UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

CHALLENGES AND PROSPECTS FACING STUDENTS OF DISTANCE

EDUCATION IN GHANAIAN PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES: THE CASE OF

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST STUDY CENTRE

BY

FRANCIS JUSTICE KWESI AGBOFA

Dissertation Submitted to the Institute for Educational Planning and Administration of the Faculty of Education, University of Cape Coast, in partial fulfilment of the Requirements for Award of Master of Education Degree in Educational Administration

MARCH 2012

ABSTRACT

The study was conducted to find the challenges and prospects facing students of distance education in Ghanaian public universities: the case of University of Cape Coast study centre. The sample for the study were twenty teachers and two hundred students making a total of two hundred and twenty respondents. The respondents were selected from` Cape Coast distance education study centre at Oyoko Methodist senior high school in the Koforidua municipality.

Questionnaires were used to collect the data. Frequencies and percentages were used to analyze the responses. The result of the study has shown that a majority of the respondents; 70% of students and 75% of tutors were not satisfied with the feedback situation at the UCC distance education programme. Also, majority of the respondents; 65% of students and 85% of tutors faced the challenge of inadequate modules in the UCC distance education programme. Furthermore, most of the respondents; 77% of students and 90% of tutors complained about inadequate support systems for distance students and staff. In addition, there was the issue of inadequate motivation of tutors of the UCC distance education programme. Most of the respondents; 70% of students and 100% of tutors accepted the fact that tutors are not adequately motivated. In light of these findings recommendations were made to enhance the programme. It was recommended that authorities of UCC distance education programme need to address these factors to improve teaching and learning.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

DEDICATION

To my wife Celestina Agbofa.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background to the Study

Formal education, especially at the higher levels, plays a vital role in the development of human resources for both personal and social advancement (Ankomah, 1998). A post-independence phenomenon in many sub-Saharan African countries has been an ever-rising school-going population. This scenario is partly the result of the fact that most governments of the newly independent African countries made it a policy to use education as an important tool for social change and national development (Adentwi, 2002).

For the past ten years or so, the universities in Ghana have had the unpleasant duty of turning away a large number of qualified applicants every year as a result of their inability to admit not even half of these applicants. This situation has been attributed to limited and deteriorating facilities, coupled with this limited facilities is the rising cost of providing quality education at the secondary and tertiary levels. The government of Ghana is finding it increasingly difficult to fund tertiary education all alone. As a result of the above reasons and many others the government of Ghana has adopted distance education as a viable complement to the conventional face-to-face education. This step is inspired by the vision that all Ghanaians should have access to all forms of education and training regardless of where they live.

The idea of distance education (DE) is not new in Ghana. It was more vibrant two or three decades ago than it is now. It used to be known as correspondence education, an avenue through which a number of workers and professionals upgraded themselves. The economy of Ghana started deteriorating after independence thus making it difficult for student workers to afford the cost of upgrading themselves by this means of education. The income levels of workers were so low that they could not simply afford to pay their fees.

However, after some time the idea of using Distance Education for manpower development resurfaced strongly and this led to the introduction of a number of Distance Education initiatives including the Modular Teacher Training Programme (MTTP), which was introduced in 1982. This programme was meant to upgrade untrained teachers academically and professionally through some form of Distance Education. Through this programme 7,537 untrained teachers received professional training and obtained Teachers Certificate 'A'. However, this programme was abandoned because of certain difficulties it faced.

Despite the difficulties encountered in the earlier attempts with Distance Education in Ghana, there was still a strong conviction on the part of the Government of Ghana that Distance Education is a viable complement to conventional education especially at the tertiary level. This conviction was partly due to the fact that universities were not able to admit even half of qualified applicants due to limited facilities.

Consequently, between 1991 and 1994, the government of Ghana through the Ministry of Education (MOE) sponsored a number of surveys to

assess the Distance Education needs of Ghana. Two important international organizations which were involved in these surveys are the Commonwealth of Learning (COL) and the United Nation Education Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

Upon the recommendations from these surveys the universities agreed to start Distance Education programmes. The four universities, University of Ghana, University of Cape Coast, University of Science and Technology and University of Education, Winneba started preparations for this new model of educational delivery. University of Ghana opted to offer four courses through its Distance Education programme. These are Sociology, English, Religious and Political Science at the Bachelor degree level. For University of Cape Coast the courses selected were Bachelor of Education in Primary Education and Post Graduate Diploma in Education (PGDE); at the University of Science and Technology, two programmes were proposed for the programme. These were B.Sc (Building Technology) and B.Sc (Building Science). However, funding of the Distance Education programme was a problem for the universities.

Of these four universities only UCEW was able to take off in 1996 as a result of assistance from the then British Overseas Development Administration (ODA), now Department for International Development (DFID). UCEW took off by admitting a first batch of 196 students to pursue Post-Diploma Bachelor of Education (B.ED) degree in four subject areas namely; English Education, Life Skill Education, Mathematics Education and Science Education. UCEW therefore became the Pioneer in university level Distance Education in Ghana. UCC AND UG has just taken off in this

2001/2002 academic year with diploma programmes in Basic Education and Youth in Development Work respectively.

The general purpose of distance education in Ghana is to increase access to and participation in education of all types and at all levels for all; to facilitate progression through the education system; to improve people's capacity to cope with rapid changes in knowledge and skills, and thereby improve upon their contribution to the economy and society; to increase in equality and democratization of education; and to make education cost-effective and affordable.

Furthermore, to improve learner achievement and retention; to produce graduates who are independent and more autonomous learners; to develop quality assurances processes in all aspects of Distance Education; and to make courses relevant to the needs of personnel for course design, development, and delivery, Besides, to provide direction to the development of Distance Education in the country; to sustain efficient and effective management, control, monitoring and evaluation of Distance Education programmes and to strengthen the institution for effective and efficient delivery of Distance Education.

The mission of Ghana's distance education programme is to make quality education at all level more accessible and relevant to meet the learning needs of Ghanaians so as to enhance their performance and improve the quality of their lives. The official title of the policy document is "Ministry of Education, Ghana Distance Education programme "Policy Document". This document is so far the official policy document, which directs how Distance Education should be delivered in Ghana. It was presented to the Minister of

Education who duly sent an acknowledgement in a letter sent to the committee, which prepared the document.

Distance Education is making significant impact in teacher education. According to Koomson (1998), there is no difference in professional competence between teachers trained by distance and those trained by convention system. Stakeholders must therefore show commitment towards the programme in order to sustain it. For distance education to work there is the need for proper planning and execution of its prospects and the key problems that confront it.

Statement of the Problem

Distance learning is an excellent method of reaching the adult learner. Adult learners desire a higher degree of flexibility to enable them meet the competing priorities of work, home, and school. The structure of distance learning gives adults the greatest possible control over the time, place and pace of education. However, it is not without problems. Reduced student motivation due to the lack of face-to-face contact with teachers and peers, potentially prohibitive startup cost, and lack of faculty support are all barriers to successful distance learning. The question therefore, is what are the real challenges that distance learners face as they try to cope with the pressures from work, home and school. Also what opportunities exist to improve and encourage distance learners to achieve their quest for higher education.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to examine the challenges facing students pursuing Distance Education and prospects derived from Distance Education as an alternative means to conventional education. It is to explore how best the

programme can effectively be managed to ensure its sustainability and acceptability.

The specific objectives of the study are;

1. Obtain views from students and tutors on challenges of Distance Education in Ghanaian public institution universities.

2. Find out what support services exist at the tertiary level for distance learners.

3. Examine the prospects of Distance Education in Ghanaian public universities.

Research Questions

The study sought answers to the following questions:

1. What are the major challenges facing the learners of Distance Education programme?

2. What kind of support services are available for learners of distance education programme?

3. What are the prospects of the Distance Education Programme for the learners?

Significance of the Study

The study will be of practical importance to educational planners and policy makers. The study and its findings could contribute to the development of Distance Education system in Ghana to promote our human resource development effort.

Presently all post secondary institutions are to be recognized as tertiary institutions under the tertiary education reform. Such institutions could also consider how best they might apply Distance Education to other particular

circumstances. This could also be of significance to administrators as well as parents and teachers and other stakeholders. Finally, since the government of Ghana is committed to Distance Education, the study could help government appreciate the problems of Distance Education and provide the necessary assistance to support Distance Education in Ghana.

Delimitation of the Study

As Gay (1987) rightly points out, using whole population in research is not feasible. Thus, this research is conducted in the Oyoko Methodist Senior High School in New Juaben Municipality of Eastern Region where students enrolment in University of Cape Coast to pursue various programmes for the award of Diploma and Degree Certificates through Distance Education programme are centered. The study sought to examine the challenges facing learners pursuing Distance Education in Ghanaian tertiary institutions and initiate appropriate measures to solve them.

The study was restricted to learners of Oyoko Centre for Distance Education because my intervention was to unearth the causes of the challenges among learners pursuing Distance Education in this tertiary institution – University of Cape Coast. Therefore, the research involves only people who are direct stakeholders of tertiary education.

Limitations of the Study

Descriptive survey research design is primarily concerned with the survey and analysis of existing phenomenon, and does not attempt to introduce any intervention strategies. However, after the problem has been identified and analyzed measures can be taken to solve it. Again, the design is susceptible to errors and distortions if the researcher does not check the biases that may be

introduced in the measuring instruments, such as the use of the questionnaire to favour one's profession. It is therefore necessary to cross-check the measuring instruments to remove all prejudices which might have been introduced.

The use of questionnaire for the instrument will not allow me to note possible evasiveness or reluctance on the part of the respondents in answering the questions. I would not be able to develop the necessary rapport that would take place in a one-to-one interaction. Again, the use of closed-ended questions will mean that respondents will be forced to make decisions without allowing them enough room to express their own opinions.

Besides, the questionnaire as a tool for data collection cannot be used or administered on illiterates, and people who are too young to read and write. It does not offer opportunities for motivating the respondent to participate in the study or to answer the questions. The characteristics of non-response associated with questionnaire especially the mail-questionnaire is likely to affect the representatives of the sample. This may result in a biased final sample. Questionnaires also do not provide an opportunity to collect additional information through observation, probing, prompting and clarification of questions while they are being completed.

Furthermore, the large number of first year students who will not be included in the study could be a limitation on the results of the study, as their perceptions of challenges and prospects of Distance Education in Ghana tertiary institutions will not be considered. However, since their relatively short period of stay in the programme would not afford them the chance of making informed opinions about challenges and prospects of Distance

Education in Ghana, their exclusion from the study would not seriously affect the findings of the study.

Organization of the Rest of the Study

The dissertation is organized in five chapters. The first chapter gives an account of the background to the study, the statement of the problem, the purpose of the study, research questions, significance of the study, delimitation of the study and Limitations in carrying the research.

The second chapter deals with the review of related literature to the topic. This chapter provides support for the study. The opening paragraph of the chapter provides an overview of what is covered in the chapter. The chapter is broken into sections to cover the important aspects of the review such as: Theoretical Framework, conceptual Base and other relevant sub-headings to include empirical review. Summary of major findings of the literature review is provided in the chapter.

Chapter three contains Methodology and techniques employed in the research. This chapter explains how the study was conducted. The opening paragraph includes the statement of the purpose of the study. The following sub-headings are used in this chapter: Research design, population, sample and sampling procedure instrument, data collection and data analysis procedure.

Chapter four contains presentation and analysis/results and discussion of findings of the study. This includes statement of the purpose of the study and summary of statistical tools and procedure used in the study. Results with their discussion are presented by research questions/hypotheses. The discussion includes the interpretation of the findings in reference to the literature/previous findings. Each finding is evaluated and implications are

examined with respect to the current theoretical position on the issue as well as educational practice.

The fifth chapter contains a summary, conclusion and recommendations. The summary involves an overview of the research problem, methodology and findings. The conclusion is based on the Results and Findings and not a restatement of the results of the study or Summary of the Discussion and Recommendations are based on the key findings of the study. It is made to specific persons/bodies/organizations. Suggestions are given for future research in the chapter. Faculty of Education (2010).

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter provides support for the study. In other words it sets up the theoretical framework upon which the study focuses. It involves the systematic identification, location and analysis of documents containing information related to the topic of study. In this chapter, the similarities and some differences between previous studies and this current study are examined. It positions the present study within the context of the overall research effort on this particular topic, thereby providing additional information with respect to the situation of challenges facing students in the Distance Education level in Ghanaian tertiary institutions. The literature review covers the following major areas:

1. Definition and characteristics of Distance Education

2. Theories and philosophies of Distance Education.

3. Learner support systems.

4. Barriers to learning in Distance Education.

5. Prospects of Distance Education.

Definition and Characteristics of Distance Learning

Distance Education has been in existence for a long time and many terms have come to be used for it. Though an old concept, there appears to be confusion about terminology and the relationship between it and other forms of non traditional methods of education. Various writers have endeavoured to define and delineate the concept in order to be more exact on what Distance Education means and what actually occurs in it. They have also attempted to express their views as to the effective practice of Distance Education.

The Commonwealth Learning (COL, 2004) explains Distance Education as the delivery of learning or training for those who are separated mostly by time and space from those who are teaching or training them. Thus, Distance Education has as its fundamental concept the separation of students and teachers by Distance and sometimes by time which necessitates the introduction of an artificial communications medium that will deliver information and also provide a channel for interaction between the teacher and the students (Moore & Kearsley, 1996). Keegan (1990) provides a comprehensive description of Distance Education. He perceives Distance Education to have the following characteristics:

1. Quasi – permanent separation of teacher and learner throughout the length of learning process. This distinguishes it from conventional face-to-face education.

2. Influence of an educational organization both in planning and preparation on learning materials and in the provision of student support services. This distinguishes it from private study and teach yourself programme.

3. The use of technical media, print, audio, video or computer, to unite teachers and learners and carry the content of the course.

4. The provision of two-way communication so that the student may benefit from or even initiate dialogue. This distinguishes it from other uses of technology in education.

5. The quasi-separation of the learning group throughout the length of the learning process so that people are usually taught as individuals and

not in groups, with the possibility of occasional meeting for both didactic and socialization purposes.

Another distinctive feature of Distance Education is the profile of students involved. According to Peters (1998), they differ primarily in the following ways: students will usually have a greater experience of life, most of them bring considerable experience of working to academic courses and this also have an effect on the ways in which they study in particular when the studies and the professional experience cover the same field; there are Distance Education students who want to reach a higher socio-economic status as a result of their experience at work; studying at a relatively large age has in general a completely different function than with 19 – 25 years old students because it fits into plans for life-cycles in a different way. From the above, Distance Education in this study can be defined as the kind of education in which the teacher is separated from the learners, thereby necessitating the use of artificial communication among teachers and learners.

Theories and Philosophies of Distance Education

The theoretical basis on which instructional models is based affects not only the way in which information is communicated to the student, but also the way in which the student makes sense and constructs new knowledge from the information which is presented. Two opposing views which impact instructional design are symbol-processing and situated cognition (Bredo, 1994). Until recently, the dominant view has been the traditional information processing approach, based on the concept of a computer performing formal operations on symbols (Seamans, 1990). The key concept is that the teacher can transmit a fixed body of information to students through an external

13

representation. He represents an abstract idea as a concrete image and then presents the image to the learner through a medium. The learner, in turn, perceives, decodes and stores it.

Horton (1994) modifies this approach by adding two additional factors: the student context (environment, current situation, and other sensory impact) and mind (memories, associations, emotions, inference and reasoning, curiosity and interest) to the presentation. The learner then develops his own image and uses it to construct new knowledge, in context, based on his own prior knowledge and abilities. Therefore, Distance Education systems now involve a high degree of interactivity between teacher and student even in rural and isolated communities: the office of Technology Assessment Stresses the importance of interactivity: distance learning react to their students' comments and questions (U.S, Congress, 1998). Moreover, virtual learning communities can be formed, in which students and researchers throughout the world who are part of the same class or study group can contact one another at any time to share observations information and expertise with one another (Vander Ven, 1994: Wolfe 1994).

Learner Support Systems

All the four universities in Ghana which have Distance Education units appreciate the crucial role learner support plays in the Distance Education programme. They acknowledge the importance of supplementing the print materials with monthly face-to-face sessions. This is evidence by the fact that UCEW now UEW already has seven study centers. UCC has centers in nine out of the ten regions in Ghana. UG has two centers for its Diploma programme but has plans to increase the number to four in order to save the

students from the problem of travelling long distances for face-to-face support. KNUST has not yet identified its centers even though it has plans to do so. These institutions believe in decentralizing learner support so that the students will not have to travel to the main university campus. This is highly commendable.

So far the three institutions (UG, UCC, and UEW) which offer Distance Education do not share common learner support systems: Every institution has its own centers in the regional capitals. In 2001, the Ghana National Association of Teachers (GNAT) offered to assist UCEW and UCC to collaborate by using their regional offices as joint study centers but it turned out that GNAT did not have the required number of rooms. The idea could not therefore materialize. There is a problem of providing the needed facilities at the centers. UEW which has been providing Distance Education for the past twelve years has not been able to set up the administrative structures which are required to make these centers fully functional. At each of its centers the only person there is the study centre coordinator. He has no office staff nor does he have basic office equipment like computers, office tables and chairs, cabinet, files, and access to telephone to help him in the day-to-day administration. The same situation prevails at the centers of UG and UCC. Also library books sent to the UEW centers have not been put on the shelves for students' use due to lack of the needed furniture.

What this means is that students are not benefiting from the centres as expected. There is the need for these centres to be made fully functional and also networked so that communication among them and also between them and the main university campus will be facilitated. At UEW it was found that

the organization of the monthly tutorials tends to be very expensive. This is because every month lecturers from Winneba have to travel to these centers to run tutorials. Once they go, the university has to pay their transport, night allowances and the tutoring itself. What makes this exercise less cost-effective is that at some of the centers a lecturer travels all the way to meet only two students. At one of the centers there is only one student offering mathematics. The institute has realized this and has decided to look for qualified people who work in the cities where the centers are located to employ them on part-time basis to organize the tutorials. Such people will be given orientation before being assigned to the distance learners. (Mensah & Owusu-Mensah, 2002).

A programme, which is gradually becoming a feature of UEW's support system, is the inclusion of lightly residential sessions (eight weeks) at the main campus for the students to join their on-campus counterparts to do the course for which study materials are not ready. This strategy, which is meant to make up for the slow pace of material production,: can create problems for the distance students who opted to study through the distance mode because they will not be able to study full time for various reasons. This problem requires that UEW will have to build the needed capacity to develop the materials needed for the Distance Education programme. Furthermore, the idea of statement support service is premised on the belief that pilling up packages of study materials on students will adequately ensure effective learning on their part unless there are human beings available to offer support of diverse kinds to bring learning at a distance closer to face-to-face resident education. In fact, where distance learners are denied such support services, they are likely to delay the completion of their programme or drop out

16

altogether (Rowntree, 1992). Student support service provided by the IEDE of University of Education of Winneba (UEW) include: regional study centers fully equipped with library books audio and video communication facilities and computers to provide access to information by distance learners. Such centers are also supposed to be used to provide face-to-face contact programme which permit some measures of feedback between course instructors and distant learners (Mensah & Owusu-Menah, 2002).

Barriers to Learning in Distance Education

While distance education has been in existence for at least 100 years, the medium has changed from pencil and paper correspondence course to real-time internet courses. But regardless of the medium, distance course have common characteristics and, likewise, have similar problems. This literature review examines student barriers to distance learning, faculty, barriers to Distance Learning and organizational barriers in Distance Learning.

Student Demographics

Changes in technology have accelerated the growth of distance learning. The improved access availability of electronic technology has enabled more adult students to participate in the learning process. Students who enroll in distance learning courses do so for convenience. They are either time –bound due to work or travel schedules or location-bound due to geographic or family responsibilities.

Distance learning is student-centered learning; thus knowing the characteristics and demographics of the distance learners helps us understand the potential barriers to learning. Although students' characteristics and needs may not guarantee success in a distance education course or programme, it is easy to defend these factors as

17

contributing to success. Additionally, knowledge about student characteristics and motivators help us understand who is likely to participate in distance education and, conversely, why others choose not to participate.

Student motivation has a powerful effect on attrition and completion rates, regardless of institutional setting. Motivators for adult distance students often differ from those of traditional students. Knowles (1980), in explaining the advantages of knowing the learner, believes that learner 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 distance learning courseware and strategies. More importantly, knowing the participants can help drive programme planning and policy formation, factors that are important to participation and success in distance learning.

Knox's (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 adults ability and willingness to participate in adult education. Further complicating the issue, deterrence to participation is exasperated by a prospective student's perception of the magnitude of his problems. In other words, "deterrents" is a multidimensional concept. No single factor appears to cause nonparticipation; however, individual student characteristics and life circumstances appear to have the greatest impact on participation (Kerka, 1986).

A 1984 survey of tele-course participants found 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).More

18

recent information seems to confirm these statistics. Over 70% of recent graduates who studied by the distance mode are in full-time employment. This suggests that a significant proportion were employed while they were involved in the learning process (Wood, 1996). Educational level prior to enrollment in a distance course or programme has been found to be significantly related to persistence (Rekkedal, 1983). The educational background of distance students ranges from less than high school to completion of a university degree. However, 20 % of U.S. tele-course students had at least an associate degree (Sheets, 1992). It is plausible that these students have an edge over new students because they already have study habits necessary to be successful in any academic setting. It is not surprising that researchers have found that students who had prior experience with nontraditional education were more likely to persist than those with exclusively conventional experience (Rekkedal, 1983).

In addition to prior educational level and prior experience level, personal factors and academic information help us to understand what motivates, and therefore, what potential barriers exist, in educating the distance student. Older students (over 50) appear to have higher course Completion rates (Rekkedal, 1983). This makes sense in that older students probably have greater coping skills in dealing with the problems of distance learning. Putting students demographics together, one can see adult distance learners are a diverse population; however, in general one can say the adult distance learner is typically employed full-time, and has personal commitments that compound his efforts in furthering his education.

Student Barriers to Distance Learning

Problems and barriers encountered by the student fall into several distinct categories such as costs and motivation, feedback and teacher contact, student support and services, alienation and isolation, lack of experience, and training. More so than traditional students, distance learners are more likely to have insecurities about learning (Knapper1988). These insecurities are founded in person and school related issues such as financial life, perceived irrelevance of their studies and lack of support from employers. Those pressures often result in higher dropout rates than among traditional students (Sweet, 1986).

A second area of concern for the distance student is the perceived lack of feedback or contact with the teacher. Students may have trouble in self-evaluation since there is no daily or weekly face-to-face contact with teachers. Keegan (1986) believes that the separation of student and teacher imposed by distance removes a vital "link" of communication between these two parties. This link must be restored through overt institutional efforts so that the teaching-learning transaction may be "reintegrated" (Tinto as cited in Keegan 1986, p. 120). Keegan hypothesized that students who did not receive adequate reintegration measures such as electronic or telephone communication could be less likely to experience complete academic and social integration into institutional life. Consequently, such students would be more likely to drop out (Sheets, 1992). These barriers can be instigated through technological methods such as e-mail, computer conferencing and electronic mail and can be integrated into the delivery of the course to provide the missing interactivity. These technologies are essentially asynchronous

20

because they continue to leave the student in charge of setting his or her own work time a critical success factor for the distance student. It is important that the student receive prompt feedback in any institutional setting, particularly in distance learning where the learner is impaired by the lack of casual contact with the teacher and other students. Those students who live outside metropolitan areas, they may not have access to reliable telecommunications, computers, and postal mail. The frustrations resulting from problems with communication between student and academic institution are factors of which distance education planners should be well aware of (Wood, 1996).

A third area of concern for distance students is the lack of support and services such as providing tutors academic planners and schedulers, and technical assistance. The isolation that results from distance learning process can complicate the learning process for adult students. Support for distance learners should not be overlooked when planning distance programmes. Students need tutors and academic planners to help them complete courses on time and to act as a support system when stress becomes a problem. Planners from Washington State University (WSU) note that "student services are a significant part of the budgeted costs of the problem". They also believe that "success in attracting, serving, and retaining students will hinge more on excellent student support services than any technology issues" (Oaks 1996). Technology costs and considerations can be a source of budgeting problems; however, student support for distance learners should take precedence.

A fourth problem area is the feeling of alienation and isolation reported by distance students. Students of all kinds want to be part of a larger school community, and simply a number of a "correspondence" course. For many

traditional students, this is an important part of their social lives. The "distance" aspect of distance learning takes away much of the social interactional learning environments. This problem must be mitigated by institutions providing a sense of personal involvement between the student and the institution. One way to help solve this problem is through the use of tutors that communicate with students either electronically or by phone. Students believe that having a good tutor is vitally important in helping them get the most out of a course and achieve a credit (Meacham & Evans, 1989). Geographical isolation has been identified as one of the major problems for distance students (Meacham & Evans 1989). In addition to the practical problems of contacting academic and administrative staff, obtaining study materials and borrowing library books, distance students suffer from the disadvantage of being unable to interact with other students and are often denied the perception that they belong to a scholarly community. This may lead to feelings of inadequacy and insecurity, and lack of confidence in their own abilities (Wood, 1996).

A fifth problem is prevalent with newer distance students. If distance learning institutions are serious about providing equity of educational opportunity to all, then careful consideration must be given to the special needs of students undertaking distance education for the first time. Of particular importance is the design of study materials for distance students. Study materials must take into account the significant proportion of students who enroll with little or no experience of distance study. These students are at risk of dropping out unless they develop study survival skills as rapidly as possible (Wood, 1996).

Another problem encountered by students is the lack of student training, particularly in reference to technical issues. Many adult students are not well versed in the use of technology such as computers and the internet. Using electronic medium in distance learning can inadvertently exclude students who lack computer or writing skills. This skills are required if computer technology is used. Students will typically be offered volumes of electronic based information. Using this information will be a problem for some non-technical students. They must be taught how to manage, not only their study time, but the materials presented as well. If students are undertaking distance learning courses that require knowledge of computers, then the students must be taught at a minimum, the fundamentals of operating the system of choice of the distance-taught course. If distance learning is to be successful, technical barriers must be made a non-issue Wood, (1996).

Faculty Barriers in Distance Learning

Faculty experience problems such as lack of staff training in course development and technology, lack of support systems for distance learning in general and inadequate faculty selection for distance learning courses. Sometimes the course work for traditional and distance students is the same. Often it is not. There can be a lot of up front effort in designing distance learning material. This can impose a burden on teachers who already have material for traditional classrooms. Computers, video equipment, communications software and the like, present challenges and frustrations. Faculty must know how to use these technologies if they are to teach distance courses. Training students and staff, particularly in troubleshooting problems, is imperative to success in technical distance learning.

23

Teachers have problems respecting the academics of distance courses. One way of enhancing commitment is by forcing distance courses through the same stringent approval process as on-campus courses. In 1994, Chou, wrote, "By going through the same stringent approval process as non-campus courses, the acceptance among college faculty is enhanced." (p. 25). The final barrier is the teacher's acceptance of distance learning programmes. Teachers with enthusiasm for this non-traditional course work are best suited to teach them. One way to mitigate these potentially serious problems is by selecting teachers who are relatively senior people, good teachers, like the idea of distance learning and want to participate in it. Internet and motivation are not success factors reserved only for the student. Faculties who want to teach distance course are certainly more likely to be successful than faculties that are forced to teach these course (Chou, 1994).

Organizational Barriers in Distance Learning

Student and teacher concerns represent the human aspects of distance programme. Organizational problem especially infrastructure and technology problems, also present challenges. Faculties who teach Distance Education courses need organizational and administrative support from the institution. Funding should be to create an administrative unit that is to be responsible for managing the programme. Institutional leaders must be committed to distance programme. Marrs (1995) agrees when he says, "without this support, Distance Education is a risk of becoming a peripheral activity, without commitment from or significance to the institution." (p. 12) Distance Education via simultaneous two-way audio-visual interaction systems such as video teleconferencing brings an additional set of issues to be considered by

the instructor and effective models for his delivery system need to be identified (Sweet, 1986).

Some students, particularly those without home computers with modems could have difficulty communicating with the university or teacher. Lack of adequate hardware and the subsequent cost barrier of obtaining equipment could place undue hardship on some remote students. However, implementing other communications systems (phone, mail, etc) could help overcome this barrier. Learning institutions must develop distance learning course material or pay a hefty price to order materials from distributors for some institutions, the investment in production technology may be worth the cost. However, a significant investment is necessary for production facilities, equipment and personnel to produce video tapes (Sweet, 1986). Using the internet instead can overcome some of this problem but it poses additional difficulties in ensuring all students have adequate access to the internet. The internet is proving to be an effective delivery medium that enables communication of knowledge at the student's convenience. It has the potential, in fact, to change the nature of distance learning, but it is not without problems (Sweet, 1986). Some fear the existing world wide telecommunications network is ill equipped to handle the rapid expansion of the internet. Relying solely on the internet for coursework and communications transmission is risky. In addition, using the internet can degrade the quality of interactions between and among staff and students. Due to the perceived anonymity provided by the internet, abusive behaviour could become a problem: however, these problems can be mediated with proper care and regulation.

The newest of the technological challenges lies in complying with government regulations. Course content may need to be limited based on the requirements in the decency section of the 1996 Telecommunications Act (Oaks, 1996). This section describes material deemed suitable for the internet. Some courses, such as Anthropology or human sexuality, may not be appropriate for the internet. Distance learning institutions must be aware of, and plan for, regulatory issues if the internet is used for conveying course context. Koomson (1988) observes that with additional staff and well-designed support service package for distance learner, attrition rate can be minimized. Such support services distance teachers face resulting in their drop out from the programmes. Paramount among the host of their dilemmas is how to combine their classroom work with their studies so that one is not sacrificed for the other. He suggests a nationally-designed financial support package for teachers on Distance Education programmes. He argues that if students on conventional programmes in the universities in Ghana are granted Social Security and National Insurance Trust (SSNIT) loans to support their education, then it is only logic that distance learners are supported with similar schemes (Galusha, 1997).

Prospects of Distance Education

Distance Education promotes women education. Kyei-Baffour (n. d) cited in Adentwi (2002) argues that Distance Education may even be the answer to the problem of gender imbalance at the tertiary education level. Using statistics from the second batch of students enrolled on the University of Education (UEW) Distance Education programme, he points out that for the first time ever in the history of the University, female student's enrolments

outnumbered that of male students. Kyei-Baffour explains this situation by assuming that Distance Education perhaps provides a convenient way by which many women can combine their desire for higher education with their matrimonial responsibilities. He believes that if Distance Education is given the chance it might provide to be the means of bridging the gap between male and female students at the tertiary level. Needless to say, the statistical basis of Kyei-Baffour's argument is weak as it is based on the admission records of only one year. However, his arrangement may be validated by future Distance Education enrolment statistics.

One cannot talk about the benefits of Distance Education without mentioning its contributions to the teaching profession. According to Adekanmbi (2004), an examination of the use of Distance Education in Africa tends to show its wide application in the area of teacher preparation. In contemporary Ghana, Distance Education is fast gaining popularity as a very effective strategy for training teachers because of the many benefits associated with it.

Distance Education is characterized by a flexible arrangement which allows learners to learn in their own time and place while they continue to earn a living thereby contributing to social and economic development. In the Ghanaian experience, teachers in the schools who are either unable to gain admission to the universities or who opt to study in the comfort of their homes are allowed to enroll on distance education programme. This way they are retained in these classrooms and have the opportunity to pursue further academic studies in their own time and at their own place. By this means, the number of people who would have taken study leave with pay and by removed

from the classrooms is considerably reduced, this minimizing the disruption in school teaching programme that results from teachers on study leave.

The argument in support of distance education is the fact that there is no significant difference in the achievement levels and teaching performance of student teachers who enroll on conventional residential institutions and those who acquire their training by distance education (Koomson, 1998). Distance Education can therefore be effective as the conventional one. Furthermore, Distance Education provides opportunity for the large number of people to acquire formal education which otherwise would have been difficult Bishop (1989), explains that about 20% of qualified students are denied access to university education in Swaziland for lack of space on the conventional campus. Reason for this is not farfetched. Conventional education has become the norm in most universities. With the advent of Distance Education however, many students have access to education.

Course consideration

The last area of concern lies in the distance courses themselves. Institutions must consider course standards, curriculum development and support, course content, and course pacing in developing distance learning programmes.

Many believe distance courses are inferior to traditional courses. Careful attention must be paid to the quality of the material presented in distance courses. Curriculum and assessment must be developed as equal as that of the traditional classroom if distance courses are to receive the respect they deserve. Maintain the same course content, learning objectives, standards and credits for all sections, regardless of method of delivery.

28

Assessing student performance is a problem area in distance learning. It is a common held believe that distance students perform more poorly in assessment than internal students do because of the additional pressures and burdens of distance study.

However, a study of the results of 67 science subjects at California State University (CSU) over a six-year period showed conclusively that there was no difference between distance and internal students in the proportions of students in each grade category (Harden et al, 1994). However, objective testing does not reward soon enough for adequate reinforcement .Since one key to a successful learning campaign is positive reinforcement, testing methods must be developed to interactively test distance students.

More research into instructional methods and models is needed to identify those that work well in distance learning (Jackman, et al 1994). Participatory and active learning models are preferred by distance learning students. In a study of 93 Interactive Video Network (IVN) graduate students at North Dakota State University (1993 and 1994) found that IVN students placed high importance on active learning models (Jackman et al 1994). However, IVN teachers need to know the variety of teaching models available for use in the classroom so they can make educated choices in designing their coursework.

The course content affects student persistence. Some coursework is more conducive to distance classes. The course content itself cannot be ignored in any theoretical or practical consideration of distance education attrition (Bullen, 1996). Poorly designed course materials are key contributors to students attrition rates.

The last course consideration is the use of pacing techniques .Pacing material presented to students appears to have a positive effect course completion rates. In a 1986 rate study found that universities which used pacing techniques had completion rates that more than doubled those institutions in which the courses were open-ended (Coldeway, 1996). Although the coursework and delivery methods were the same, those institutions that paced student work were more successful at retaining distance learning students.

Summary

The literature review dealt with the following summarized points: the review examined the concept of distance education with its characteristics where authorities such as commonwealth of learning (COL, 2004), (Moore & Kearsly, 1996) and Keegan (1990) provide a comprehensive description and characteristics of Distance Education. The review also covered various theories and philosophies of Distance Education, where Bredo, (1994), and Seamans, (1998) were the prominent features of this concept. Another feature of the literature review was the learner support systems/services which were addressed by (Rowntree, 1992).

The study also reviewed the barriers to learning in Distance Education, where the major problems addressed were: Student related problems, Faculty related problems and Organizational related problems. The final feature of the literature review was the prospects of Distance Education where authorities like Johnston, (1997), Bishop (1989) (cited in Adentwi, 2002), and Adekanmbi (2004) expressed their views on the prospects of the Distance Education.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

This chapter discusses the method and procedures adopted for the study under the following sub-headings: Research Design, Population, Sample and Sampling Procedure, Instrument, Data Collection Procedure and Data Analysis.

Research Design

The research design adopted for this study was descriptive survey. The rationale for the research design was to try to describe, analyze and interpret challenges facing students in the Distance Education level in Ghanaian Universities and prospects. As Gay (1987) points out this descriptive survey is primarily concerned with the collection of data in order to test hypotheses or to answer questions concerning the current state of a phenomenon. In the descriptive research design, the researcher selects relevant variables for an analysis of their relationships. This method as recommended by Babbie (1990) is suitable for purposes of making generalization for a sample to a population so that inferences could be made about some opinions, or perception of the population. The descriptive survey design was considered appropriate for use as it deals with questions about things as they stand currently.

What may be considered as weakness of this research design is that it is primarily concerned with the survey and analysis of an existing phenomenon, and does not attempt to introduce any intervention strategies. However, after the problem has been identified and analyzed, measures can be taken to solve it. Again, the design is susceptible to errors and distortions if the researcher does not check biases that may be introduced in the measuring

instruments to remove all prejudices which might have been introduced. In spite of the weaknesses, the descriptive survey was considered the most suitable for the nature and purpose of the research.

Population

The target group which the researcher is interested in gaining information and drawing conclusions is known as the population. Polit and Hungler (1996) (as cited in Amedahe 2002) have explained that population is the entire aggregation of cases that meet a designated set of criteria. The target population was drawn from tutors and students of the Oyoko Methodist Senior High School study centre of the Distance Education programme of the University of Cape Coast, Cape Coast. The total population was 535. The population of the students was 500 made of 367 males and 133 females, there were 35 tutors comprising 25 males and   10 females.

Sample and Sampling Procedure

Sampling refers to the process of selecting a portion of the population to represent the entire population. Generally, sampling enables the researcher to study a relatively small number of units in place of the target population, and to obtain data that are representative of the whole target population.

A sample consists of a carefully selected subset of the units that comprise the population. In most cases researchers opt for an incomplete coverage and study only a small proportion of the population. This small proportion of the population is the sample. Sampling is thus the process of choosing the units of target population which are to be included in the study. In sampling, the units that make up the sample and population are referred to

as elements. The element is the most basic unit about which information is collected. In social research, the elements are usually humans.

Opting for a sample survey is guided by a number of factors. Sarantakos (1998) has identified the following as the most common. In many cases a complete coverage of the population is not possible. Complete coverage may not offer substantial advantage over a sample survey. Sampling provides a better option since it addresses the survey population in a short period of time and produces comparable and equally valid results. Studies based on samples require less time and produces quick answers. Sampling is less demanding in terms of labor requirement, since it requires a small portion of the target population. It is thought to be more economical, since it contains fewer people and requires less printed materials, fewer general costs (travelling, accommodation) and fewer experts. Finally, samples are thought to offer more detailed information and a high degree of accuracy because they deal with relatively small lowercase letters of unit.

Two sampling techniques were employed by the researcher. These are purposive sampling for the tutors and random sampling for the students. The student sample for the study consisted of 40% of the population, that is 200 students made up of 146 males and 54 females. An equal number of 100 students each were drawn from the second and third year groups. However, the first year students were excluded from the study since they were new in the system.

The selection was done separately, thus one for the male students and other for the female students. The ratio of male to female students in the program is 3: 1. They were sampled according to this ratio, thus resulting in

33

150 males and 50 females as student's respondents. A ratio is a relationship between two things when it is expressed in lowercase letters or amounts. For example, if there are 10 boys and thirty girls in a room, the ratio of boys to girls is 1:3, or one to three. Therefore, since the male and female students are 150 and 50 respectively, the ratio becomes 3:1.

This method was employed to ensure that each member of the defined population had an equal chance of being sampled. Following the guidelines of using the random sampling technique as proposed by Borg and Gall (1973), the names of all students – male and female were written on pieces of paper separately. These pieces of paper was folded, put into two separate empty boxes and vigorously shaken. The researcher then picked the folded pieces of paper of   the students (males) one after the other from the box since their names were obtained from the class list. The process continued until the required number of respondents for the males were obtained. The same procedure was done for the female students.

In selecting the tutors the researcher used purposive sampling technique. Out of a total tutor population of 35, the researcher purposely sampled 20 for the study, representing approximately 57% of the entire teacher population. The distribution was done as follows: 2 English tutors, 2 Education tutors, 2 HIV/AIDS tutors, 2 Science tutors, 2 Environmental Studies tutors, 2 ICT tutors, 2 Religious and Moral Education tutors, 2 P.E. tutors, 2 Communication Skills tutors and 2 Mathematics tutors.   The rationale behind this purposive sampling selection was to acquire relevant information from those personalities who, by virtue of the key positions (such as heads of department and form masters) they held in the distance education

34

program with experience in teaching had such information. The total sample size therefore was 220.

Instrument

A questionnaire was used by the researcher as a means for collecting data. The reason is that it provides a quick way of collecting data. It is known to be quite valid and reliable if well constructed. Furthermore, questionnaire is widely used and useful instrument for collecting survey information providing structures, often numerical data, being able to be administered without the presence of the researcher and often being comparatively straight forward, to analyze. A questionnaire is an effective instrument for securing factual information about practices and conditions of which the respondents are presumed to have knowledge and enquiring into the opinions and attitudes of the subject. The items in the instrument will be arrived at out of the literature review, purpose of the study, research questions, previous studies and the researcher's own personal experience.

The researcher designed one main questionnaire for both students and teachers because they all looked at the same issue. The questionnaire was made up of five major sections. Section (A) consisted of items dealing with the demographic data of both students and teachers. Section (B) consisted of items designed to measure the respondents' view on the challenges or problems facing distance education programme. Section (C) of the instrument was designed to find out the kind of support services available for learners of the distance education programme. Section (D) of the instrument contained items designed to measure respondents' view on the prospects of Distance Education programme.

35

Most of the items were closed-ended Likert-scale type. This type of questionnaire has been found to be the most suitable type of instrument for the measurement of attitudes and perceptions. This is because it enables respondents to indicate the degree of their belief in a given statement (Best & Khan, 1996). The few open-ended questionnaires which were used were expected to offer the respondents an opportunity to express their opinions on challenges facing students pursuing Distance Education at the tertiary level.

Questionnaire as methods of data collection have strengths and weaknesses. Strength and weaknesses are factors that have a significant impact on a researcher's decision about whether or not to use questionnaires in the study. The strengths and weaknesses which most researchers and writers consider as significant are as follows:

Questionnaire are less expensive than other methods-interview and observation. It can be sent through mail, interview and observation cannot hence the expenses and times involved as well as time spent on interviewing and observation are not involved in the use of questionnaire. The use of questionnaires promises a wider coverage since researchers can approach respondents more easily than other methods. They are not affected by problems of no-contacts. They are also a stable consistent and uniform measure, without variation. They can be completed at the respondent's convenience and also after greater assurance of anonymity.

However, the questionnaire as a tool for data collection cannot be used as administered on illiterates, and people who are too young to read and write. The use of questionnaire does not offer opportunities for motivating the respondent to participate in the survey or to answer the questions. The

characteristics of non-response associated with questionnaire especially the mail questionnaire is likely to affect the representativeness of the sample. This may result in a biased final sample. In addition, questionnaires do not provide an opportunity to collect additional information through observation, probing, prompting and clarification of questions while they are being completed.

Pre-Testing of Instrument

The pre-testing of the instrument was employed by the researcher before the actual data collection begins. This is done to ensure that the instrument is reliable and valid. Pre-testing the questionnaire will help determine whether there is the need for re-arrangement of the response categories to a particular question or the question will remain as it is. Generally, pre-testing will enable the researcher to discover possible weaknesses, inadequacies and ambiguities in the research instruments so that they can be corrected before the actual data collection takes place. Pre-testing for the study was carried out at the Accra study centre. Twenty respondents made of 5 tutors and 15 students were selected for this pre- testing. They comprised 7 diploma students, 8 post-diploma students, and 5 tutors/lecturers. The Accra Study Center shares some similarities with Koforidua Study Centre in terms of students' population and effective organization of the programme. The center is similar to Oyoko study center since the students offer the same distance education from the same tertiary institution - University of Cape Coast and there are also experienced course tutors as pertains to Oyoko study center.

Furthermore, results of the test helped to improve upon the final schedule so that it can elicit adequately the required information. For instance,

a few clumsy questions which could neither be explained nor comprehended easily were modified as a result of the pre-testing. The respondents who were used in the pre-testing were excluded from the main study. This was done to make sure that there were no influences on the main study. They comprise 7 diploma students, 8 post-diploma students, and 5 tutors/lecturers. The Cronbach Alpha Reliability Co-efficient for the two parts of the questionnaire stood as .718 and .709 respectively.

Data Collection Procedure

Questionnaires were delivered by the researcher to the respondents. To maximize response level, the researcher made a follow-up to re-emphasize the importance of the study. The follow-up was accompanied by a further copy of the questionnaire to replace lost ones, if it happens to the respondents.

Ethical issues were considered in the process. Ethical issues are highly relevant and require due consideration in any research (Sarantakos, 1998). The researcher has an obligation to respect the rights, values and desires of the respondents. A possible researcher should be considerate, should not injure or harm the participants of the research, keep data collected from respondents confidentially and record information accurately. Based on these ethical issues, the researcher went through the following steps to reach the respondents thereby protecting their rights.

The consent of the respondents was obtained so that they could fully and voluntarily participate in the study. The purpose of the study was explained to the respondents with a covering letter attached to the questionnaire. Confidentiality was ensured since questionnaire to respondents did not require them to write their names and addresses.

38

Data collection for the study started on the 5th of June, 2011 and ended on the 26th of June 2011. Data collection for the study was done in two parts. The respondents were students (Diploma and Post-diploma) and tutors/lecturers. The first part which involved data collection from the diploma and post-diploma students started from 5th of June, 2011 and ended on the 19th of June, 2011.

The second part of the data collection exercise commenced on the 19th of June, 2011 and ended on the 26th of June, 2011. This comprised data from the tutor/lecturers. All 220 questionnaires representing the sample size distributed to the respondents were retrieved. This represents 100% return rate. The process of the exercise was made possible as a result of the cooperation of the respondents who were eager to answer the questions which is probably because they have been made part of a study which directly affects them. Besides, some tutors at the centre assisted me in the administration of the questionnaires.

The researcher sought an official permission from the coordinator of UCC Distance Education programme in Oyoko Methodist Senior High School Study Centre in the New Juaben Municipality of Eastern Region to conduct the research. Data was collected by the researcher through the use of questionnaires designed for the study. The questionnaire was personally distributed by the researcher to the respondents of the Oyoko Methodist Senior High School Study Centre. The administration of the questionnaires was preceded by a letter of introduction from the director of Institute for Educational Planning and Administration (IEPA) to the coordinator of the centre. (see Appendix B).

Respondents were assured of confidentiality in the processes. The 200 selected students/respondents were grouped together in the Oyoko Methodist Senior High School Assembly hall. They were carefully briefed about the purpose of the exercise and were persuaded to carefully read and consider each item before supplying the responses. In the case of the teachers they were given the questionnaires and asked to complete and return them to the coordinator within three days. The researcher went round personally to retrieve all questionnaires.

Data Analysis

Percentages and frequencies were used for the analysis and interpretations. A five point Likert-type scale was the major scale of measurement for sections two, three and four of the questionnaire, the items were scored as ordinal level data. The Likert-type scale items for the various sections of the questionnaire were weighted as follows: strongly agree (4), agree (3), disagree (2) strongly disagree (1). For the purpose of analysis, strongly agree and agree responses were put together as agree whiles strongly disagree and disagree were merged as disagree.

Analysis of response were done in order of the research questions. Responses from the various categories of respondents were discussed systematically in line with the research questions.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents the analysis and discussion of the data. The study gathered data on the major challenges, support services and prospects of the Distance Education Programme at UCC. Percentages and frequencies were used for the analysis and interpretations.

Questionnaires were administered to two groups of respondents, namely students and tutors/lecturers. The results are presented according to the research questions of the study in this chapter.

Research Question One: What are the major challenges facing the learners of the Distance Education Programme?

Research Question one sought information on the major challenges facing the learners of UCC Distance Education Programme. Table 1 presents responses from respondents on the major challenges facing the learners of UCC Distance Education Programme.

Table 1:   Major Challenges facing the learners UCC Distance Education Programme

		Responses	
Issue	Respondent	Agree	Disagree
Inadequate feedback	Students	140 (70%)	60 (30%)
	Tutors	15 (75%)	5 (25%)
Inadequate modules	Students	130 (65%)	70 (35%)
	Tutors	17 (85%)	3 (15%)
Poor modules	Students	38 (19%)	162 (81%)
	Tutors	4 (20%)	16 (80%)
Inadequate support	Students	154 (77%)	46 (23%)
	Tutors	18 (90%)	2 (10%)

Inadequate tutorial	Students	67 (33.5%)	133 (66.5%)
Sessions	Tutors	3 (15%)	17 (85%)
Uncomfortable	Students	64 (32%)	136 (68%)
teaching method	Tutors	0 (0%)	20 (100%)
Delayed modules	Students	46 (23%)	154 (77%)
	Tutors	7 (35%)	13 (65%)
Inadequate in-service	Students	74 (37%)	126 (63%)
training	Tutors	14 (70%)	6 (30%)
Inadequate qualified	Students	39 (19.5%)	161 (80.5%)
tutors	Tutors	0 (00%)	20 (100%)
Inadequate tutor	Students	140 (70%)	60 (30%)
motivation	Tutors	20 (100%)	0 (0%)
Students' expectation	Students	81 (40.5%)	119 (59.5%)
not met	Tutors	5 (25%)	15 (75%)

As shown in Table 1, it can be seen that the major challenges facing the students of the UCC distance education programme included the following: inadequate feedback, inadequate modules and inadequate support systems. For the tutors two main challenges were identified which included inadequate in-service training and inadequate tutor motivation.

In terms of inadequate feedback, the results indicate that 70% of the students are of the view that they do not receive adequate feedback from their tutors. On the other hand, 75% of the tutors also agreed to the fact that students do not receive adequate feedback from them.

The results therefore indicate that majority of the respondents are of the opinion that students do not receive adequate feedback from their tutors.

These results confirm a study conducted by Keegan (1990) in Mongolia that distance learners do not have adequate feedback from their instructors. This situation is not good for distance learning. Keegan believes that the separation of student and teacher imposed by distance removes a "vital link" of communication between these two parties. Feedback to students is very important in distance learning as learners place high premium on it. Besides, feedback to students is one of the strategies for effective distance learning.

In relation to inadequate modules, (65%) of the students were of the view that there were inadequate modules and this was fully supported by the majority of the tutors (85%). The significance of study materials for effective distance learning delivery cannot be underestimated. This is because first year students see study materials as the most useful part of a distance education programme.

In connection with inadequate support systems, it is observed from Table1 that majority of the students (77%) agreed that support services in the UCC distance programme are inadequate. The tutors (90%) also attest to the fact that there are inadequate support services. This means that distance education providers should try to provide adequate support for their students. The neglect of student support services at UCC Distance Programme can have serious implications on their programme. This assertion was supported by Wood (1996) that lack of support for students can lead to learning problems resulting in students' dissatisfaction for Distance Programme. Oaks (1996) also hold the view that success in attracting and retaining students depends on excellent student support. With reference to the challenges facing the tutors

the results indicate that tutors of the UCC distance programme are not adequately motivated and there is also inadequate in-service training for them.

Research Question Two: What kind of support services are available for learners of the Distance Education Programme?

Research question two focused on the kind of support services available for learners of distance Education programme. Table 2 presents the responses from the respondents related to possible support services from the views of the learners and tutors.

Table 2: The kind of support services available for learners of the Distance

       Education Programme

Issue	Respondent	Responses	
		Agree	Disagree
Print materials supported with	Students	190 (95%)	10 (5%)
monthly face-to-face	Tutors	17 (85%)	3 (15%)
Availability of ICT centre for	Students	16 (8%)	184 (92%)
learners/students	Tutors	2 (10%)	18 (90%)
Provision of adequate number of	Students	11 (5.5%)	189 (84.5%)
library books for students	Tutors	13 (65%)	7 (35%)
Provision of adequate equipment for	Students	0 (0%)	20 (100%)
printing at study center	Tutors	0 (0%)	20 (100%)

Table 2 presents the kind of support services available for the learners of the distance education programme. The main support service available for learners of the distance education programme is print materials support with monthly face-to-face sessions.

The results indicate that majority of the respondents (students 90%, tutors 85%) agreed that the UCC distance education programme supported the print materials such as text books and library books with monthly face-to-face sessions. These findings confirm Quaigrain's (2001) study on face-to-face tutorials is an example of support services at the University of Hong Kong. The University of Namibia also provided face-to-face tutorials at its study center using local tutors who are trained to provide tutorials (Owusu-Mensah, 1998).

However, face-to-face tutorials at the Makerere University is centralized at the main University Campus and scheduled three times a year with each session lasting two weeks. (Owusu-Mensah, 1998).In case of UCC, the distance education programme is decentralized from the main university campus and scheduled two times a year with each session or semester lasting eight weeks and on fortnight bases with the face-to-face taking place on weekends- Saturdays and Sundays. According to Aguti (1995), face-to-face sessions motivate Makerere students to learn. It allows them concentrate on their work, gave students the opportunity to interact with their friends and a sense of belonging to the University. Face-to-face at UCC provides the same opportunities like that of Makerere University.

On the issue of availability of ICT, library books and equipment for printing at the study centers, most of the students and tutors disagreed about

the availability of those items or equipment. The results indicate that minority of the respondents (students 8%, tutors 10%) were of the opinion that the UCC Distance education programme provided an ICT center for its learners.

One concern of distance learners is the provision of adequate support services. Studies by Owusu-Mensah (1998) Bampo (2008) Owusu-Boateng, Essel and Mensah (2001) support this assertion. The neglect of student support services at UCC Distance Programme can have serious implications on their programme. According to Wood (1996), lack of support for students can lead to learning problems resulting in students' dissatisfaction for distance programme.

On the issue of UCC providing adequate number of library books for students, the respondents raised an objection to this assertion. The results indicate that minority on the part of the students (5.5%) and majority (65%) on the part of the tutors hold the view that the UCC Distance Education Programme provided adequate number of library books for its distance students use. Oaks (1996) holds the view that success in attracting and retaining students depends on excellent student support services such as provision of library books and other reading materials .

The results suggest that none of the respondents agreed that students are provided with adequate equipment for printing at the UCC study centers for students to support their academic work. The results indicate that there are inadequate support services at the UCC distance education programme.

Research Question Three: What are the Prospects of the Distance Education Program for the Learners?

Research Question three collected information on the prospects of the UCC Distance Education Programme. Table 3 presents the responses from respondents related to possible prospects from the perspective of the learners and tutors.

Table 3: Prospects of UCC Distance Education

		Responses	
Prospects	Respondent	Agree	Disagree
Teacher accessibility to	Students	197 (98.5%)	3 (1.5%)
University Education	Tutors	18 (90%)	2 (10%)
Higher professional	Students	200 (100%)	0 (0%)
training	Tutors	20 (100%)	0 (0%)
Reduces pressure on	Students	196 (98%)	4 (2%)
admission	Tutors	20 (100%)	0 (0%)
Potential to attract	Students	195 (97.5%)	5 (2.5%)
more teachers	Tutors	18 (90%)	2 (10%)
Teacher efficiency	Students	198 (99%)	2 (1%)
	Tutors	19 (95%)	1 (5%)

Table 3 shows that tutors and students had similar views in relation to prospects of distance Education. The main prospects related to access to higher education, professional training and teacher efficiency.

Responses gathered on the issue indicate that majority of the respondents (students 98.5%, tutors 90%) at UCC Distance Education program agreed that the programme gives students the opportunity to have access to University Education. In Ghana, Distance Education is used as a strategy for the training of teachers (Koomson, 1998). Adentwi (2002) points

out that many basic school teachers in Ghana have received training through this program.

In relation to the UCC Distance Education programme enabling teachers acquiring higher professional training while on the job, the results indicated that all respondents: students and tutors alike agreed that distance education in UCC had assisted students to attain higher professional training. The results once again indicated that pursuing distance education in UCC had helped the students to upgrade their professional skills.

On the issue of distance education reducing the number of qualified students who are refused admission into tertiary institution every year, the results show that majority of the respondents (students 98%, tutors 100%) were of the view that UCC distance education to some extent had reduced pressure on admission. The results are in line with the opinion of Adentwi (2002) that Distance Education allows Ghanaian basic school teachers to have easy access to University Education thereby alleviating them from the stress they go through looking for admission into University. Distance Education has been used by some institutions in Ghana as a means of expanding access to University Education. Study conducted by Mensah and Owusu-Mensah (2002) about interest in Distance Education in four public Universities – the University of Ghana, Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, University of Cape Coast and the University of Education indicated that these universities are into Distance Education with the view that the programme will help them to expand access to many applicants who are refused admission into conventional tertiary education available to the large number of the working population who are unable to study full-time.

On the issue of the UCC Distance Education programme having the potential to attract more teachers to be enrolled in future, the results show that majority of the respondents (students 97.5,tutors 90%) agreed that UCC Distance Education programme has the potential to attract more teachers to enroll in future. The results is in agreement with the view held by Keegan (1995) that distance education has the potential to attract many applicants to enroll in future due to factors such as cost, flexibility of programme and easy access to university education.

Finally, all the respondents are of the view that the UCC Distance education has brought about teacher efficiency in the classroom teaching and learning. This is because distance education brings about efficiency of work as it makes it possible for students to apply theories, techniques and skills acquired though the programme to their jobs thereby making them improve upon their job performance.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Chapter five presents the last segment of the report. The chapter consists of the summary of the main study and the conclusions that were reached as a result of the analysis. The chapter also presents recommendations made by the researcher for improving Distance Education Programme in the University of Cape Coast, and the suggestions for further research.

Summary

The study was a descriptive survey which was meant to identify the challenges, support services and prospects of the UCC Distance Education Programme. The study specifically sought to identify the major challenges of the UCC Distance Education Programme, find out the support services available to the students of the programme as well as identify the prospects of the programme. Three research questions were posed to direct the study. They were: what are the major challenges facing the learners of the Distance Education Programme?; what kind of support services were available for learners of the Distance Education Programme? And what are the prospects of the UCC Distance Education Programme for the learners?

Literature was also reviewed on issues that related to the subject under study. The review covered issues such as the meaning and characteristics of Distance Education, theories and philosophies of Distance Education, learner support services, challenges of Distance Education, and prospects of Distance Education. The sample size for the study was 220 comprising 100 diploma students, 100 post-diploma students, and 20 tutors/lecturers. Purposive and simple random sampling methods were used to select the respondents. With

51

guidelines from Cohen et al (2005), 40% of the respondents (students) population (i.e 500) were randomly selected to ensure fair representation. Approximately 57% of the entire teacher population (35) were also purposively selected by virtue of the key position they held in the distance education programme with experience in teaching.

Questionnaire was the main instrument used to collect data. To ensure that the questionnaire is reliable, a pre-test exercise was carried out at the Accra Study Centre involving 20 respondents. They comprised 7 diploma students, 8 post-diploma students, and 5 tutors/lecturers. The Cronbach Alpha Reliability Co-efficient for the two part of the questionnaire stood as .718 and .709 respectively.

Following a successful pre-testing, questionnaires were sent to the respondents for the main study. With the cooperation of respondents, and assistance from colleagues, all 220 questionnaire distributed to the respondents were retrieved indicating 100% return rate.

Responses to the questions were coded and entered into the SPSS for analysis and interpretation. Percentages and frequencies were used for the analysis and interpretation. Responses to the questions were analyzed according to the research questions.

Key Findings

The major findings from the study are presented as following:

1. The major challenges facing learners of the Distance programme were insufficient feedback for learners, inadequate modules for studies, inadequate support systems and inadequate motivation of tutors of the UCC distance programme.

2. The main support service provided that was effective was print materials supported with face-face sessions.

3. The findings revealed that the prospects of the distance education programme for the learners were the fact that it enhances students access to university education, it helps basic school teachers acquire higher professional training, it reduces the pressure on admission on the main campuses, it contributes to teacher efficiency and the programme has the potential to attract more teachers to enroll in the future.

Conclusions

The following conclusions can be drawn from the study. The respondents were not satisfied with the feedback situation in the UCC distance education programme. Students may have trouble in self-evaluation since there is no daily or weekly face-to-face contact with teachers. Lack of feedback between students and tutors removes a vital "link" of communication between these two parties. This link must be restored through overt institutional efforts so that the teaching and learning transaction may be "reintegrated". Students who did not receive adequate reintegration measures such as electronic or telephone communication could be less likely to

experience complete academic and social integration into institutional life. Consequently such students would be more likely to drop out from the programme.   Students of all kinds want to be part of a larger school or community   that provides a kind of social "correspondence" course. For many traditional students, this is an important part of their social lives, the (distance) aspect of the distance learning takes away much of the social interactional learning environments. Students believe that having a good tutor is vitally important in helping them get the most out of a course and achieve a credit. In addition to practical problems of contacting academic and administrative staff, obtaining study materials and borrowing library books, distance students suffer from the disadvantages of being unable to interact with other students and are often denied the perception that they belong to a scholarly community. This may lead to feelings of inadequacy and insecurity, and lack of confidence in their own abilities.

Internet and motivation are not success factors reserved only for the students, teachers must also be motivated. Faculties who want to teach distance education courses are certainly more likely to be successful than faculties that are forced to teach these courses. The dramatic growth of the adult learner population is making distance learning an increasing popular choice of learning techniques.

Recommendations

On the basis of the findings of the study recommendations are made by the researcher as follows:

1. Feedback to students is very crucial in Distance Education. Authorities of UCC Distance Programme should therefore ensure that students receive adequate feedback from their course tutors by organizing regular workshop.

2. Modules are the main materials available to the students. These are often inadequate. To facilitate learning, the researcher recommends that adequate modules be supplied to all students and on time. Writers of the modules should be given incentives to produce the modules on time. Also modules should be given to publishing institutions that have the capacity to produce in large quantities and on schedules.

3. Adequate support systems should be provided to students and tutors to ensure effective teaching and learning. Some of the support services that need urgent attention include library services, counseling, feedback to students and face-to-face tutorials.

4. Relevant materials and photocopies to supplement the modules should also be made available to students at minimal cost.

5. Since the programme has the potential to attract more teachers to enroll in future, UCC should be thinking of opening more study centers to ease the pressure on the existing ones.

6. To maintain high standard at the Distance Programme, there should be an effective monitoring system by the authorities of UCC.

7. Since tutors play a vital role in any educational institution, they need to be motivated. Distance planners at UCC should do well to motivate their tutors so that they will give off their best.

8. In-service training programme should also be organized for tutors from time to time to enable them upgrade their professional skills.

9. One of the strategies for making Distance Education Programme attractive to more potential clientele is to make the programmes flexible and dynamic. The flexibility should be seen in the following areas:

   a. Payment of fees – students should be allowed to pay about a third of the total fees on registration and the rest spread over a number of months.

   b. Admission policy – students should be allowed to enter the programme at any time they wish and work towards the accumulation of the total number of credits required to graduate.

   c. Credit accumulation – there should be a policy where after accumulating a certain number of credits, it should be possible for students to take some time off when the demands of their jobs necessitate that, and come back to continue later.

   d. Credit transfer – it should be possible for Distance Education students leave one institution for another to transfer the accumulated credits to their new institutions.

As regards dynamism, UCC should be capable of responding to the changing educational needs of Ghanaians. In this regards, this university should be able to change or modify its programmes as and when the need

arises as to be in tune with the educational needs of the Ghanaian public. This will keep the university in business.

Suggestions for Further Research

Further study of student demographics and motivations will help target the adult learner population and will help institutions develop course materials and techniques appropriately. Further research into course development techniques will help learning institutions understand which methods work best in the distance learning classroom. One important area of concern as far as Distance Education is concerned is guidance needs of distance students. Research can be conducted to examine the guidance needs of Distance Education students. Further research should be carried out on the role of ICT in Distance Education delivery.

REFERENCES

Adekanmbi, G. (2004). *The transformation of distance education in Africa.* Retrieved March 5, 2008, from *http:www.co/org/forum/ pcfpapers/Adekanmbi,pdf.*

Adentwi, K. I. (2002). *Principles and practices and issues in teacher Education.* Kumasi: Sky Printing Works.

Aguti, J. N. (1995). Makerere *University external degree program: A dual role approach:* Unpublished MA dissertation. Institute of Education, University of London, London.

Amedahe, F. K. (2002). *Notes on educational research.* Unpublished. Faculty of Education, University of Cape Coast, Cape Coast.

Ankomah, Y. A. (1998), Participation in secondary education in Ghana: The case of females in rural Brong Ahafo. *Journal of Educational Management*, 1, 83 – 93.

Babbie, E. (1990). *Survey research methods.* (2nd ed.) New Delhi: Prentice Hall Of India Private Ltd.

Bampo, J. (2008). *Students' assessment of facilities and services available for distance teaching and learning in the University of Cape Coast.* An unpublished M.Phil thesis, Faculty of Education, University of Cape Coast, Cape Coast.

Best, J. W., & Khan, J. V. (1996). *Research in education.* (7th ed.). New Delhi: Prentice Hall of India Private Limited.

Bishop, G. (1986). *Innovation in education.* London: Macmillan publishers.

Borg, W. R., & Gall, M. D, (1973), *Educational research: An introduction.* (6th ed.). New York: Longman Publishing Company.

Bredo, E. (1994). Reconstructing Educational Psychology: Situated cognition and Deweyan Pragmatism. *Educational Psychologists*, *29*(1), 23-25.

Bullen, M. (1996).Distance Education &Technology Continuing Studies. Retrieved February 6, 2013, from http://www.cstudies.ubc.ca/dited.

Carter, A. (2001). Interactive distance education: Implications for the adult learner. *International Journal of Instructional Media*, *28*(3), 249-261.

Chou, P. (1994). *Guide to Managing a telecourse/distance learning program.* Suisun, California: Learning Resources Association.

Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morrison, K. (2005). *Research methods in education*. (5th ed.). London: Routledge Falm.

Coldeway, D. (1986). *Learner characteristics and success*. Distance Education in Canada, 46, 81-87.

Commonwealth of Learning (CoL) (2004). *Defining open and distance learning*. Retrieved April 16, 2008, from http://col.org/resources/

Faculty of Education (FOE) (2010). *Guide for writing and presenting project work, Dissertation and Thesis.* Rev. (ed.), UCC: Cape Coast.

Galusha, J. M. (1997). *Barriers of Learning in Distance Education*. Mississippi: University of Southern Mississippi.

Gay, L. R. (1987). *Educational research*: *Competencies for analysis and application*. (3rd ed.) Ohio: Merril Publication Company.

Harden, T., Barnard, I. & Donnan, P. (1994). *Success with science at a distance*. OLAA Occasion Papers. 1, 15-19.

Horton, W. (1994). *How we communicate*. Paper presented at the meeting of the Rocky Mountain Chapter of the Society for technical communication. Denver, Co.

Jackman, D., & Swan, M. (1994). *Alternative instructional models for IVN delivery (vol. 1).* Fargo: North Dakota State University. Central Duplicating.

Johnston, S.G. (1997). *Virtual culture: Identity and communication in cybersociety*. London: Kogan page.

Joshi, I, (1999). *Scenario of distance education in Africa countries*: *Case studies*. Retrieved December 15, 2008 from

http://www.obicom.uquan.ca/infocus/columns/en/archies/1999aout.

Keegan D. (1986). *The foundation of Distance Education*. London: Croom Helm.

Keegan D. (1990). *Foundation of Distance Education.* London: Routledge.

Keegan, D. (1995). Recent contributions to the theory of distance education. *Open Learning*, *5*(3), 10-15.

Kerka, S. (1986). Deterrents to Participation in Adult Education, *ERIC Digest. 59, ED27588986.* Retrieved February 6, 2013 from http://www.edgov/databases/ERC Digests/ed27588986.html

Knapper, C. (1988). Lifelong Learning and Distance Education. *American Journal of Distance Education. 2*(1), 63-72.

Knowles, M. (1980). *The modern Practice of Adult Education: From Pedagogy to Androgogy*. Chicago: Follett Publishers.

Knox, A. (1977). *Adult Learning and Development*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Koomson, A. K. (1998). Distance Education as a strategy for Training Teachers in Ghana: Problems and Prospects. *Journal of the Institute of Education, 4*, 1.

Lewis, R. (2002). The Hybridisation of conventional higher education. UK: Retrieved July 1, 2008 from http://www.irrodl.org/content/v2.2/lewis.pdf.

Marrs, L. (1995, June) *An Analysis of Distance Education and Educational Technology, Offices of Continuing Education and Information and Telecommunication Services*. Bellingham. Washington: Western Washington University.

Meacham, D. & Evans, D. (1989). Distance Education: The Design of Study, Materials. Open Learning Institute, Charles Stuart University.

Wagga, W. (1973). Towards a theory of independent learning and teaching. *Journal of Higher Education*, *44*, 661 -679.

Mensah, J., & Owusu-Mensah, F. (2002). Towards a theory of independent learning and teaching. *Journal of Education*, 5(214), 661-679.

Moore, M., & Kearsley, G. (1996). *Distance Education: A System's view.* Belmont: Wadsworth.

Musa, A. (2002). *The prospects and problems of providing distance education program for professional teachers in the Wa District*. An unpublished M. Phil thesis, Faculty of Education, University of Cape Coast, Cape Coast.

Oaks, M. (1996). *Western co-operative for educational telecommunications*.

Washington State University. Retrieved October 7, 2009 from

http://www.wiche.educ/telecom/techwasu.htm

Owusu-Boateng, W., Essel, R., & Mensah, J. (2001). *Using DL to address the educational need of the Ghanaian basic school teachers*. Kumasi: Institute of Distance Learning, KNUST.

Owusu-Mensah, F. (1998). *The provision of student support services in distance education in three different contexts: Implication for University College of Education, Winneba*. An unpublished MA dissertation, University of London, London.

Peters, O. (1998). *Learning and Teaching in Distance Education*. London: Kogan page.

Polit, D. F., & Hungler, B. P. (1995). Cited in Amedahe, F. K. (1994). Attitudes of basic education teachers toward the use of continuous assessment in Ghana. *Journal of Institute of Education.* 3(1), 8 – 20.

Quaigrain, K. A. (1994). Expanding teacher education through distance in Ghana: Prospects and challenges, *Journal of Education Development*, *6*(1), 75-82.

Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) (1999). *Distance learning guidelines*. Retrieved July 5, 2008 from http//www.qaa.ac.uk

Rekkedal, T. (1983). Enhancing student progress in Norway. *Teaching at a Distance, 23*, 19-24.

Rowntree, D. (1992). *Exploring open and distance learning*. London: Kogan.

Sarantakos S. (1998). *Social research.* (3rded.) New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Seamans, M. C. (1990). *New perspectives on user-centered design*. Presentation at the Interchange Technical Writing Conference. Lowell: University of Lowell.

Sheets, L. (1992). Issues in distance learning. *International Journal of Educational Telecommunications*, *1*(4), 337-365.

Sweet, R. (1986). *Student Drop-out in Distance Education*: An application of Tinto's Model. *Distance Education*, *7*, 201-231.

UNESCO, (2001). *Teacher Education Through Distance Learning: Technology*, *Curriculum, Evaluation, Cost*. Paris: Education Sector, Higher Education Division, Teacher Education Sector.

U. S. Congress Office of Technology Assessment. (1998). *Power on New Tools for Teaching and Learning.* OTA-SET-379 Washington DC: US Government Printing Office.

Vander Ven, K. (1994).*Viewpoint: The power and paradox of Distance Education*. *The on-line chronicle of Distance Education and Communication.* Retrieved May 3, 2010 from http://usenet news group alt.

Wolfe, L. (1994). *The digital Co-op. Trends in the Virtual Community*. Paper presented at the writers Technology and Equipment Vancouver, The University of British Columbia Continuing Studies, B C.

Wood, H. (1996). *Designing study materials for distance students*. Retrieved March5,2008,from*http://www.csu.educ.an/division/oli-rd/occpap/7/design.htm.*

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Questionnaire for both Students and Tutors

The University of Cape Coast uses distance education as a strategy to complement its conventional system of Tertiary Education. This questionnaire is an attempt to examine the UCC's Distance Education Programme in relation to challenges, support services and prospects. To help UCC plan its programme well to achieve the intended goals, you are kindly requested to respond to this questionnaire. You are assured of confidentiality and anonymity as you fill this questionnaire. Thank you.

SECTION A

Personal Background Information

Please respond by ticking the appropriate box. For example [√]

1. Category of respondent

   Student   [   ]

   Tutor/Lecturer   [   ]

2. Gender:

   Male   [   ]

   Female   [   ]

3. Academic and professional qualification

   PhD   [   ]

   M.Phil   [   ]

   MA/MED/MSC   [   ]

   1st Degree   [   ]

   Diploma   [   ]

4. Teaching experience

1-4 years   [   ]

5-9 years   [   ]

10-14 years   [   ]

15-19 years   [   ]

20-24 years   [   ]

SECTION B

Challenges of the UCC Distance Education Program

This section of the questionnaire is to solicit information on the challenges facing the UCC Distance Education Programme. Please tick [√] only one column in the following categories for each statement.

SA = Strongly Agree   A = Agree

SD = Strongly Disagree   D = Disagree

Challenges of the UCC Distance Education Programme include:	SA	A	D	SD
5. Inadequate feedback and contact with tutors/lecturers				
6. Inadequate provision of modules.				
7. Poor quality of modules.				
8. Inadequate student-support system.				
9. Inadequate tutorial sessions (face-to-face				

meetings)				
10. Students are not comfortable with the method of teaching used.				
11. Students/tutors/lecturers do not receive modules on time.				
12. Inadequate in-service training for tutors.				
13. There are inadequate qualified tutors/lecturers.				
14. Inadequate motivation for tutors/lecturers.				
15. The programme does not meet students' expectation.				

16. Apart from the items 14-15, please indicate any other challenge(s) facing the UCC Distance Education Programme.

………………………………………………………………………

………………………………………………………………………

………………………………………………………………………

………………………………………………………………………

………………………………………………………………………

………………………………………………………………………

SECTION C

Support Services Available for Learners of the Distance Education Programme.

This section of the questionnaire seeks to gather information on the kind of support services available for learners of the distance Education Programme.

Please tick {√} only one column in the following categories for each statement.

S A = Strongly Agree A = Agree

S A = Strongly Agree D = Disagree

Support services available for learners /students of UCC Distance Education Programme include:	SA	A	D	SD
17. The UCC Distance Education Programme supported the print materials with monthly face-to face sessions.				
18. The UCC Distance Education Programme set up an ICT centre for its learners/ students				
19. The UCC Distance Education Programme provided adequate computers for students use.				
20. The UCC Distance Education Programme provided adequate number of library books to support students' learning.				
21. The UCC Distance Education Programme provided adequate equipment for printing at its study centers				

to support students' academic work.				

22.   Apart from the items 20-21, please indicate any other support services available for learners/ students of the UCC distance Education Programme.

…………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………..

SECTION D

Prospects of the UCC Distance Education Program

This section sought to gather information on the prospects of the UCC Distance Education Programme. Please tick [√] only one column in the following categories for each statement.

SA = Strongly Agree   A = Agree

SD = Strongly Disagree   D = Disagree

Prospects of the UCC Distance Education Programme include:	SA	A	D	SD
23. The UCC Distance Education programme increases teacher accessibility to university				

education.				
24. The UCC Distance Education Programme enables teachers to acquire higher professional training whiles on their job.				
25. The UCC Distance Education Programme will reduce the number of qualified students who are refused admission into tertiary institutions every year.				
26. The UCC Distance Education Programme has the potential to attract more teachers to enroll in future				
27. The UCC Distance Education Programme increases the efficiency of teachers.				

28. Apart from the items 26 – 27, please indicate any other prospect(s) of

the UCC Distance Education Programme.

…………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………

Thank you for your time and cooperation

LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

FACULTY OF EDUCATION

INSTITUTE FOR EDUCATIONAL PLANNING AND ADMINISTRATION

Tel. No. : 03321-30571   University Post Office

Fax No. : 03321-30588   Cape Coast

E-mail   : iepa@ucc.edu.gh   Ghana

Our Ref. EP/144.1/V.2

March 27, 2011

…………………………………….

…………………………………….

…………………………………….

…………………………………….

LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

The bearer of this letter, **Francis Justice Kwesi Agbofa** is a graduate student of the Institute for Educational Planning and Administration of the University of Cape Coast.   He requires some information from your outfit for the purpose of writing a dissertation as a requirements of M.Ed degree programme.

We would be grateful if you would kindly allow him to collect the information from your outfit. Kindly give the necessary assistance that **Francis Justice Kwesi Agbofa** requires to collect the information.

While anticipating your cooperation, we thank you for any help that you may be able to give him.

Thanking you for your co-operation.

Mr. Y.M. Anhwere
Assistant Registrar
for: Director