accessing Learning Materials 37
4.4.4: Effects on problems of completion 38
4.5 Adulthood Roles 39
4.5.2: Students' Coping Mechanisms 40

4.5.3: Effect of Adulthood Roles on Completion 41
4.6: Cost of education 42
4.6.1: Students Ratings on the charged of Distance Education 42
4.6.2: Problems Encountered as a result of the Cost of Education 43
4.6.3: Effect of Cost of Education on completion 44
4.7 Learner Support Services 45
4.7.3: Effect of Availability of Learning Services on completion 47
4.8 Summary of the Findings 48
CHAPTER FIVE 50
SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, DISCUSSIONS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS 50
5.1 Introduction 50
5.2 Discussion of Findings 50
5.3 Summary of Findings 51
5.4 Conclusion 53
5.5 Recommendations 54
5.6 Suggested area for further research 56
REFERENCES 57
APPENDICES 61
APPENDIX I: INTRODUCTORY LETTER 61
APPENDIX II: QUESTIONNAIRE 62

LIST OF TABLES

Table 3.1: Operational Definition of Variables 31

Table 4.1: Response Rate 32

Table 4.2: Gender distribution of the Respondents 33

Table 4.3 Marital status of the respondents 34

Table 4.4: Age Distribution of the Respondents 34

Table 4.5: Distribution of respondents by the level of schools taught 35

Table 4.6: Importance of learning materials 36

Table 4.7: Rating of learning materials 37

Table 4.8: Problems Encountered in Accessing Learning Materials 38

Table 4.9: Effect of Access to materials on the performance of the students 39

Table 4.10: The effect of Adulthood Roles on Distance Learners 40

Table 4.11: Coping with Studies 41

Table 4.12: Effect of Adulthood Roles on Performance 42

Table 4.13: Cost of Education 43

Table 4.14: Effect of Cost of Education on Performance of Distance Learners 44

Table 4.15: Support Services Offered 45

Table 4.16: Importance of Learner Services Offered 46

Table 4.17: Effect of availability of learner support services on performance 47

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 2.1 Conceptual Framework…… 23

ABBREVIATIONS

BED	Bachelor of Education
CATs:	Continuous Assessment Tests
DEO:	District Education Officer
ICT:	Information Computer Technology
IDC:	International Data Corporation
K.U:	Kenyatta University
KEMU:	Kenya Methodist University
MBA:	Master of Business Administration
ODC:	Off-campus Degree Completion
ODL:	Open and Distance learning
SPSS:	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
TV:	Television
U.O.N:	University of Nairobi
UNESCO:	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation

ABSTRACT

The aim of this study was to assess factors influencing completion of Bachelor of Education distance learners at Kenya Methodists University in Nyeri Municipality. The study was guided by the following objectives: to establish the extent to which access to learning resources has influenced completion of Bachelor of Education learners in Nyeri Municipality, to determine the extent to which roles of adulthood has influenced completion of Bachelor of Education distance students in Nyeri Municipality, , to establish the extent to which cost of education has influenced Bachelor of Education distance learners in Nyeri Municipality and to establish the extent to which learners support services has influenced completion of Bachelor of Education distance learners in Nyeri Municipality.

This study was conducted using descriptive survey research method. The target population for this study comprised Bachelor of Education students distance learners at KEMU. The study found out that most of the students were faced with challenges to do with lack of access to reading materials, their duties as adults which are quite demanding, the cost of education which in most cases comes from internet accessibility and lack of adequate learners support services.

The study recommends that, the university should train and employ more distance learner instructors or lectures who have specialized in the area of distance learning as they understand the learners' characteristics. Departments to put measures to curb the problem of delayed feedback from the respective course lecturers. ICT lessons to be given adequate time during tutorials to equip the learners with the necessary technological skills needed in distance learning programs. Government to implement a lending financial policy which is learner friendly to distance learners who are self sponsored. The department to explore more options mostly in technology for delivering instructional materials to learners to avoid delay and prepare instructional materials well in advance and issue the same during registration of courses.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1Background to the Study

Distance learning is a mode of learning where a learner is separated from the teacher in space and time. It is an excellent method of reaching the adult learners especially the working class or those with family responsibilities. Holmberg (2005) noted that distance learning programme is expanding rapidly in the field of education. It is through the technology and instructional system designs that aim to deliver education to students who are not physically on site in a traditional classroom or campus. It has been described as a process to create and provide access to learning when the source of information and the learners are separated by time and distance, or both. In other words, distance learning is the process of creating an educational experience of equal quality for the learner to best suit their needs outside the classroom.

This emerging technology is becoming widely used in universities and institutions around the globe. With the recent trend of technological advancement distance learning is becoming more recognized for its potential in providing individualized attention to students internationally. Distance learning is being accepted globally and learning is being enhanced by internet based technologies with the recognition that traditional ways of education transmission needs reinforcement and innovative methods if the fundamental right of all people to a life of learning is to be realised.

According to Moore and Kearsley (2005) 80 per cent of learners in most institutions like to go to tradition colleges This is not possible for everyone since many people are working, others have families to take care of hence the need for distance learning. Now technology has changed the face of education from the usual conventional classroom to students learning at a distance therefore with these kinds of change more people are enrolling. In the year 1997-1998 at least 34 % of institutions offered distance courses. Thus distance learning students find it easier to maintain their jobs and families amid the many challenges they face growing the demand for distance learning.

Moore (2007) found that the annual market for distance learning was 4.5 billion in 2002 and it was expected to grow to11 billion by 2005. Romesh (2005) has said that international data corporation (IDC) expect at least 30% growth rate for distance learners over the next coming years. Most institutions all over the world are adapting distance learning and accepting on line degree. Countries such as Pakistan, Mexico Indonesia, India, Brazil and Bangladesh are focusing on distance education and distance learning is seen important in terms of market oriented societies.

In regional trends it's no exception for example Sub-Sahara Africa is a place where distance learning has widened access for its basic education. In 1960s and 1970s it was used to train all unqualified teachers through distance learning (UNESCO, 2000). In South Africa projects for distance learning known as the soma teachers development (using satellite and TV) were used to train teachers and other interested people in furthering their education through this mode of education (Aggarwal, 2007).

In Kenya, distance education commission was establishment in 1978 to come up with a framework on the development and implementation of open and distance learning in institutions of higher learning. At the same time Gachathi report emphasized the need to achieve greater access to distance learning while session paper no1-2005 recommended the establishment of an open university and use of ODC in human resource development at all levels. Kenya has provided materials as well as expertise to Southern African universities such as Zimbabwe Open University which offers distance learning. British council supported University of Nairobi with funds to run degree programmes to meet the needs of distance learners in 1980's under the faculty of external degree studies.

Despite the promises and obvious advantages to distance learning, there are problems that need to be resolved. These problems include the quality of instruction, hidden costs, misuse of technology, and the attitudes of instructors, students, and administrators among others. Each one of these has an effect on the overall quality of distance learning as a product. It is therefore imperative to examine the challenges facing Bachelor of Education distance learners at Kenya Methodists University in Nyeri Municipality.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

This study set to investigate the factors influencing completion of distance learners who have done Bachelors of Education at the Kenyan Methodist University in Nyeri Municipality. The variables included access of learning resources, adulthood roles, cost of education as well as lack of learner support. Many distance learners are taking long to complete their courses and they are not achieving their objectives at the end of it (Mensa,

Ahiatrogah and Deku, 2008). If these factors that are experienced by distance learners are not treated with the urgency they deserve, there will be wastage of resources and time and overburdening of distance learners (Sussan and Kassira, 2009). This will in the long run make it difficult for students to engage in distance learning. This calls for a study to investigate the challenges facing bachelor of education distance learners in Kenya which is the basis of this study.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine the factors influencing completion of Bachelor of Education distance learners at KEMU in Nyeri municipality.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

The study was be guided by the following objectives;

i. To establish the extent to which access to learning materials has influenced completion of Bachelor of Education distance learners at KEMU in Nyeri Municipality.
ii. To determine the extent to which roles of adulthood has influenced Bachelor of Education distance students at KEMU in Nyeri Municipality.
iii. To establish the extent to which cost of education has influenced completion of Bachelor of Education distance learners at KEMU in Nyeri Municipality.
iv. To establish the extent to which learners support services has affected Bachelor of Education distance learners at KEMU in Nyeri Municipality

1.5 Research Questions

i. To what extent does access to learning materials influence completion of Bachelor of education distance learners at KEMU in Nyeri Municipality?

ii. How do the roles of adulthood affect the Bachelor of Education distance students at KEMU in Nyeri Municipality?

iii. To what extent does the cost of education influence completion of bachelor of Education at KEMU in Nyeri Municipality?

iv. To what extent does learners support services influence completion of distant student at KEMU in Nyeri Municipality?

1.6 Significance of the Study

The findings of this study are hoped to advance knowledge on factors influencing completion of distance learners and hope the findings would be used by universities offering distance education to help overcome them. The study is hoped to be useful to the prospective students as they are likely to be provided with the knowledge of various challenges they would face when pursuing their courses hence they would be prepared. The findings of this study would help other researchers who might be interested in this area of study in future.

1.7 Scope of the Study

This study was carried out in Nyeri municipality in Nyeri County. The target population comprised of the Bachelor of Education distance learners in KEMU. The main reason for choosing Nyeri Municipality is that, it has the characteristic elements which the

researcher needed to investigate and therefore it formed the best and most reliable source of data for the study.

1.8 Limitations of the Study

The study was limited in various ways for example; it was difficult to control the respondents' attitudes as they responded to questions and therefore the researcher had to personally encourage and persuade the respondents to give the information by assuring them of confidentiality and the explaining to them the fact that the study was being done for academic purposed only. It was also not possible to investigate all the factors influencing completion of bachelor of education distance at Kenya Methodists University in Nyeri Municipality. Further the study was constrained by inadequacy of finances due to the high cost of materials and time to cover all the distance learners within the institution.

1.9 Assumptions

The choice of one Municipality in Nyeri central district was with an assumption that research findings would reflect the situation in other Municipalities in the county and in Kenya in general. It was also assumed that the respondents would cooperate with the researcher and give correct information regarding the area of study.

1.10 Definition of Significant Terms

Distance learning - is an interaction between the distance educator, the learner and the learning materials.

Academic - concerned with studying books and other resources.

Access – to be able reach materials for reading.

Adulthood - is being financially independent, leaving home, completing school and working full-time.

Learners support services – the serviced provided to the distance learners at KEMU

Cost of Education – the amount of money paid by learner for either tuition, reading materials, travel and other expenses concerning learning.

1.11 Organisation of the Study

The study is organised into the following chapters; chapter one which contains background of the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, study objectives, research questions, significance of the study, scope, limitations, assumptions, definitions of terms and organisations of the study. The second chapter has reviewed the past literature regarding this topic. It also has theoretical framework, conceptual framework and a summary of the chapter. The third chapter which is research methodology has the research design, target population, sampling procedure and sample size, data collection instruments, validity and reliability and methods of analysing and presenting data. Chapter four covers data analysis, interpretation and presentation and a summary. Chapter five comprises of summary, discussion, conclusion, recommendations and suggestions for further research.

CHAPTER TWO:

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The chapter dealt with the analysis and discussions of the literature. The purpose of the analysis and discussion of the literature was to get a deeper understanding of the challenges facing the distance learners from a general perspective. Various factors influencing completion were examined to show how they affect distance learners in general. Overall this section examined scholarly research studies and articles that addressed the effects of access to learning resources, roles of adulthood, and cost of education and learners support services on distance students in order to established their strengths, weaknesses and research gaps in relation to the study.

2.2 Distant Learning

This is the kind of learning where the learner is separated from the teacher in space and time. It is a favoured method by adults who are working and have other tasks to perform. Holneberg (2005) noted that distant learning programme is expanding in the field of learning. (Aggrawal 2007) said that through technology distant learning is rapidly growing with the help of technological advancement. Distant learning has been accepted as a mode of learning globally.

In South Africa it is no exception there is a growing need to take up distant learning. There is a programme called Soma Teachers Development which use satellites and TV to educate distant learners.

In Kenya many of the institutions of higher learning have embraced distant learning. One of the institutions is University of Nairobi which was supported by British council with funds in order to learn the programmes in 1980s

2.3 Accessing learning materials

Sachannd (2002) noted that distance learners access reading materials in different ways they use variety of means such as printed material, manuals mediated by technology using different kinds of media e.g. radio internet telephone e.t.c. In order to access the above directly the above must be reliable, available, user friendly, portable and efficient in order offer proper service.

Conrad (2002) examined how distance learners' experiences in the first class of a distance course and how it affected their preparation and engagement in distance learning. In this study, survey data was obtained from twenty-eight distance students. The majority of the students preferred access to the course site at least two weeks prior to the course start date. The reasons students gave for such preferences included, a feeling of comfort and familiarity (i.e., lowered anxiety), checking for completeness and getting prepared and integrating this new learning experience into their lives. However, the students did not expect to interact socially with the instructor and students during the preview period. They reported that their comfort level with course materials as well as the associated course-related processes was more important than interactions with peers during this early period. The students were more satisfied when the course provided the necessary information and was presented in an organized manner.

Kavulya (2004) in his study said that most Kenyan students have little or no exposure to library use and this affects the way they access reading materials and study on their own. Lu (2005) and Ramirez (2003) reported that most students get printed materials from internet and later read them at their own pace. In Nigeria since libraries do not have relevant materials (Oladonkon, 2004). Most students may not be able to locate the relevant materials to read in the library.

Olaojo and Akewukere (2004) studied students in university of Ibadan and reported that most students were not able to locate reading materials in the library and this affected their learning outcomes. Library services are very important to distance learners. Researchers in distance learning agree that library services are key to distance learners (Caspers, Fritts and Gover 2001). Students working independently must have study habits which would enable them achieve their goals.

Azikiwe (1998) noted that the way students study can adversely influence a distance learning outcomes. Thus time for reading may not be there, skills for using computers may be there, skills for using computers may be minimal and this also will contribute negatively to student's access to reading materials. Most students especially those in rural set up may not have access to reliable telecommunications such as computers, emails, etc. This leads to frustrations which bring about problems between the students and institutions.

Isolation from other students is another factor influencing completion whereby the students would exchange reading materials to help one another. Lack of training on use of computers would be a barrier in accessing learning resources, thus such students may drop out due to lack of survival skills (Woo, 1996). Thus students taking distance learning must undergo some fundamental training on use of computers to help the access materials from the internet.

According to Holmberg (2005) distance education students experience certain difficulties because of being away from the main campus. The distance from the main campus created an added degree of difficulty to every task required of distance students. The resources that were at the fingertips of main campus students (e.g., library, bookstore, professor, etc.) required the negotiation of time-consuming and often frustrating intermediary mechanisms for distance students: professors' telephones were often busy, the inter-campus document courier service usually involved delays, textbooks were slow in coming and generally too few in number, requests for library materials were often stacked in slow moving queues, etc. Distance education students encountered problems in acquiring necessary course materials and this made most of them feel as though they had to work harder to receive the same grades as their main campus counterparts (Holmberg, 2005).

From the studies, it was found that distance learners encounter challenges related to access to learning materials. They may be forced to travel to use libraries since they may not have some in their home towns. Even if they are there, they may not be as equipped

as the ones in the campuses. In addition, they experience delays before they get course materials and the communication between them and their tutors is a challenge and this affects their accessibility to learning materials. All these problems are discouraging to distance learners and as noted earlier, some may feel that they have to work harder than the on-campus students to get the same grades.

2.4 Coping with the Roles of Adulthood and Distance Learning

Most distance students have varied responsibilities. They fill the role of a worker and a spouse St Pierre and Olsen (1991), for example found that, 57% of the students worked 40 or more hours a week outside their home. Robinson (1992) also found out that 83% of the students in distance education were employed outside the home 62% worked full time and 58.5% were married. Over 50% of the students in Gibson and Graff (1992) study were employed fulltime and approximately 75% were married. Thus distance learning offers convenience and flexibility for students who are busy at work and schedules. Sacchanand (2002) said that distance learners have a characteristic as mature, employed as well as adult learners who have family responsibilities and they are highly motivated. They are self directed and they are able to set their goals. Revelations of past students show that distance learners find it difficult to multitask thus having full time work, taking care of family and other responsibilities is a challenge (Triands, 1995).

Another study was done in Botswana (Triands, 1995) and it was found out that female students taking distance learning did not get enough time to study over the weekend due to house chores. However, not all who had difficult in multitasking since some had

support from their family members which enabled them to attend to their studies. Family support plays a significant role in the success of distance learners. This is because it makes it easier to focus on their studies. Wenger De Demont and Snyder (2002) reported that after work some students find little or no time to study at home thus weekends leave them with little time for study since they first start with house chores before reading. In this case, students must be self driven towards their studies. Most students take a number of courses which they can handle at their own pace and that means that students require discipline to study. Interactions with peers and instructors as well as collaboration skills were found to be critical elements influencing typical learning experiences within distance learning.

Kim, Liu and Bonk (2005) examined the benefits and challenges perceived by the students enrolled in an MBA program in a university setting. These researchers completed a survey with 100 second-year distance students and conducted in-person interviews with 22 students. In that particular study, 70 percent of the participants viewed their distance learning experiences in a positive manner. These MBA students valued time flexibility, more opportunities for meaningful interactions with instructors and the development of virtual teaming skills.

The majority of the survey participants responded that collaborative work with peers in distance learning was helpful. These students thought that team work was more important than independent work for their distance learning courses. In contrast, delayed feedback, difficulty in communicating with team members in different time zones, and a lack of

emotional connection were perceived as challenges. These researchers emphasized the importance of distance learners teaming together and working as a group helps them to create time and discuss reading materials and assignment together, (Kim, Liu and Bonk, 2005).

These studies show that at times distance learners are torn between their studies, work, home and society responsibilities. They have to prioritize in order to succeed in all of them. This poses a challenge to studies because by the time they have time to study, they are already too tired due to the other obligations they have been attending to.

2.5 Cost of Education

Siemens (2008) noted that when learners join together in a learning community that is when learning start. Bearing in mind the knowledge that is in worldwide, it is important for distance learners to get knowledge and information from valid sources. Distance learning has its own cost to run that kind of learning while we say that a learner is separated by time distance and space these calls for costs in order to access materials for reading, travelling expenses as well as materials to write on assignments and modules. However, distance learning is able to deal with large number of learners in a cost effective manner. Distance education therefore has far more on economics of scale.

Romesh (2005) noted that distance learning is attractive in most countries since it is said to increase access and at the same time –cost –effective that is lower average cost per students. A study by Winsboro (2002) found out that cost effectiveness of using

technology based system is still quite uncertain. And that cost effectiveness is not as simple as it seems to be. The programme may be efficient but may also not be cost effective. Winsboro (2002) found also talks of human capital and other costs of conversion are costs that can easily be underestimated.

In the University of Colorado Moore (2007) noted that cost of electronic distance delivery were quite expensive. Aggrawal (2002) looked at a California state university system which saw the cost savings in distance learning programmes and found that only large courses with many sections where savings would be possible. In terms of funds the government of Kenya lacks enough funds to provide the public universities with enough teaching materials for instructors. At the same time institutions may afford few modules of which the students are given yet they would need more books for acquiring sufficient knowledge.

These finally flows down to students especially those in distance learning. This becomes a heavy burden and therefore most students may defer and this delays completion and lowers performance. Training of instructors should not be overlooked for effective distance education to take place, the staff delivering the instructors should be well trained (Hickman, 2003) All in all students taking distance learning will find cost as a challenge and thus most students defer until they get funds thus lowered performance and delayed completion. While some studies claim that the cost of distance education is lower, others find it more expensive. This is due to cost of materials, travelling costs, use

of technology and cost of communication. Cost of education may make distance learners to defer or drop out of school.

2.6 Learner Support Services

Institutions with distance learning need support services which play a major role in the expansion of ODL systems across the globe. Gunawardena (1992) defines learner support as the resources that learners can access in order to carry out the learning process. These are learning materials, library, teacher/ facilitator, and resources. He observes that in distance education support is concerned with a range of human and resources to guide and facilitate the education transaction. In most instructional services the most important support is the teacher who guides and directs, as well as assists the student to achieve their goals and develop control of the education system.

Nonyongo and Ngengebule (1998) noted that the support services differ in institutions and these can be put into two categories one being academic- which includes as tutorial, advising, and counselling services. The other is administrative functions, such as enrolment, admission and registration, record keeping, information provision and delivery of study materials.

Distance students need access to academic advisory services. This can be done through email or telephone. Gurawadena (1992) says that a model of a learner centred distance education system can be facilitated by the use of interactive communications technology. Learners are connected with other learners, both on and off campus and the library

database. The tutor acts as a facilitator to connect learners to other learners. Learners are also taught to link up with other learners using networking. Learners should also be taught skills such as cognitive strategies and self-directed learning skills in order to be capable of taking charge of their learning experiences.

Tait and Mills (2003) observed that some factors hindered the full participation of distance learners in the interactive courses. These are: instructor's negative attitude toward off- campus students, lack of instructor contract, lack of feedback from instructor and poor distribution materials. Learners need to control their learning environment and the activities they undertake while social interaction and feedback are very important. Since distance learning isolates learners from teaching institutions, it also deprives them from peers. This may at time bring loneliness and confusion, anxiety as well as stress and sometimes attrition (Nonyongo and Ngengebule 1998). Therefore it is important for distance learners to be supported to enable them cope with challenges of isolation and infrequent contact with their learning facilitators and fellow students.

Somayajulu (2002) in a study in Indira Gandhi National University in New Delhi found out that learners needed quality support services to meet their academic requirements in time. Learners also seek more technical support in meeting their requirements rapidly for their academic achievements. All distance learners need learner support services. The institutions should recognize the basic needs of the learner and try to fulfil them to the best of their abilities. For distance learners to be offered better services the following should be considered: The centres should be equipped with infrastructural facilities,

technology facilities should be provided and centres should be managed in purposeful manner. Well established and maintenance of regional centres, proper information services and proper material distribution, well managed library services as well as examination and evaluation services are needed to support the distance learners.

2.7 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework is the structure that can hold or support a theory of a research study. The theoretical framework introduces and describes the theory which explains why the research problem under study exists. In this case the theory of independent study introduced by Moore in 1973 will be used.

2.7.1 The Theory of Independent Study

This theory is an important foundation of distance education; it suggests that successful teaching can take place even though teacher and learner are physically separated during the learning process. For Moore (1994), distance education is composed of two elements, each of which can be measured. The first element is the provision for two-way communication (dialog); some systems or programs offer greater amounts of two-way communication than others. The second element is the extent to which a program is responsive to the needs of the individual learner (structure); some programs are very structured while others are more responsive to the needs and goals of the individual student.

In the second part of his theory, Moore addresses learner autonomy. He notes that in traditional school settings learners are very dependent on teachers for guidance and that in most programs, conventional and distance, the teacher is active while the student is passive. In distance education, there is a gap between teacher and student, so the student must accept a high degree of responsibility for the conduct of the learning program. The autonomous learner needs little help from the teacher, who may be more of a respondent than a director. Some adult learners, however, require help in formulating their learning objectives, identifying sources of information, and measuring objectives, (Moore, 1972). The theory has been used in the current study since it promotes and enhances the independence of the student as the essence of distance education. This was reflected in Wedemeyer's preference for the term "independent study" for distance education at the college or university level. He was critical of contemporary patterns of higher education, believing that outdated concepts of learning and teaching were being employed. Wedemeyer felt that these concepts failed to utilize modern technologies in ways that could alter an institution.

Therefore the system is capable of operating in any place where there are students even only one student whether or not there are teachers at the same place, at the same time, places greater responsibility for learning on the student, free faculty members from custodial-type duties so that more time can be given to truly educational tasks and offering students and adults wider choices (more opportunities) in courses, formats, and methodologies. This paper further utilizes this theory to mix and combine media and methods so that each subject or unit within a subject is taught in the best way known,

cause the redesign and development of courses to fit into an articulated media program, preserve and enhance opportunities for adaptation to individual differences, evaluate student achievement simply, not by raising barriers regarding the place, rate, method, or sequence of student study; and permit students to start, stop, and learn at their own pace.

2.8 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework is the schematic diagram which shows the variables included in the study. In this case, the dependent variable is performance of distance learners and the independent variables include: adulthood roles, accessing reading materials, cost of education and learners' support. These have been conceptualised as shown in Figure 2.1.

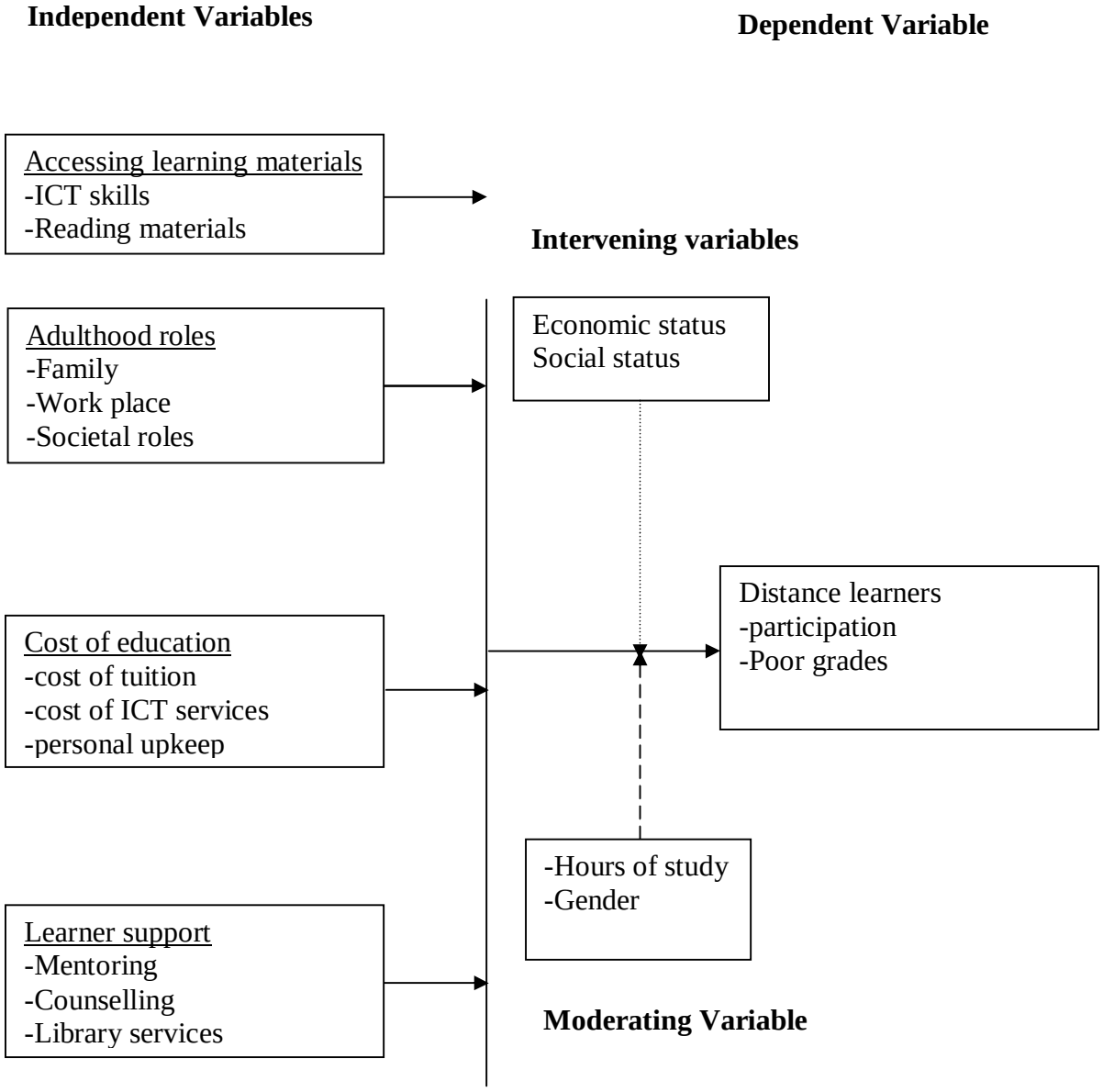
Independent Variables
Dependent Variable
Accessing learning materials
-ICT skills
-Reading materials
Intervening variables
Adulthood roles
-Family
-Work place
-Societal roles
Economic status
Social status
Distance learners
-participation
-Poor grades
Cost of education
-cost of tuition
-cost of ICT services
-personal upkeep
-Hours of study
-Gender
Learner support
-Mentoring
-Counselling
-Library services
Moderating Variable

Figure 2.1 Conceptual Framework

The dependent variable was the distance learners. The study also had five independent variables which are access to reading materials, roles of adulthood, testing and evaluation methods, the cost of education and learners' support. All these were identified as the some of the major issues that bother distance learners and as a result they may affect their performance. The intervening variables are, the economic and social status of the distance learners while these are moderated by the hours of work and gender groupings of the respondents.

2.9 Summary

As shown in the literature review, studies on adult responsibilities show that at times distance learners are torn between their studies, work, home and societal responsibilities. They have to prioritize in order to succeed in all of them. This poses a challenge to complete their studies because by the time they have time to study, they are already too tired due to the other obligations they have been attending to. This might have a negative effect on their performance. From the studies, it was found that distance learners encounter challenges related to access to learning materials. They may be forced to travel to use libraries since they may not have some in their home towns.

Even if they are there, they may not be as equipped as the ones in campus. In addition, they experience delays before they get course materials and the communication between

them and their tutors is a challenge and this affects their accessibility to learning materials. All these problems are discouraging to distance learners and as noted earlier, some may feel that they have to work harder than the on-campus students to get the same grades. It might affect their performance negatively. The major challenges in relation to testing and evaluation include technical problems related to technology, lack of control among instructors and exam cheating.

These make it more difficult to test in distance education and may affect distance learners' performance. While some studies claim that the cost of distance education is lower, others find it more expensive. This is due to cost of materials, travelling costs, use of technology and cost of communication. Cost of education may make distance learners to defer or drop out of school. All the mentioned studies have been done in other regions in the world. This study was done in Nyeri Municipality to establish factors influencing completion.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter deals with the research methodology in the study. This includes the research design, target population, sample and sampling procedures, research instruments, pilot study, data collection procedures, and data analysis and presentation techniques.

3.2 Research Design

This was a descriptive survey research method which as defined by Ary, Jacobs and Lizavich (1996) is a technique in which detailed information concerning social phenomenon are gathered by posing questions to respondents. The result of such investigation makes it possible to find explanation of the social phenomenon in question. The survey design was chosen because it provided a means to contextually interpret and understand the factors affecting the performance of distance learners under BED programmes at KEMU in Nyeri Municipality. According to Orodho and Kombo (2002) the survey method is useful in measuring people's attitudes, opinions, habits or any of the variety of education or social issues in a large population.

3.3 Target Population

The target population for this study comprised of distance education Bachelor of Education students in KEMU, Nyeri municipality. There were 100 Bachelor of Education

distance learners at KEMU. The population size was comparable to the target population in the characteristics that appear most relevant to the study.

3.4 Sample Size and Sampling Procedures

Sampling is the process of selecting a number of individuals for a study in such a way that the individuals selected represent the large group from which they are selected, (Mugenda and Mugenda, 1999). Singleton (1988) view sampling as that part of the research plan that indicates how cases are to be selected for observation. In addition to the purpose of the study and population size, the researcher was required to specify the sample size for the study from the target population.

From the records in the institution, the study found out that the approximate number of registered BED students under the distance learning programmes 1000 students. Out of this, a sample of 10 % was picked as the most representative of the target population supported by Grbich's (2007) argument that a sample of 10 % to 30 % is recommended for a study population of 1000 respondents and above. Therefore the final sample size for this study was 100 BED distance learners. In this study stratified sampling technique was employed in grouping the students into the various courses as sampling units within KEMU. Then simple random sampling was used to settle on the final respondents by the use of the course registration as the sampling frame.

3.5 Research Instruments

This study used questionnaires as the tools of data collection. The questionnaires had both closed and open-ended questions. Close-ended questions were accompanied by a list

of all possible alternatives from which the respondents selected the answer that best described their situation. Open ended questions gave the respondents complete freedom of response. The questionnaires each contained four items of questions: test and evaluation, accessing reading material, varied roles, learner support services and the cost of education.

3.6 Pilot Study

Pilot study involved ten teachers to pre-test the research instruments. The pilot study was expected to help the researcher in identification of items in the questionnaire which would be ambiguous in eliciting the relevant information. The items which were found ambiguous, and therefore not soliciting the intended information, were reconstructed or discarded altogether. The importance of carrying out a pilot study was that through pre-testing it would be possible to find some ambiguities in the questions asked and then the necessary corrections were made before the final study was carried out.

3.6.1 Instrument Validity

Validity is the appropriateness, meaningfulness and usefulness of the inferences a researcher makes. Validity therefore has to do with how accurate the data obtained in the study represents the variables of the study, (Cochran, 1993). To ascertain the content validity of the research instrument, the researcher consulted colleagues who help to enrich the data collection instruments. This enabled the researcher to develop instruments that would yield valid, relevant and reliable data.

To ensure that the survey instrument was valid, the questions in the instrument were related to the distance education programmes at KEMU and its impacts on students' livelihoods and the factors affecting their performance as they pursue their education through the programmes. Some questions were also formulated to capture all the variables as identified in the conceptual framework and ensure that the content logically got the intended purpose.

3.6.2 Instrument Reliability

Reliability refers to the consistency of scores or answers from one administration of an instrument to another, and from one set of items to another, (Bishop, 2007), the instruments were administered within four days to ensure that the conditions under which the measurements taken place were similar. This ensured that external sources of variation to the measures were minimized. Split-halves method was used to determine reliability and the reliability statistics generated in the study was above the recommended coefficient of 0.7.

This implies that the research instrument was reliable because it had a reliability coefficient of 0.8. This method is more practical in that it does not require two administrations of the same or an alternative form test. The total number of items was divided into two halves. In addition enumerators were trained and given directions for administering the instrument to avoid variations from one enumerator to the other.

3.7 Data Collection Procedures

To carry out the study, permission and authority was sought from the Ministry of Higher Education, through a letter of authorization from the school of continuing and distance learning, University of Nairobi. Subsequent clearance to carry out the study was obtained from the District Education Officer (DEO) in Nyeri District. The researcher then visited KEMU and introduced herself to the administration to inform them of the intended study and created some rapport. The pilot study was then conducted and corrections were made to the questionnaires. Then, afterwards, the researcher administered the questionnaires personally to the respondents at different times. The filled questionnaires were collected one week later.

3.8 Data Analysis and Presentation

The results of the questionnaires were checked for completeness for the preparation of its analysis. Then the Data was appropriately coded for ease of use with Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The simplest way to present information according to Brinker (1988) is in descriptive statistics, that is; tables, and distributions which gave a summary of data about a single variable.

Descriptive statistics enabled the researcher to meaningfully describe a distribution of scores or measurements using a few indices or statistics. Each statistics used in descriptive statistics had a purpose or role. The types of statistics or indices used depended on the type of variables in the study and the scale of measurement used. Using

the SPSS program gave such descriptive statistics and therefore the program was much appropriate for the analysis. The findings were presented in tables.

Table 3.1 Operational Definition of Variables

Objective	Variable	Indicators	Measurement	Scale	Data Analysis
To establish the extent to which access to learning materials has influenced completion of B/Ed distance learners in Nyeri Municipality.	Learning resources	ICT skills, reading materials	Having ICT skills, Availability of reading materials	Ordinal	Descriptive statistics
To determine the extent to which roles of adulthood have influenced the completion of b/Ed students in Nyeri Municipality.	Adulthood roles	Family, work place, Society	Challenges of adulthood roles Coping with adulthood roles	Nominal	Descriptive statistics
To establish the extent to which cost of education has influenced completion of distance learners in Nyeri Municipality	Cost of education	Tuition cost, cost of ICT services, personal upkeep	- Costs of tuition, ICT services and personal upkeep	Nominal	Descriptive statistics
To establish the extent to which learner support services are available to distance learners in Nyeri Municipality	Learner support services	Mentoring, counselling, library services	- Availability of learner support services	Ordinal	Descriptive e statistics

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 Introduction

A structured questionnaire, posing 4 problems expected to be faced by distance learners pursuing university courses through distance education in Nyeri municipality was handed out to 100 randomly selected students at Kenya Methodist University. The questionnaires were administered personally by the researcher to the respondents who filled and returned the questionnaires on the same day. Having assured them of the confidentiality of the information solicited from them, the response was positive making the return rate very impressive at 80 % as shown in table 4.1.

4.2 Response Rate

Table 4.1: Response Rate

Response category	**Frequency**	**Percentage (%)**
Response	80	80
Non-response	8	8
Poor response	12	12
Total	**100**	**100**

A total of 100 questionnaires were administered, only 80 were returned fully filled, translating the questionnaire return rate to about 80%, another 8 questionnaire representing (8%) were not returned while 12 (12%) had not been properly responded to

and most of the questions were not answered hence their responses were not included in the analysis. Therefore, only 80 (80%) questionnaire were used to carry out data analysis which formed the sample size of analysis where n=80.

4.3 Demographic Information

4.3.1: Genders representation of the respondents

The first item of the study sought information on the respondent's demographic information beginning with the gender distribution of the respondents. This was presented as in table 4.2.

Table 4.2: Gender distribution of the Respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	32	40
Female	48	60
Total	**80**	**100**

The study found out that majority of distance learners in Nyeri Municipality were women as represented by 60 % while the male were represented by 40 %. This implies that distance learning is a mode of education that is mostly preferred by the women.

4.3.2 Marital Status of the Respondents

The respondents were asked to indicate their marital status and the response presented in table 4.3 as shown below.

Table 4.3 Marital status of the respondents

Marital Status	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Single	20	25
Married	60	75
Total	**80**	**100**

The table shows that 75 % of the respondents were married while 25 % were single. This means that distance learning is the preferred mode of study by people who have their own families.

4.3.3: Ages of the Respondents

The respondents were further asked to state their ages. This was presented as shown in table 4.4.

Table 4.4: Age Distribution of the Respondents

Age group (in years)	Frequency	Percentage (%)
18-25	16	20
26-35	24	30
36-45	28	35
46 and above	12	15
Total	**80**	**100**

The table indicates that majority of the respondents in distance learning were between 36-45 years old as represented by 35 %, followed by the those who were in age bracket of 26-35 years at 30 %, then those who had just acquired adulthood at 18 – 25 years at a response rate of 20% with the oldest at 46 years and above ranking lowest at 15 %. Thus distance learning as a mode of learning is preferred by all the age groups who have acquired their adulthood status but more so by those who are mainly above 18 and 45 years old.

4.3.4: The Respondents Level of Schools Taught

The study sought information on the levels schools where the respondents taught, they responded as shown in table 4.5.

Table 4.5: Distribution of respondents by the level of schools taught

Teaching school	**Frequency**	**Percentage (%)**
Primary	28	35
Secondary	52	65
Total	**80**	**100**

The response above indicates that 65 % of the respondents were secondary school teachers where as 35 % of the respondents taught in primary schools. These implies that majority of the student joining the distance learning programmes from Nyeri Municipality are secondary school teachers.

4.4 Access to Learning Materials

The first item sought information on the respondents rating on the availability of learning materials. The response was presented as shown in table 4.6.

4.4.1: Availability of Learning Materials

Table 4.6: Availability of learning materials

Availability of learning materials	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	64	80
No	16	20
Total	**80**	**100**

The table shows that most of the respondents appreciate the learning materials provided for them as they undertake their programmes under the distance education mode at 80 % rating with only 20 % of the respondents felt that the learning materials were not as important.

4.4.2: Provision of Help by the Learning Materials

Asked to rate the extent to which the learning materials provided helped them, the respondents gave their rating as presented in table 4.7.

Table 4.7: Rating of learning materials

Extent of helpfulness	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Very great extent	20	25
Great extent	48	60
Moderate extent	12	15
Small extent	0	0
No extent at all	0	0
Total	**80**	**100**

Majority of respondents said that the materials provided were helpful to a great extent at a rating of 60%, those who thought they were helpful to a very great extent were 25% while 15% said it was helpful with moderately extent. This means that the respondents find the materials provided for them very helpful to them.

4.4.3: Problems Encountered in Accessing Learning Materials

The study sought information on the problems encountered by the respondents in accessing the learning materials. The response was presented as shown in table 4.8.

Table 4.8: Problems Encountered in Accessing Learning Materials

Problems	Frequency	Percentage (%)
No library in my home town	20	25
Lack of equipments	48	60
Travelling expenses to access to materials	12	15
Poor technological skills	0	0
Delayed course materials by tutors	0	0
Expensive to buy books, computers and other tools	0	0
Total	**80**	**100**

From the table it is clear that most of the respondents experienced problems as a result of lack of equipments at 60 %, 25 % of the respondents have a problem with access to reading materials since they have no access to libraries from their homes where as 15 % experience problems with the travelling expenses. This implies that most of the distance learners lack adequate equipments for their programmes.

4.4.4: Effects on problems of completion

The researcher sought to find out how the problems identified have influenced completion of the students. The response was presented as shown in table 4.9.

Table 4.9: Influence on the students

Extent of effect	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Very great Extent	15	19
Great Extent	43	54
Moderate Extent	22	27
Small Extent	0	0
No extent at all	0	0
Total	**80**	**100**

Based on a likert scale measurement the study established that access to learning had a direct impact on the performance of the students to a great extent at 54 %, while those who felt that access to learning materials affected the students performance to a moderate extent were rated at 27 % with the ones who rated the effect of access to learning materials to a very great extend ranking lowest at 15 %.

4.5 Adulthood Roles

4.5.1: Adult Roles and their effect on Performance

The respondents were asked questions related to adult roles and how they affect their performance in distance learning and they responded as follows: table 4.10 presents the challenges faced by the distance learners.

Table 4.10: The effect of Adulthood Roles on Distance Learners

Challenges faced	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Lack of time	48	60
Fatigue	20	25
Loss of concentration	12	15
Total	**80**	**100**

The study found out that 60% of the respondents lacked adequate time, 25% suffered from fatigue due to the demanding schedules of the programme and 15% had loss of concentration as a result of having to run numerous programmes at the same time. Lack of time could be as a result of the responsibilities at work as well as family matters. Thus lack of time had the highest responses as well as fatigue.

4.5.2: Students' Coping Mechanisms

The study sought to establish how the students were coping with their studies. They responded as shown in table 4.11.

Table 4.11: Coping with Studies

How to cope with Studies	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Delegating some responsibilities	12	15
Neglecting some duties	8	10
Planning and scheduling	60	75
Total	**80**	**100**

Planning and scheduling ahead of studies are the most common coping mechanism adopted by most of the students at 75%, 10% neglected or ignored some of their duties and assignments and 15% had prefer delegating some of their responsibilities in their families or places of work. Thus planning and scheduling seems to be the preferred coping mechanism for the distance learners in Nyeri Municipality.

4.5.3: Effect of Adulthood Roles on Completion

The study sought to establish the effect of adulthood roles on completion of the distance learners. The response was presented in table 4.12.

Table 4.12: Effect of Adulthood Roles on completion

	Frequency	**Percentage (%)**
To a very great extent	12	15
Great extent	40	50
Moderate extent	28	35
Small extent	0	0
Not Extent at all	0	0
Total	**80**	**100**

From the table, 50 % of the distance learners felt that adulthood roles influence the students completion to a great extent, 35 % were affected to a moderate extent with 15 % feeling the effect to a very great extent. This implies that the effect of adulthood on the distant learners.

4.6: Cost of education

4.6.1: Students Ratings on the charged of Distance Education

To assess the cost of undertaking such programmes, the researcher sought information on the students rating on the charges of running the programmes. They responded as shown in table 4.17.

Table 4.13: Cost of Education

Cost of education	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Very cheap	0	0
Cheap	40	50
Same as traditional	0	0
Expensive	28	35
Very expensive	12	15
Total	**80**	**100**

From the table, 50 % of the respondents cited the cost of education to be cheap as compared to tradition learning while 35% said it is expensive and a further 15% said it is very expensive. There was a 50/50 win on both cases hence the cost running the distance education programmes is relative to an individual capacity and experiences with other institutions offering such programmes.

4.6.2: Problems Encountered as a result of the Cost of Education

Further the study sought to establish the problems encountered in relation to the cost of education. The response was presented as follows in table 4.18

Table 4.14: Problems Encountered in Relation to the Cost of Education

Problem in relation to cost of education	**Frequency**	**Percentage (%)**
Extra costs	16	20
Additional packages	16	20
Internet	48	60
Total	**80**	**100**

From the table above 60% of the respondents said that they find internet costs be too high, 20% said extra cost arise from books and another 20% had to enrol for extra packages for example computer studies alongside the programmes which is very expensive and exhaustive too.

4.6.3: Effect of Cost of Education on completion

Finally the study tested on the extent to which the distance learners felt that the cost of education influenced completion of the students. The response was presented in table 4.19 as follows.

Table 4.15: Effect of Cost of Education on completion of Distance Learners

Extent of effect	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Very great extent	4	5
Great extent	20	25
Moderate extent	36	45
Small Extent	20	25
No extent at all	0	0
Total	**80**	**100**

Most of the respondents felt that the cost of education had influenced completion of distance learners at 25% who were greatly affected by the cost of education in relation to competion, 45% were affected moderately and a further 25% said that they were affected by a small extent with those who were affected to a very great extent ranking lowest at 5%.

4.7 Learner Support Services

4.7.1: Variety of Support Services

The first item one the learners support services questioned the respondents on the variety of support services offered to them in the distance learning programmes. The response was presented as shown in table 4.20.

Table 4.16: Support Services Offered

Support services Offered	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Learning Materials	32	40
Library support	20	25
Tutors	10	12
Technical support	6	8
Examination And evaluation services	12	15
Total	**80**	**100**

The study found out that 40 % of the learning support services offered was learning materials, 25% was through library support, 12 % were the tutors/lecturers and 8 % was technical support and 15 % was examination and evaluation services. This implies that the distant learners have a variety of services offered to them and that is why most of them prefer such programmes.

The respondents were asked to rate the importance of the distance learners services to the students. The response was presented as shown in table 4.21.

Table 4.17: Importance of Learner Services Offered

Rating of services satisfaction	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Very satisfactory	20	25
Satisfactory	24	30
Moderate satisfactory	36	45
Unsatisfactory	0	0
Very Unsatisfactory	0	0
Total	80	100

From the table above 25% of the respondents were very satisfied with services offered, 30% of were satisfied and 45% were moderately satisfied with the services offered. This means that most of the distance learners are generally satisfies with the learners services offered.

4.7.3: Effect of Availability of Learning Services on completion

The final item tested on the effect of the availability of the learners' service on the completion of the learners. The response was presented as follows.

Table 4.22: Effect of availability of learner support services on completion

Support services effect on completion	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Very great extent	28	35
Great extent	28	35
Moderate extent	20	25
Small extent	4	5
No extent all	0	0
Total	**80**	**100**

Availability of learner support services has a great impact on learners at to a very great and a great extent at 35% in each case. 25% respondent to felt that the availability of the learners service affected the students completion to a moderate extent while 5% said learners support services offered affected their completion to a small extent.

4.8 Summary of the Findings

Achieving a response of 80 %, this study revealed that irregular and unsystematic supply of learning materials, untimely tutorial help and or poor quality of supplied learning materials and lack of study centres within the neighbourhood are among the top of the list of the severe problems faced by distance learners. Students said that their opportunities to gain entrance into upgrade programmes are limited and it is difficult to advance

otherwise. From the tables above distance learning costs less than traditional programmes and acceptance is easier. While the cost of tuition is low, however students feel that the additional costs enumerated above for example internet and travelling expenses are too high.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, DISCUSSIONS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the findings, summarises, concludes and makes recommendations to the factors challenges facing the Bachelor of Education distance learners at KEMU in Nyeri Municipality. The results obtained are in accordance to relevant information from respondents who filled the questionnaires and the summary is based on BED students who are undertaking the distance learning programme

5.2 Discussion of Findings

The findings indicate that many respondents have challenges in accessing reading materials. They lack I.C.T skills and very few reading materials given by the institution and that the majority of respondents lack enough time to study and if it were not for distance mode many would not study. They have jobs to do, attend family and work in the community to attend to.

Further the findings shows that most respondents did not receive feedback on time, a number of them cited lack of preparedness and other technical problems as other major factors influencing the completion of distance learners in KEMU. Most of the adults prefer the distance learning as it compliments well with their other responsibilities as parents and guardians hence many adults have the desire to enrol for distance learning.

Although distance learning programmes is cheap the internet cost, buying materials for reading and cost of travelling all together make distance learning quite expensive. The findings also indicate that many respondents were dissatisfied with the support given by tutors which has greatly affected their completion.

5.3 Summary of Findings

This part discusses the research findings based on variables namely, accessing reading materials, adulthood roles, test and evaluation, cost of education and learner support services. The study found out that most of the students were faced with problems to do with lack of access to reading materials, their duties as adults which are quite demanding, the cost of education which in most cases comes from the internet accessibility and lack of adequate learners support services.

This posses a major challenge to the distance learners where learning materials are not available from the institutions. At the same time they do not have I.C.T. skills to use the internet. Kavulya (2004) in his study said that most Kenyan students have little or no exposure to library use and this affects the way they access reading materials. Mabawonku (2004) added that Library is the nerve centre of any education institution as it promotes auditions of reading, inquiry and independent thinking. Rowland and Rubbert (2001) opine that university libraries did not cater for specific needs of students.

Distance education increases access to learning thus this gives opportunity to many adults who gets a chance to go back to school. This mode of learning offers convenience and

flexibility for students who are busy at work. Sacchan and (2002) said that distance learners have characteristic as mature, employed as well as adult learners who have family responsibilities and they are highly motivated. Their roles affect their performance due to lack of enough time to study. A Skompa (2002) state that adults play multiple roles and experiences comes as some sort of life transition as they go back to school. Cael (2000) states that it is important to address the needs of these students in ways that work best for them.

Different methods are used to test and evaluate distance students; these are CATs, questions, assignments and examinations. Delayed feedback for the same is the major issue. There is also no tutor control over assignment. Main examinations are not a problem since they are taken in controlled setting. Worthen and Sanders, (2000) states that feedback for performance should be given back to learners until desired outcomes are achieved.

Distance learning is cheap as compared to traditional learning. However it has its own hidden costs, these include costs of internet, travelling and cost of materials. Other expenses include travelling and materials for writing assignments. Since government does not have distance education policy for higher education there is no specific provision for distance education budget. As a result universities generate funds for learning programs. Therefore learners are forced to pay heavily for their studies. Siemens (2008) stated that the capacity to know is more critical that what is actually known and that cost of education for distance learner is still a major setback.

This plays a major role for distance learners. They need mentoring, advising and counselling services. They also need learning materials library and facilitators. When all these are available it enhances their learning. Feedback for most students said that it was slow.

5.4 Conclusion

Although most of the distance learners appreciate the materials that have been provided for them by the institution, their accessibility remains a challenge as most of the students lack equipments, do not have libraries and incur a lot of expenses in logistics. This is so despite the fact they feel that the few that are available are very helpful and therefore they feel that these challenges has led most students not completing in time in their courses.

As adults and parents, the distance learners are faced with a number of challenges in running the programmes. These are lack of enough time; most of them experience fatigue as they have to attend to other family issues which also lead to lack of concentration on their part. As such most of them have devised various coping mechanisms which range from ensuring that proper plans are in place to factor in all their responsibilities, delegating some of their duties and even neglecting others that are considered less important.

Communication is key between teachers and student in a Distance Education environment. Without key communication, the learning is not existent. The communication being used must be an effective communication device and a positive relationship with student and teacher. This applies to distance learning too as it has been

proved to be a very effective mode of education especially for those people who do not have access to education through formal education system throughout the country and the world.

Some students attempt distance education without proper training of the tools needed to be successful in the program. Students must be provided with training on each tool that is used throughout the program. Lack of advanced technology skills can lead to an unsuccessful experience for a student. Institutions of higher learning have a responsibility to adopt a proactive policy for managing technology barriers.

5.5 Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study the following recommendations were made on the factors affecting the performance of BED distance learners at KEMU in Nyeri Municipality.

i. The university should train and employ more distance learner instructors or lectures who have specialized in the area of distance learning as they understand the learners' characteristics to improve on the student's access to learning materials.
ii. The university to come with modalities to assist the students to balance their adulthood roles with the academic requirements of the distance programme and put measures to curb the problem of delayed feedback from the respective course lecturers

iii. ICT lessons to be given adequate time during tutorials to equip the learners with the necessary technological skills needed in distance learning programs especially by continuous testing and evaluation methods.

iv. Government to implement a lending financial policy which is learner friendly to distance learners who are self sponsored which are affordable and manageable e.g. women should be offered more time to pay-back their loans from academic financial institutions e.g. HELB

v. The institution to explore more options mostly in technology for delivering instructional materials to learners to avoid delay and ensure enough support for learners.

vi. The management of KEMU to prepare instructional materials well in advance and issue the same during registration of courses.

5.6 Suggested area for further research

In an effort to fill in existing gaps more suggestions for further research to contribute to the body of knowledge, more needs to be done to answer the following questions;

i. What are the factors that influence enrollment of learners to distance education as a mode of study?

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I: INTRODUCTORY LETTER

Dear respondent,

I am a Masters student at the University of Nairobi and collecting data on factors influencing completion of distance education learners who have done bachelor of education: a case study of Nyeri Municipality.

I would be grateful if you could spare some time and complete the enclosed questionnaire. Your identity will be treated with utmost confidentiality and the information provided will be used purely for the purpose of the study and no other reason whatsoever. Your timely response will be highly appreciated.

Yours faithfully,

Jemimah Gachugi

APPENDIX II: QUESTIONNAIRE

The purpose of this questionnaire is to collect data on factors influencing distance education learners and the way these affect their completion of their completion. You have been selected to take part in this study. Kindly spare some time to answer the questions to the best of your knowledge. Further, you are assured that your identity will be treated with utmost confidentiality and the information will only be used for the purpose of the study. Hence, please do not write your name or that of the school. Please tick (√) where appropriate or fill in the required information and kindly respond to all items.

Part A: Demographic information

1. What is your gender? Male ( ) Female ( )

2. Marital status Single ( ) Married ( )

3. Kindly indicate the school you teach? Primary ( ) Secondary ( )

4. When did you enrol for distance learning? .....

Part B: Access to Learning Materials

5. Do the materials provided to the distance learners help them in their course?

Yes ( )

No ( )

If yes to what extent are they very helpful?

Very Great extent ( )

Great extent…. ( )

Moderate extent ( )

Small extent ( )

Not extent at all ( )

6. What problems do you encounter in relation to access to learning materials?

No library in my home town ( )

Ill equipped libraries ( )

Travelling expenses to access to materials ( )

Poor technological skills hence can't access materials from the internet ( )

Delayed course materials by tutors ( )

Expensive to buy books, computers and other tools ( )

Others (specify) .....

7. To what extent does access to learning materials influence completion of distance learners?

Very Great extent ( )

Great extent ( )

Moderate extent ( )

Small extent ( )

Not extent at all ( )

Part C: Adulthood Roles

8. Which are the challenges that distance learners face due to family and community activities?

Lack of study time ( )

Fatigue ( )

Loss of concentration ( )

Others (specify).....

9. How do distance learners cope with assignment, their jobs as well as other community based activities?

Delegating some responsibilities ( )

Neglecting some duties ( )

Planning and scheduling ( )

Others (specify).....

10. To what extent do adult varied responsibilities influence completion of distance learners?

Very great extent ( )

Great extent ( )

Moderate extent ( )

Small extent ( )

Not extent at all (

Part E: Cost of education

11. Compared to traditional education, how would you rate the cost of distance education?

Very cheap ( )

Cheap ( )

Same as traditional education ( )

Expensive ( )

Very expensive ( )

12. What problems do you encounter in relation to the cost of education?

It has extra costs e.g. buying books, travelling ( )

I had to enrol for computer packages ( )

The cost of internet is high ( )

Others (specify).....

13. To what extent does the cost of education affect the performance of distance learners?

Very Great extent ( )

Great extent ( )

Moderate extent ( )

Small extent ( )

Not extent at all ( )

Part D: Learner Support Services

14. What learner support services do you get in the course of learning?

Learning materials ( )

Library services ( )

Tutors ( )

Technical support ( )

Examination and evaluation services ( )

Others (specify).....

15.. To what extent are these services satisfactory?

Very satisfactory ( )

Satisfactory ( )

Moderately satisfactory ( )

Unsatisfactory ( )

Very unsatisfactory ( )

16. To what extent does availability of learner support services influence the performance of distance learners?

Very Great extent ( )

Great extent ( )

Moderate extent ( )

Small extent ( )

Not extent at all ( )

Thank you for your time and cooperation