THE EVOLUTION AND IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES OF THE UNIVERSITY OF GHANA BACHELOR OF ARTS DISTANCE EDUCATION PROGRAMME

BY

SAMUEL AMPONSAH

THIS THESIS IS SUBMITTED TO THE UNIVERSITY OF GHANA, LEGON IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR THE AWARD OF

M. PHIL ADULT EDUCATION DEGREE

AUGUST, 2010.

DECLARATION

I certify that this thesis is my own original research work carried out in the 2009/2010 academic year. Full acknowledgement has been rendered for references of other people's views cited. This work has neither been presented in whole or in part to any other institution for any award of degree.

.....

SAMUEL AMPONSAH

(STUDENT)

.....

DR. S. K. BADU-NYARKO

(SUPERVISOR)

.....

MR. R.A. AGGOR

(SUPERVISOR)

DEDICATION

A mother is the fruit through which God gives life. A woman who will give all the love, support and encouragement is what everyone would wish to have as a mother. This thesis is dedicated to my selfless mum- Maame Akosua Boadu (Carol). I say God richly bless you and make you live to enjoy the fruits of your labour.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

First and foremost, I wish to express my sincerest appreciation to the living God not only for giving me wisdom, courage and guidance to successfully finish this work, but for giving me more meaning to life as I embarked on this study.

I also wish to register my appreciation to my supervisors, Dr. S. K. Badu-Nyarko and Mr. R. A. Aggor for their guidance, constructive criticisms and the good relationship that was built right from the very inception of the study.

My deepest gratitude goes to Bernard Owusu Amponsah, Maame Abena Takyiwaa, Kofi Appiagyei Atta-Mensah and all my family for their spiritual and material support throughout the course of this research.

I am also indepted to Dr. Daniel Oduro-Mensah, Ms. Clara Benneh, Dr O.A.T.F Kwapong, Mr Kenneth Adda, Mr Ben Akuoko, Mr Samuel Asare and Mr Ken Barnor, all of the Institute of Continuing and Distance Education for their encouragement and support in various ways.

The present and past coordinators, organizers, tutors and learners on the distance education programme, who spared me their time in spite of their busy schedules, cannot be forgotten. Your contributions have made this study a success. I say God bless you all.

I am particularly grateful to the following Graduate and Teaching Assistants of the ICDE for their support and encouragement. William Teye, Mavis Forson, Patricia Serwaa Afrifa, Edward Okine, David Addae, Isaac Kofi Biney, Adamu Seidu Abariche, Gifty Wumekpor and Ophelia Ampoma-Benefo.

Special mention is made of Desmond Kumi (Political Science Department), Johnson Owusu (Switzerland), Ignatius Kofi Fenu, Isaac Appiah, Ellen Abakah, Gail Ama Ashong and Dotsey Kaledzi. I wish I could do more than just say thank you. I really do appreciate the time you all spent in helping me out with the data analysis and editing of this thesis.

Finally, I wish to state that all shortfalls, errors and omissions in this work are entirely my responsibility.

Samuel Amponsah

Institute of Distance and Continuing Education

University of Ghana, Legon.

August, 2010.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Contents **Page**

CHAPTER TWO

CHAPTER THREE

CHAPTER FOUR

CHAPTER SIX

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

ABSTRACT

Higher education is undergoing fundamental change as a result of increasing globalization, advances in technology, and changing student demographics. In response to these changes, distance education at the tertiary level is growing rapidly. As this change occurs, many of the traditionally held ideas about higher education are challenged. There are important issues to be recognized and addressed that will provide challenges as well as opportunities for educators as they strive to develop quality distance education programmes. This study, therefore sought to investigate the evolution process and implementation strategies the University of Ghana Bachelor of Arts Distance Education Programme went through.

In all, a sample of 197 respondents was used for the study. The proportional sampling and simple random sampling techniques were used to select 139 learners and 49 tutors. Additionally, four past coordinators and the present coordinator of the distance education programme were interviewed personally. The research instrument used to collect data from from the students was the questionnaire.

The results of the study revealed that the university was in 1995 tasked by the Ministry of Education to initiate a tertiary distance education programme. A steering committee was formed and the programme eventually took off in 2007 with a student population of 907 and five out of the seven disciplines initially planned.

Training of course writers and tutors, contact with faculty and involvement of regional heads of the programme were some of strategies used in the implementation process. Notwithstanding the strategies, there were initial resistance by faculty, lack of funds and management problems that confronted the implementation of the distance education programme. It was further revealed that flexibility in time tabling, provision of support services and employment of staff to edit and format the modules helped to resolve the challenges that were encountered in the implementation process.

Based on the findings of the study, it is recommended that faculty should embrace the distance education programme just like the regular programmes run by the university. Also, more people should be employed to facilitate work at the Distance Education Unit. In addition, course materials must be developed and distributed on time.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Higher education is undergoing fundamental change as a result of increasing globalization, advances in technology, and changing student demographics. In response to these changes, distance education at the tertiary level is growing rapidly. As this change occurs, many of the traditionally held ideas about higher education are challenged. There are important issues to be recognized and addressed that will provide challenge as well as opportunity for educators as they strive to develop quality distance education programmes that are accessible, inclusive, and learner-centered (Dubois, 1996). Among these issues are understanding the distance learner as well as systems and institutional interfaces needed to support the distance learner in order to promote academic success.

Kwapong (2008) holds that open and distance learning has proved as a sure way of widening access to education especially for women. She adds that it is an educational philosophy that seeks to overcome/ remove as many barriers as possible to education. The emphasis is on open and distance in the sense that there are barriers to accessing the programmes. The distance implies that the learner and the teacher could be at different places and different times and engage in an educational transaction using appropriate media such as print or electronic.

UNESCO (2002) says open and distance learning refers to approaches to learning that focus on freeing learners from constraints of time and place while offering flexible learning opportunities. For many students open and distance learning is a way of combining work and family responsibilities with educational opportunities. The open nature of distance learning could be formally institutionalized when such policies as open admissions, and freedom of selection of what, when and where to learn are introduced. The openness of distance learning is also seen in relatively flexible organizational structures, patterns of delivery and communication as well as the use of various technologies to support learning (Commonwealth of Learning, n.d). In open and distance learning, the learner has control over pace, place, time and process. Hence, the process of distance learning is often described as learner-centred, and this is one of the main strengths of distance learning.

According to the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), everybody has the right to education. From the cradle to the grave, human beings learn so as to develop and adjust to changes in the community. The United Nations' 1959 Convention on the Rights of the Child, and the UN International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) all declare education to be a fundamental human right. Further discussion has continued at the Education for All conferences held in Thailand in 1990 and Senegal in 2000 as well as in the International Commission on Education for the 21st Century's report to the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO, 1948). However, there is no consistent definition of what amounts, qualities, forms, and content of education meet the minimum requirements to fulfill that right. In a globalized world, this issue

becomes even more complex. Questions arise as to who should provide education, for whom, how, with what content, and under what conditions (Lindahl, 2006)

Amedzro (2005) writes that learning has become a very important strategy to survive, as people continue to learn throughout life either non-formally, formally or informally. They learn in schools and through the process of self-education in reading, travelling, discussion, watching and listening. It should however be noted that the effectiveness and quality of a self-directed learning throughout life cannot be ascertained. This is because self- directed learning is not supervised and evaluated and could therefore be disastrous. It may also be haphazard and does not follow any system. Learning must be supported and taken in partnership with an external agent. It must be supervised and promote the spirit of inquisitiveness and acquisitiveness.

Brookfield (1986) opines that one main purpose of education is to inculcate the habit of independent learning skills in learners. But self directed learning fails generally to build these skills and the learner can relax at any point of time for one reason or the other. People need some sort of organized education to help them adapt comfortably to situations but may not demand or get opportunities for it. It is then that distance education or distance learning can play a very important role and should therefore be made available to people to satisfy their educational needs (make them function effectively and efficiently in all aspects of their lives).

In the 2006–07 academic year, 66 percent of the 4,160 2-year and 4-year Title IV degree-granting postsecondary institutions in the United States offered college-level distance

education courses. The overall percentage includes 97 percent of public 2-year institutions, 18 percent of private for-profit 2-year institutions, 89 percent of public 4-year institutions, 53 percent of private not-for-profit institutions, and 70 percent of private for-profit 4-year institutions. Sixty-five percent of the institutions reported college-level credit-granting distance education courses, and 23 percent reported noncredit distance education courses. There was a total of an estimated 12.2 million enrollments (or registrations) in college-level credit-granting distance education courses in 2006–07. Of these enrollments, 77 percent were reported in online courses, 12 percent were reported in hybrid/blended online courses, and 10 percent were reported in other types of distance education courses. In 2006–07, there were approximately 11,200 college-level programs that were designed to be completed totally through distance education; 66 percent of these programs were reported as degree programs and the remaining 34 percent were reported as certificate programs (NCES, 2008).

It is stated in the President's Committee on Review of Education Reforms in Ghana (2002) as a recommnendation that "the university should introduce more flexibility into their programmes to allow for work- study, and credit transfers from one institution to another (p. 115)." In the same vein Paton (2009) made the assertion that organizations are changing and therefore jobs demand new capabilities and as such it is very important to move with the times. He continued that learning must be learner-centred and self- directed, since this will afford the learner the opportunity to undergo variety of interaction in order to blend with the resource base of the communities where the learning takes place and that the communities would also be direct beneficiaries of the knowledge gained. This is by virtue of the fact that

the learner would mingle with the communities to get first hand information on needs to satisfy them (the communities) through knowledge acquired.

Another strength of distance education lies in the fact that it calls for a cheaper, timely and more accessible education to enable learners to be closer to the realities of life and self direction in the face of conflicting expectations. By adopting the distance learning mode, individuals stand to gain more experience in the field of work compared to the traditional mode. It is believed that by this the learner is made to answer questions based on personal interactions and feedback immediately sent to achieve results. It is in this light that distance learning has gained prominence worldwide in recent times.

In Ghana, distance education is being organized in the public universities. This did not happen just suddenly; it progressed through stages and thus has a history. Ansere (2002) holds that the provision of distance education in Ghana predates the attainment of the country's political independence in 1957. Records show that some members of the educated and political elite during the pre- independence era used what was then called Correspondence Courses to further their education and training. Notable examples were J. B. Danquah and Kwame Nkrumah. They did this because there was hardly any higher education institution in the country at the time. Aggor, Kinyanjui, Pecku, and Yerbury (1992) also note that as far back as March 1964, there was recognition that distance learning and correspondence delivery was needed to serve the needs of Ghanaians, the society in which they live and the country as a

whole. University committees and senior administrators have also long realized and advocated the pivotal role that distance education could provide for tertiary education system and societal development. As early as the mid-1980s, the universities began to look to distance learning for cost- effective solution to the problem of limited access to tertiary education. They began to explore the potential of using distance learning to address the excessive demand for education in the country and for that matter widening access to education especially at the higher level. This received the attention and support of government and development partners Aggor et al (1992).

Since the 1990s, development partners like UNESCO, and some foreign educational institutions like The Commonwealth of Learning, Canadian International Development Agency, through the Association of Universities and Colleges in Canada (AUCC), and Simon Fraser University have supported local interventions to help establish distance education in the country (Kwapong, 2007).

To build on these initial efforts and explore the full potential of open and distance learning (ODL) to address some of the key educational challenges, the most recent educational reforms under the chairmanship of Professor J. Anamuah- Mensah, proposes the establishment of an Open University and Open Colleges in the country. The Open University is to provide work-study programmes through distance learning using both print and electronic delivery systems for students and workers to acquire higher education. The Open community colleges on the

other hand are to provide avenues for further studies/ training for those who may end their education at the Junior Secondary School/ Senior Secondary School levels, and meet the multiplicity of needs of different learners as well as encourage life-long learning (Ghana, 2002). The White Paper (Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, 2004) on the report endorses this proposal by indicating that the concept of Open University will create further opportunities for education for all. When properly established, the Open University will satisfy the need for further education opportunities for the large numbers of people who require further education. ODL is emerging as the mode that meets the educational needs of the country (Kwapong, 2007).

Badu-Nyarko (2000) writes that distance education in Ghanaian universities is a new phenomenon. Its introduction has been received with mixed feelings by both the public and academics. He further stated that in the academic community, there has been some concern regarding the parity of a distance education mode to a traditional delivery mode. He captures challenges to pursuing full-time study at the tertiary level in Ghana as, the highly-selective admission system, residential status of institutions, distance from the university, and lack of financial support for non- resident or off-campus students. On the same issue of the need for distance education, Badu-Nyarko cites Aggor et al. (1992) that high costs associated with the country's traditional residential higher educational system have put higher education out of the reach of many. For this reason they make the recommendation that distance education has the potential to contribute to workforce requirements of the country's efforts and so it must be pursued.

Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy (GPRS II, 2006- 2009) observes how tertiary institutions are not able to absorb all applicants at the tertiary level and holds that there is the need for critical policy issues that relate to inadequate physical infrastructure to absorb the growing number of young adults who seek admission to tertiary institutions and insufficient numbers of qualified and well motivated staff. The new Educational Sector Reform Programme introduced in 2004 aims at addressing these issues, particularly at the basic and secondary levels. It continues by stating that at the tertiary level, on-going programmes for enhancing infrastructural development in the universities and polytechnics will be expanded to provide essential facilities like libraries, lecture halls, laboratories, workshops, equipment, and residential accommodation. A National Policy on distance education will be adopted and distance education centres established in all regions of the country.

1.2 Overview of the University of Ghana Distance Education Progamme

Adda (2004) states that various efforts have been made by the Government of Ghana, the universities and international agencies like the Commonwealth of Learning (COL) to integrate distance education into the nation's tertiary education system. The Academic Board of the University of Ghana gave the first serious consideration to the issue in 1986 as a direct result of the lack of both academic and residential facilities in all the three universities in Ghana at that time (Aggor et. al 1992). The University of Ghana was the first university established in Ghana in 1948 and it operated on the Oxbridge model which allowed all learners to stay in halls of residence, where they were fed three times in a day. This system could however not

be sustained with the increasing number of prospective tertiary students and those who had to combine job and or family chores with schooling.

University of Ghana's Bachelor of Arts degree by distance learning was therefore introduced principally to broaden access to qualified applicants who otherwise would not have been admitted because of inadequate space on the main campus and for others whose work and family obligations make it difficult for them to be resident students (Coordinator, 2010).

The programme was launched in November 23, 2007 with an initial intake of 1127 applicants. However, 907 of the applicants duly registered and were matriculated. The programme was started with five courses namely; Sociology, Economics, Linguistics, Psychology, Geography and Resource Development (The University of Ghana Distance Education Programme Brochure, undated). In the 2009/10 academic year, 1097 learners were admitted into the programme and another 2508 learners have been admitted for the 2010/11 academic year in addition to 748 mature students (University of Ghana Basic Statistics, 2007).

The mission of the Centre for Distance Education is, 'the Centre for Distance Education shall be a centre of excellence through which the University of Ghana shall provide tertiary education to all segments of the population irrespective of their social background or geographical location, using distance and flexible learning methodologies' (Coordinator, 2010).

With regards to admission requirements three categories of students are admitted into the programme, the categories are:

- Senior high students with aggregates 6-24 in any Senior High School (SHS) course.
- Mature students who pass an entrance examination (begins at level 200).
- Diploma from University and its affiliates with 2.5 FGPA or Distinction.

The centre runs the following programmes:

- Bachelor of Arts-Linguistics, Economics, History, Sociology, Geography and Development, Psychology, Social Work, Information Studies, Political Science.
- B.A (Accounting and Management).
- Bachelor of Science in Administration
    a. Accounting and Finance
    b. Marketing
    c. Management
    d. Public Administration

(The University of Ghana Distance Education Programme Brochure, undated).

With regards to course and material development, courses are developed based on the existing courses in the university and they are developed in line with the departmental courses thereby making each course department-owned. The total number of modules that have been produced since 2007 according to the coordinator of the programme are 184. This total number comprises of 21 modules for Level 100, 51 for Level 200 and 82 for Level 300 while 84 new

ones are being written for Level 400 and an additional four for Level 100 for the university required courses.

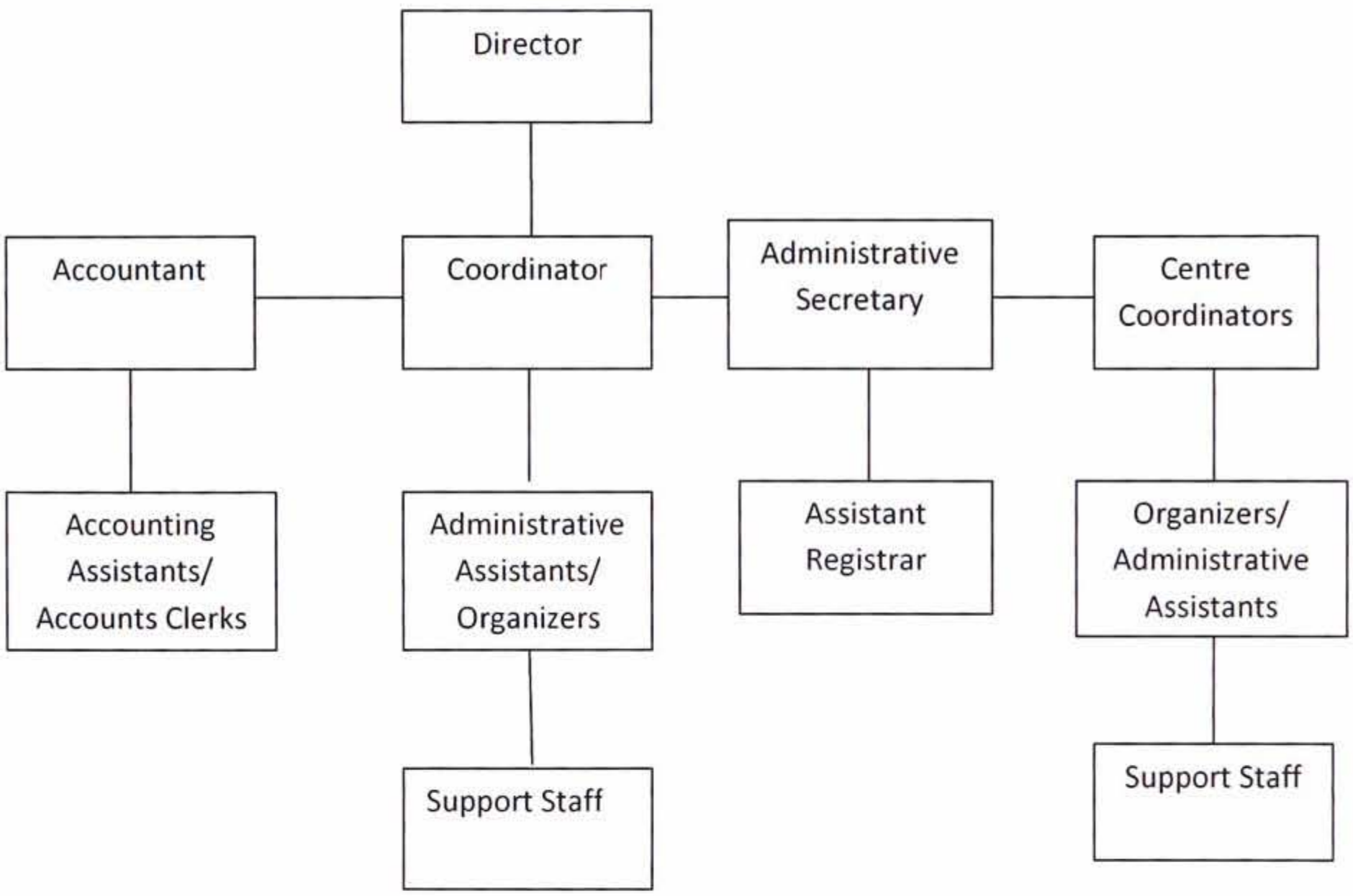
With the inception of the University of Ghana Distance Education Degree Programme, the following support services are supposed to be provided to enhance learners' ability to adapt to the system and also ensure a smooth implementation of the programme. The services are;

- Study Centres with Co-ordinator, administrators and competent tutors.
- Academic Advising and Personal Counselling.
- Well resourced Study Centres.
- Course materials are delivered at the Study Centres. An example is the module provided for students.
- Students can assess library information in the University once registered as a student with a valid university identity card.
- Assignments may be mailed (post), faxed or submitted personally at the study centre.

In addition to these support services the university provide, there are residential sessions where learners from all over the country congregate at Legon for one month for revision and examinations. This takes place at the end of every semester in January and July and the examinations are held under the supervision of the University Examinations Superintending Committee and Academic Affairs Directorate of the University (Coordinator, 2010).

The programme is currently managed by the Institute of Continuing and Distance Education with an advisory Board and Steering Committee. Every department has a coordinator who serves as a link between the department and the distance education centre and the head of departments ensure the smooth delivery of courses from their departments. Below is figure 1.1 that depicts the structure of the distance education unit.

Figure 1.1 Structure of the Distance Education Unit



Source: Coordinator (2010)

1.3 Statement of the Problem

Over ten million learners all over the world are believed to be studying by distance and almost all of them are believed to be adults (Harry, Keegan and Magnus, 1994). In some institutions, distance learners never meet their tutors. However, face- to- face sessions have been incorporated into the University of Ghana DE programme to enable learners meet their tutors and also to enable the learners to meet and interact with one another. This aspect of the programme is to help reduce loneliness, isolation and dropout associated with distance education and also helps eliminate the problems associated with self- directed learning.

The mission of distance education programme in Ghana is to make quality education at all levels more accessible and relevant to meet the needs of Ghanaians in order to enhance their performance and improve the quality of their lives. Specifically governments of Ghana have among other factors sought to use distance education to give opportunities to qualified applicants who do not get admission into face- to- face programmes at the tertiary level, create opportunity for work and study and provide cost- effective and affordable education.

From the afore-mentioned reasons and others, the University of Ghana Distance Education Degree Programmme was formally established in 2007. After two years of operation, a study of the programme could be very beneficial in guiding the future implementation of the programme. The study seeks to answer the question: How did the University of Ghana Distance Education Programme evolve and what strategies were adopted in the implementation process?

1.4 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this research is to study in depth the evolution of the University of Ghana Distance Education Programme in order to identify the strategies used in the implementation process. Rogers' (1962) Diffusion-Innovation Theory was be used to analyse and discuss the innovation and communication channels in enhancing the implementation of the programme. In addition, the Transactional Distance Theory by Moore (1972) was adopted for the research as it indicates the main features of distance learning.

1.5 Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study are to identify the:

i. Evolution of the distance education programme.

ii. Strategies adopted for the implementation of the programme.

iii. Challenges in the implementation process from learners and programme implementers.

iv. Ways of resolving the challenges.

1.6 Related Research Questions

The following research questions are going to guide the study:

i. What were the objectives for the establishment of the distance education programme?

ii. How did the University of Ghana Distance Education Degree Programme start?

iii. What strategies were used in the implementation of the programme?

iv. How were the strategies applied in the implementation process?

v. What were the major challenges faced in the implementation process?

vi. How are the current challenges being resolved?

1.7 Significance of the Study

It is hoped that a systematic investigation of the University of Ghana Distance Education Programme has the potential to unveil the strengths and weaknesses of the programme. The findings will therefore assist in planning, decision-making and programme administration. This will help to effectively support and expand the experiences of learners on the programme, as well as contribute to inform practice of distance education at the University of Ghana.

The study will also be of immense help to learners by way of making them aware of challenges that they may face in the course of their study and suggest ways of overcoming these challenges. It will be very useful to policy makers as a guide where they want to start a distance education programme and other universities that are involved in distance education.

1.8 Limitations of the Study

Very little information on the University of Ghana distance education programme has been documented, thereby making it very difficult for the researcher to get important information

to enhance the quality of this research work. The five centres used in this research are spread across five regions in Ghana which meant the researcher had to spend more money and time in order to get the necessary data.

Finally, almost all the respondents used in this study were very busy. This meant interview appointments had to be rescheduled time and again thereby delaying the pace at which the research ought to have travelled.

1.9 Operational Definition of Terms

The key words defined in the study are:

i. Evolution

Evolution is the change in the way things are done through successive activities or strategies. In the case of this study evolution is about how the idea of distance education was conceived through its implementation processes.

ii. Implementation

It is the realization of an application or execution of a plan, ideal, design or policy. The idea of establishing distance learning went through various processes and was finally established, the establishment of the programme is what is termed as implementation.

iii. Strategies

Strategies refer to all the actions that were designed to achieve the goal of implementing the Distance Education Programme.

iv. Distance education

Distance education is a formal education process in which the students and instructor are not in the same place. Thus, instruction may be synchronous or asynchronous, and it may involve communication through the use of video, audio, or computer technologies, or by correspondence (including written correspondence and the use of technology such as CD-ROM). Distance education includes courses and programmes that were formerly designated as online, hybrid/blended online (combination of online and in-class instruction with reduced in-class seat time for students), and other distance education courses and programmes.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The literature review is divided into two parts. The first part deals with the theoretical framework on which the study is grounded. The second part deals with issues related to the evolution and implementation strategies of programmes. Specifically, the second part reviews literature on the following themes:

- Importance of distance education
- Evolution of distance education programmes
- Implementation strategies in distance education programmes
- Challenges in the implementation process from learners and programme implementers
- Media/ Technology in distance education

2.2 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework attempts to integrate the defining characteristics of models or theories from different behavioural science disciplines into distance education. Two of these models namely, the diffusion-innovation theory and transactional model, have been adopted for this study.

2.2.1 Diffusion-Innovation Theory

Globally, distance education (DE) has changed how teaching, training, and self-directed learning occurs at all ages and stages of life. This change is mainly because there are questions about the ability of traditional approaches to provide the learner with optimal rather than minimalist environments and with authentic experiences of learning which are meaningful to the learner in some intrinsic manner (Perkins, 1996). Such criticisms have escalated as multimedia and telecommunications technologies continue to evolve and advance with promises of providing the learner with richer, more meaningful education relevant for future workplace and learning environment (Bethany, 1994; Reigeiuth, 1994 & Daughterty & Funke, 1998). Daughterty and Funke (1998) added that these technological innovations have direct impact on current university practices and policies and subsequently have the potential to alter the traditional definition of education. Consequently, there is need to understand the faculty members' innovations-adopted process in order for universities to establish these policies and procedures.

This study investigates how programmes like distance education were adopted by considering the innovation-decision process based on Rogers' (1995) diffusion of innovation theory. This study considers that innovation-decision process among faculty members was not in isolation; rather there were other factors that triggered their decision to adopt or reject an innovation. Some factors considered were faculty characteristics, the attributes of innovations embedded in distance learning, and the communication channels. Rogers' adopter categories and how they influence innovativeness show how individual characteristics influence the decision to

adopt or reject an innovation. In addition, Rogers (1995) commented that, "the communication channels used to diffuse an innovation also may influence the innovation's rate of adoption" (p. 207), and therefore, the communication channels used by individuals to inform others about a new or an existing innovation might eventually be of great significance for the this study.

The researcher starts by explaining how the information about distance education gets to one or several individuals, which gives way to the types of innovation decisions and the innovation-decision process. Next, the discussion focuses on Rogers' (1995) categories of adopters and how their characteristics influence their innovativeness followed by the research findings on the characteristics of university faculty members. Lastly, discussion focuses on the attributes on innovation in distance learning.

2.2.1.1 Innovativeness

Rogers' (1995) defined innovativeness, as "the degree to which an individual is relatively earlier in adopting new ideas than other members of his system" (p. 27). Rogers and Shoemaker (1971) earlier defined innovation as "an idea, practice, or object perceived as new by the individual" (p. 19). Accordingly, Midgley and Dowling (1978) produced a definition of innovativeness as "the degree to which an individual is receptive to a new idea and makes innovation decisions independently of communicated expressions of others" (p. 236). These definitions of innovativeness are the anchors that guide the definition of innovativeness in this

study. In this regard, Lee (2001) opined that regardless of the external rewards or incentives, faculty members tend to motivate and commit themselves to the teaching process. In this study, innovativeness refers to the degree to which an individual faculty member is receptive to distance education in spite of the perception of their colleagues or the administrative staff.

2.2.1.2 Communication Channels

Information is a vital tool in the diffusion of innovations in that individuals must be aware of the existence and relevance of an innovation in order to decide to adopt or reject it. According to Rogers (1995), "diffusion is the process by which an innovation is communicated through certain channels over time among the members of a social system (p. 35). In this view, communication channels play a major role in determining the adopters' and rejecters' innovation decision process. Rogers (1995) defined communication channel as "the means by which messages get from one individual to another" (p. 36). Communication channels by virtue of providing a means to get information regarding an innovation from one individual to another open up new possibilities for individuals to exercise both rights and responsibilities of moving from one stage of innovation decision process to the next. Rogers (1995) refers to the innovation-decision process as an "information-seeking and information processing activity in which the individual is motivated to reduce uncertainty about the advantages and disadvantages of an innovation" (p. 165).

In order to communicate effectively with all faculties at the University of Ghana in connection to the birth of distance education, the Implementation Committee made the following recommendations among others;

- The University informed Heads of Departments in writing to make themselves available for training to develop and deliver their courses in the distance mode.
- Heads of Departments had to appoint Coordinators for distance education activities in their departments.
- The Centre for distance education contacted Departments to discuss the training and other issues related to the programme.
- University of Ghana staff was to be encouraged in writing the course, (Distance Education Implementation Committee Report, 2006. p. 4).

In connection with helping people access information on the University of Ghana distance education programme, the university placed adverts in the Ghanaian Times and the Daily Graphic on Tuesday, 25th March and Thursday, 27th March 2008 respectively (Progress Report, 2008).

The communication channels adopted by the Distance Education Implementation Committee are consistent with Rogers' (1995) categories of communication channels: mass media and interpersonal channels. Mass media channels refer to "those means of transmitting messages that involves mass medium, such as radio, television, and newspapers, which enable a source to reach an audience of many" (Rogers, 1995, p.18). Rogers defined interpersonal channels as

"a face-to-face exchange of messages between two or more individuals" (p.18). He emphasized that interpersonal channels are more effective in persuading an individual to accept a new idea especially if they are of the same social status and education level among other similarities. Rogers (1995) further explained that human communication involves transferring information between individuals who are similar in certain attributes (homophily) or between dissimilar individuals (heterophily), but he concluded that although "the very nature of diffusion demands that at least some degree of heterophily be present between two participants... more effective communication occurs when two or more individuals are homophilous" (p. 19). However, Rogers (1995) noted that adoption or rejection of an innovation can be by an individual member of a system or by the entire system. Thus, despite the types of communication channels, individuals can make the decision to adopt an innovation independently or collectively. It is of course in connection with this that the Distance Education Implementation Committee met at the Pro-VCs office and set up a sub-committee so as to take care of issues effectively at different levels (Distance Education Implementation Committee Report, p.1).

2.2.1.3 Types of Innovation Decisions

Rogers and Shoemaker (1971) identified three types of innovation decisions. First, there are optional decisions, in which "choices to adopt or reject innovations are made by an individual independent of the decisions of other members of a system" (p. 28), although at the same time the individual's decision is undoubtedly influenced by the norms his or her social system and the need to conform to group pressures. Second, there are collective decisions that refer to

"choices to adopt or reject an innovation that are made by consensus among members of a system" (p. 28). Rogers and Shoemaker (1971) asserted that in collective decisions, all members of a society must conform to the system's decision once it is made. Finally, there are authority decisions that refer to, "choices to adopt or reject innovations that are made by relatively few individuals in a system who possess power, status, or technical expertise" (p. 28). In authority decisions, Rogers and Shoemaker (1971) explained, "the individual's attitude toward the innovation is not a prime factor in his or her adoption or rejection, he or she is simply told of it and is expected to comply with the innovation decision, which was made by an authority" (p. 36). After developing these types of innovation decisions, Rogers (1995) concluded that innovations requiring an individual optional decision are generally adopted more rapidly than innovation adopted by an organization.

It is worth noting that the last two types of innovation (collective and authority decisions) contradict what was later identified by Keast (1997) that in the implementation process, it is prudent to collaborate. He further describes collaboration as going hand-in-hand with enlisting the support from key stakeholders and decision makers which is so necessary for success. He continues that collaboration helps participants to assimilate and understand what the initiative is about.

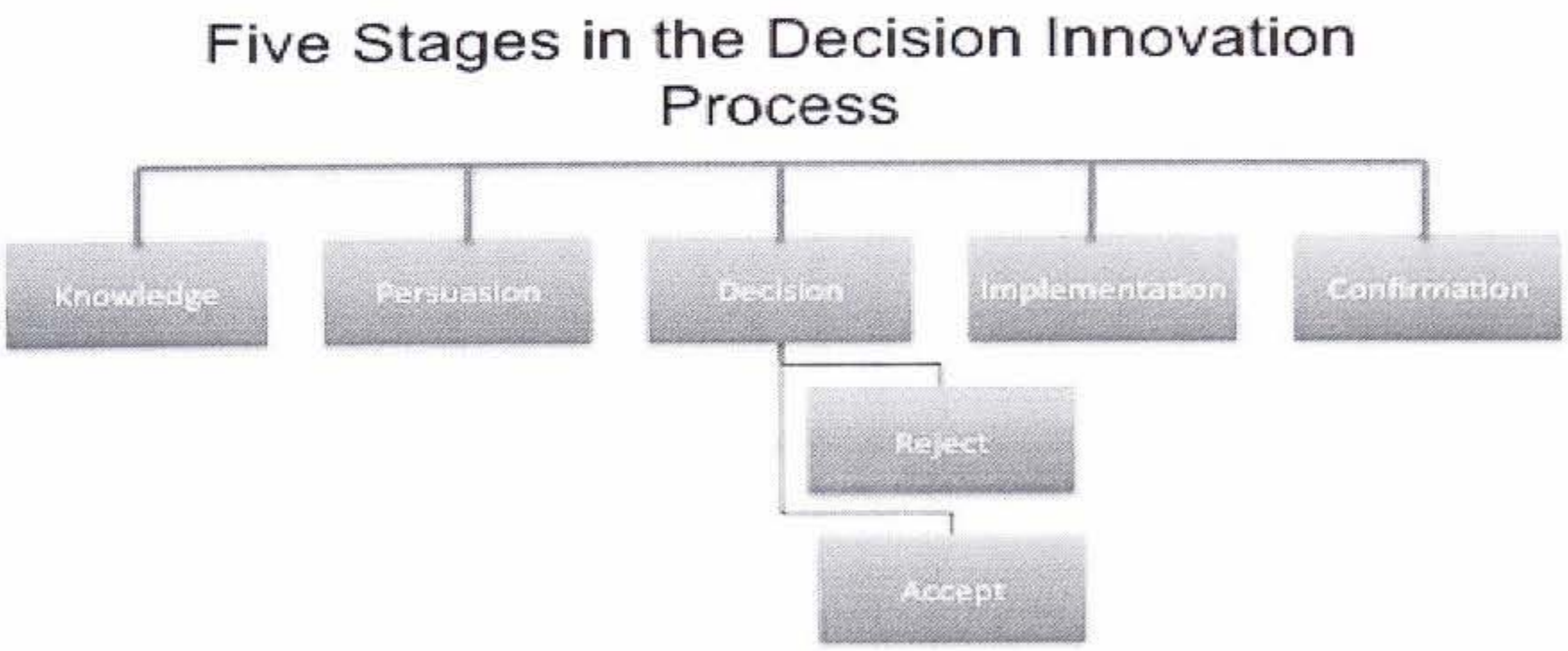
Although Rogers (1995) acknowledged that a type of innovation-decision might change over time, he noted that each type of innovation-decision takes time too. That is, the individual or

decision-making unit passes through a mental process "from knowledge of an innovation to forming an attitude toward the innovation, to deciding to adopt or reject, to implementation of new idea, and confirmation of this decision" (p. 36).

2.2.1.4 The Model of Innovation-Decision Process

Rogers and Shoemaker (1971) stressed that diffusion scholars have long recognized that an individual's decision about an innovation is not an instantaneous act, but a process that occurs over time and consists of a series of actions. In this regard, Rogers (1995) established a model of innovation-decision process that has five different stages during which potential adopters deal with the uncertainty that is inherently involved in deciding about a new alternative to that previously in existence. The five stages developed by Rogers (1995) are: knowledge, persuasion, decision, implementation, and confirmation stages. This is presented in figure 2.1.

Figure 2.1: Model of Innovation-Decision Process



Source: Rogers, M. (1962). *Diffusion of Innovations*

The knowledge stage refers to, "the time period when an individual or other decision making unit is exposed to an innovation's existence and gains some understanding of how it functions" (p. 165). This stage has three subdivisions. First, the awareness, which is information that an innovation exists, second is how-to-stage referring to the information necessary to use an innovation properly, and finally, is the principles knowledge stage that refers to the information dealing with the functioning principles underlying how the innovation works (Rogers, 1995). This stage seems to be the genesis to innovation and is so important, the University of Ghana therefore made sure that a committee and a sub-committee was set up and also ensured that all heads of departments were involved in the process of implementing the distance education programme.

The persuasion stage is the stage at which "the individual or some other decision making unit forms a favourable or unfavourable attitude toward innovation" (p, 168). At this stage, the individual becomes more psychologically involved with the innovation, that is, he or she actively seeks information about the new idea and it is at this stage that an individual forms a general perception of the innovation. In developing favourable or unfavourable attitude toward innovation, an individual may mentally apply the new idea to his or her present or anticipated future situation before deciding whether or not to try it because the individual wants to know that his or her thinking is on the right track in comparison with the opinion peers (Rogers, 1995). Some individuals are more likely to have an attitude-adoption gap than others in that the formation of favourable or unfavourable attitude toward an innovation does not lead to an adoption or rejection decision.

The decision stage is the stage where an individual or decision-making unit engages in activities that lead to a choice to adopt or reject an innovation. Most individuals will not adopt an innovation without trying it first on probationary basis in order to determine its usefulness in their own situations. Thus, innovations that can be divided for trail are generally adopted more rapidly, but for some individuals and for some innovations, the "trial of a new idea by peers like themselves can substitute, at least in part, for their own trial of an innovation" (p. 171).

In line with the decision stage, Badu-Nyarko (2000) advises that "adequate preparation is necessary for any innovation. This calls for effective programme planning, the preparation and testing of quality instructional materials, and modifications made before embarking on the programme". Similarly, the University of Ghana in a bid to have a smooth implementation of its innovation (the distance education programme) ensured that all staff involved were duly mobilized, the target population in terms of learners were identified as well as courses to be offered, remuneration and other incentives and the fee structure (Distance Education Implementation Committee Report, 2006. p. 3-5).

The implementation stage occurs when an individual or other decision-making units put an innovation into use. Implementation may represent the termination of the innovation decision process for most individuals, but for others, a confirmation stage may occur (Rogers, 1995). At this stage reinvention occurs in which the user changes or modifies an innovation in the process of its adoption and implementation. At this stage what University of Ghana has done is to admit learners at level 100 and exceptions made for mature students who are admitted at level 200. Courses are developed by various departments as recommended by the Implementation Committee and tutorials are held in the face-to-face mode and examinations held after a residential revision session (University of Ghana Distance Education Brochure, nd).

The confirmation stage takes place when an individual or other decision unit, if exposed to conflicting messages about the innovation, seeks reinforcement of the innovation decision already made or reverses a previous decision to adopt or reject the innovation. During this

stage, the individual wants supportive messages that will prevent drop out and dissatisfaction of the programme from occurring. This stage is critical to the rate of adoption in that, Rogers (1995) notes that diffusion scholars previously assumed that later adopters are relatively less innovative because they did not adopt or were slow to adopt.

In summary, how potential adopters deal with the uncertainty that is inherently involved in deciding about a new alternative to that previously in existence differs from one individual to another. In this case, individuals or decision-making units do not adopt or reject an innovation at the same time rather their decision period differs depending on their innovativeness.

Rogers' diffusion-innovation theory relates to the implementation strategies of the University of Ghana Bachelor of Arts Distance Education Programme in such a way that Aggor et al. (1992) found out that high costs associated with Ghana's traditional residency-based higher educational system have put higher education out of reach to many. They further recommended that distance education had the potential of contributing to workforce requirements of the country's efforts, if it must be pursued (Aggor et al., 1992). This among other factors such as workers who want to further their studies calls for innovation in the whole higher educational system and hence a form of higher education to complement the traditional classroom mode, which is distance education.

Overall, the theory reflects administrative development process which first addresses decisions about change, relevant knowledge and information about an innovation. It also contains various components and guidelines designed to facilitate the effective implementation of innovation.

2.2.3 Transactional Model

In distance education the teacher and learner are said to be geographically separated (Keegan 1990). This separation has been put forward as the most distinguishing characteristic of distance education in comparison to other forms, such as what is commonly referred to as "face-to-face" education. Moore was the first to moot the idea of *transactional distance* in 1972, but did not tag it to education till 1980 (Stirling, 1997). According to Moore (1996), the term '*transactional'* has its roots in John Dewey and he (Dewey, 1938:43) states that, 'An experience is always what it is because of a transaction taking place between an individual and his environment. The environment is whatever conditions interact with personal needs to create the experience.' In support of this Stirling (1997) refers to it as denoting 'the special nature of the relationship between the learner and the instructor during learning'.

In an attempt to explain the concept, Moore (1993) defines it in relation to interaction in an instructional programme. He identifies transactional distance as a function of dialogue, structure, and learner's autonomy. According to Moore (1993), it is pedagogical, not geographic, and necessitates 'special organizations and teaching procedures'. Since then,

several authors have added their voices to the definition. Peters (1998: 28) refers to it as 'communication of mental distance'; Boyd and Apps (1980) cited by Moore (1996: 22) explain that it connotes the interplay among the environment, the individuals and the patterns of behaviours in a situation. Above all, Rumble (1986), cited by Moore (1996) and Mueller, (1997) explains that, in any educational programme, even in face-to-face education, there is some *transactional distance* (TD). Moore (1996), on his part, indicates that transactional distance is a continuous and relative variable because it exists in varying degrees.

Transactional distance is related to teaching and learning, and it involves three variables; Dialogue, Structure and Learner's Autonomy. Dialogue, according to Moore (1996), is developed by teachers and learners in the course of the interactions that occur when one gives instruction and the other responds. It is worthy to note that the nature of the medium of delivery has a direct effect on the extent and quality of the dialogue, and 'transactional distance will be overcome depending on the extent of this variable'. This means that when positive interactions in the form of quality modules, support services and tutorials are neglected in distance education, the distance increases.

On the other hand, 'structure' refers to the ways in which the teaching programme is designed, and it usually reflects 'the rigidity or flexibility of the programme's educational objectives, teaching strategies and evaluation methods which in turn determines to what extent each learner's differences is taken into consideration (Mueller, 1997). In support of

this, Garrison, (2000) states that it reflects the course's design and is largely a function of the teaching organization and communication media. Therefore, as dialogue increases, structure decreases, and this is given as:

-S + D Less distant

Where 'S' depicts Structure and 'D' dialogue (Moore, 1996 and Stirling, 1997).

The third dimension is the Learner's Autonomy, which Peters (1998: 48) refers to as 'a state of affairs in which a person is no longer the object of educational guidance, influences, effects and obligations, but the subject of his or her own education'. However, because learners have been trained to be dependent on the school system, autonomy becomes difficult and teachers are obligated to assist learners to attain this (Moore, 1996). Therefore, according to Moore (1991: 5) 'the greater the transactional distance (TD), the more autonomy the learner has to exercise'. As said by Mueller (1997), 'the interactive nature of the medium is the major determinant of dialogue in the teaching-learning environment, and by manipulating the communications media, dialogue can be increased, and thus transactional distance reduced'. To enhance more dialogue and reduce distance, the University of Ghana Distance Education Programme has fused in regular face-to-face sessions as well as residential revision sessions before the end of semester examinations. Provision of quality modules, which serve as 'lecturers' for the learners are provided. Again, flexibility is allowed in the selection of subjects so that there are no time table restrictions (Distance Education Implementation Committee Report, 2006).

The transactional model is of importance to this research because according to Peters (1998) 'the concept is a significant contribution to distance education pedagogies', it again proposes that the essential distance in distance education is transactional, not spatial or temporal (Gorsky & Caspi, 2005).

Secondly, it goes a long way to determine the quality of the delivery applied to teaching and learning. With the move to the constructivist approach (Fraser & Lombard, 2002; Garrison, 1996), the student assumes the responsibility of constructing knowledge and the more this is aided, the better for students. As a result of this, constructivists, with the aim of improving the quality of education, have suggested the term *transactional distance* and studies have revealed that it 'applies not only to distance education, but to any educational setting' (Bischoff, 1996).

2.3 Review of Related Literature

2.3.1 Importance of Distance Education

The reasons given over one hundred years ago for preferring distance education are actually quite similar to the rationale used by students today. Limitations of geography, travel, and financial resources have prohibited students from attending a university. Added to this is the increased burdens of career and family responsibilities that often plague today's professional person and the result is an individual in urgent need of more flexibility in his or her life.

Surveys of learners in earlier distance education programmes reveal that most participate because of convenience, flexibility of time, cost savings, travel requirements, and ability to combine studies with family responsibilities (Hyatt, 1992; Liveratos & Frank, 1992). Clark and Jones (2001) examined the reasoning used by learners when selecting a format for a class: either an on-line course/distance education or face-to-face course. Among the on-line/DE learners, the overriding motivation for selecting an on-line/ distance education course was flexible use of time. The face-to-face learners had many motives for selecting the traditional classroom; however, no one reason stronger was than the others. With regard to communication, apprehension and learning outcomes, no significant difference was noted between the two formats (distance learning and face-to-face learning).

Keast (1997) also added that postsecondary institutions are now faced with an unprecedented number of challenges and constraints more than ever before and these institutions are confronted with providing wider range of services to a student population which is more geographically, socio-economically, and culturally diverse. He continued by saying that to confound matters, educational services must be provided using increasingly scarce resources.

At the University of Pittsburgh, convenience is the factor cited most often by students for choosing an on-line format (Catalano, 2007). What could be more convenient than a medium for learning that does not require one to leave home or the workplace to take classes or complete assignments? According to the California Distance Learning Project (2000), distance learning students generally are older with jobs and families. By virtue of all responsibilities, they need to coordinate their schedules to allow for careers, children,

household chores, spouses, and homework. They seek degrees to broaden their education, or pursue career advancement opportunities. This is because they are older and more settled than most traditional high school students, and may have more self-confidence than younger students have, giving them that extra desire to excel (California Distance Learning Project, 2000).

Distance education has allowed educators to reach a wider student audience and meet the needs of students unable to attend classes on campus (California Distance Learning Project, 2000). In an interview with a distance education consumer who was working on his Master's in Library and Information Science, the major advantages cited were the ability to attend class while eating dinner and wearing comfortable clothes. In addition, he did not have to drive to Knoxville, Tennessee, for all of his classes, thus, saving time (a minimum of three hours, roundtrip), money, and additional mileage on his vehicle.

As reported by Owston (1997), distance (online) education can be accessed either at synchronous or asynchronous times. With asynchronous courses, students can access the lessons and complete their assignments at any time of the day or night regardless of when other students log on to the computer. With a synchronous class, everyone, including students and teachers join in at the same "real-time" (Vail, 2002).

Symonds (2001) gave two examples of the benefits of online classes. In the first example

given, a flight attendant had to quit college in the 1960s. Later, she earned her bachelor's degree while travelling for her job. She took her laptop and completed her assignments while travelling. Another example was a dentist who wanted to earn a law degree. He enrolled in Kaplan's Concord Law Program. This eliminated a 12-hour commute during the week; therefore, he studied during the times he would have been travelling (Symonds, 2001).

In the 1980s, the Corporation for Public Broadcasting developed a general profile of the "typical" distance learning student identifying the individual as over 26 years of age, highly-motivated, goal oriented, and unable to participate in the traditional classroom setting (Brey & Gigsby, 1988). Today, the "typical" student in an on-line/distance education course may be an adult or a younger individual, including those who consider an on-line/distance education degree to be a third career—after their job and family responsibilities (Catalano, 2007). The availability of distance education, through the use of technology, answers the needs of individuals from all situations and circumstances that wish to obtain course credits or a degree, but are unable to physically attend classes.

2.3.2 Evolution of Distance Education Programmes

Distance education has gone through several stages of development since its inception and this is described as the evolution of distance education in this study, each stage of the evolution has been characterized mainly by the media used in the delivery process. In looking at the evolution of distance education, Jeffries (2002) writes that aspects of distance education

can be traced all the way back to the early 1700s, when it was known as correspondence study. Taylor (1999) has also proposed five generations of distance education:

- correspondence education;
- integrated use of multiple, one-way media such as print, broadcasting or recorded media such as videocassettes;
- two-way, synchronous telelearning using audio or video-conferencing;
- flexible learning based on asynchronous online learning combined with online interactive multimedia;
- intelligent flexible learning, which adds a high degree of automation and student control to asynchronous online learning and interactive multimedia.

The first generation could be described as using correspondence/independent study. In 1840, the earliest known use of correspondence study was in Great Britain when Isaac Pittman taught shorthand using the "Penny Post" a name derived because at that time it cost a penny to mail a document in the United Kingdom ("A Brief History," 2002; Moore & Kearsley, 1996).

During the first distance education generation, the Chautauqua Institute in New York awarded degrees using correspondence/independent study courses. In addition, the International Correspondence School (ICS) offered courses in mining safety for miners and railroad workers. According to Moore and Kearsley (1996), "ICS is the largest commercial provider of home study programs in the United States" (p. 21).

Laws (2000) described that William Rainey Harper was ridiculed in the 1890s because of his correspondence course in Hebrew. Critics considered the course as an inferior education and as being of poor quality. Harper began teaching his Hebrew course by correspondence because he had numerous requests for the class. After success with this course, he taught at Chautauqua University in New York and organized the School of Languages ("Historical Overview of Distance Education," 2000; Moore & Kearsley, 1996).

There were two major developments during the second generation of distance education that occurred in the 1970s. The first was the Articulated Instructional Media (AIM), funded by the Carnegie Corporation during the 1960s. Charles Wedemeyer was the director of the project. He combined various communication media, including study guides, radio, television, and recorded audio taped telephone conferences. The AIM project marked the first time that educational instruction was given through a variety of media (Moore & Kearsley, 1996).

Also in the 1960s and 1970s, the British government wanted a nationwide university through which students could obtain a full curriculum. The British Open University was designed and has since served as a model for similar programs (Moore & Kearsley, 1996). The use of technology supplemented print-based instruction by using well-designed courses that were closely monitored and successfully delivered to over 100,000 students (McIsaac & Gunawardena, 2001). The British Open University assigned a tutor to each student, tutoring

both over the telephone and through group sessions ("Historical Overview of Distance Education," 2000).

The third-generation of the evolution of distance education was characterized by the broadcast media (radio and television). The use of radio as an educational delivery system proved to be a failure in the United States. There was little interest among university faculty and administrators. On the other hand, television courses were specifically developed for educational purposes with printed materials supplementing them. Educational television stations began to appear with the first in Texas in 1953 (Hunter, 1998).

Apart from televisions and radios, this stage of the evolution also witnessed the audio conferencing as another method of broadcast medium that used public telephone lines. Educational Telephone Network, the oldest and largest provider of audio conferencing, was developed at the University of Wisconsin. The advantages included real time communications, equipment that was easy to use, and a moderate capital investment. The disadvantages of this method were the lack of a video and the telephone line charges that were expensive (Williams, Paprock, & Covington, 1999).

The fourth generation began in the 1990s. This is because of increases in the speed of equipment and the abundance of computer technology, distance education is becoming

acceptable with educators in both public schools and post-secondary schools. A variety of media can now be used in the delivery of coursework ("A Brief History," 2002).

The emerging generation five involves the use of automated response systems and intelligent object database- a derivation of the fourth generation, based on the further exploitation of new technologies. In other words, this aims to capitalize on the features of the internet and the Web [E-learning] (Taylor, 2002). It has been predicted that this generation would reduce the tuition costs and thereby engender economies of scale, (Taylor, 2001).

2.3.3 Implementation Strategies in Distance Education

For effective implementation, and therefore acceptance of the use of distance learning technologies, educators might view this shift to be like all educational changes of value which require new skills, behaviours, and beliefs or understandings. The emerging technologies of distance learning can have a positive effect on the educational system if it is recognized that change is a journey, not a blueprint and that the development of new skills, behaviours, and beliefs is a complex process that must embrace the problems inherent in change (Fullan, 1993). Keast (1997) adds that "we can obtain great advantage by viewing the implementation of distance programmes as the *management of innovation*."

Willis (1993) also identified that for distance education to be effective it requires the integrated efforts of several participants, including students, faculty, facilitators [tutors], support staff and administrators. He continues that when effectively integrated, each brings a unique capability to the distance education enterprise, similarly the absence or under-involvement of a critical participant can dilute or derail the integrated efforts of other contributors.

Aggor et. al (1994) also recommend that a number of systematic strategies should be adopted in the design and delivery of distance education courses by Ghanaian Universities and the National Distance Education Secretariat (NDES). The recommendations include the following:

- The universities should examine and carefully select suitable course materials produced by other tertiary institutions for use, with modifications in initiating their first programmes (p.3). To this Willis (1993) also states that the fastest way to eliminate uneasiness in a distance- delivered class is to contact local sites or individual students prior to the start of class and get to know them as individuals, not just students.
- The universities through NDES should adopt a team approach in the planning and production of core course materials.
- Course writers and instructional staff should be paid adequate remuneration and courses shall belong to academic departments.

- The universities should plan to use a wide range of media to maximize student access and to meet their learning needs and situations. Radio, audio and video recordings can be used to supplement and enhance print materials and other instructional methods.
- The NDES must establish effective instructional and student support services by using existing physical and human resources of the university and Institute of Adult Education centres (p. 13).

Another strategy by which distance education can be implemented effectively is for the department in charge of distance education to work within the broader university in line with existing institutional systems and personnel. Faculty members, for example, can help to align distance education with the overall university mission through the acceptance of a greater range of scholarly activities (eg, the development and use of non-traditional delivery systems). Other works by the faculty can help the university to define various copyright and intellectual property issues and to protect junior faculty, perhaps relieving them of distance education responsibilities (Wolcott, 1997).

Again, faculty training is another important aspect of preparing for new distance education initiatives. One of the most effective ways to begin this type of training is to provide faculty with general information about distance education, including the overall educational process, instructional models, appropriate technology, relevant research, and specific publications. This early training could also include showcases of faculty examples and experience, workshops, forums, and newsletters (Olcott and Wright, 1995), as well as an online mini-

course which could provide an introduction to the online environment, its features, and activities (Cini and Vilic, 1999).

With facilitators or tutors, Willis (1993) opines that they should be used for effective delivery and course content, to enhance the use of instructional materials and to ensure that course goals and objectives are met. He continues by saying that in connection with support staffs, they (support staff) are the silent heroes of successful distance education programmes. The conclusion is that support service function as the glue that keeps distance education enterprises together. Both students and faculty will find it invaluable to have a single organization coordinating the numerous support activities required for effective distance education.

Lastly, "effective distance education administrators are more idea people. They are consensus builders, decision- makers, and facilitators. They maintain control of technical managers, ensuring that technological resources are effectively deployed to further the institution's academic mission. At the same time they lead and inspire faculty and staff in overcoming obstacles that arise" (Willis, 1993). This is in agreement to what Jones and Lewis (1991) suggested earlier that in addition to change on an individual level, change must be collective in that it must occur simultaneously on the level of organizational structure and function.

In summary, effective distance education requires the integrated interest, participation, and enthusiasm of faculty, students, facilitators (tutors), support staff, and administrators. The

informed involvement of these related participants will help meet the challenges that may arise in the implementation of the distance education programme. It is for this reason that Aggor et. al. (1994) recommend that the NDES and distance education centres will require core staff for programme development and delivery. There must be opportunities for staff training and development at all levels. They further state that orientation and training workshops should be organized on a regular basis.

2.3.4 Challenges in Implementing Distance Education Programmes

Badu-Nyarko (2000) writes that distance education at the tertiary level has been controversial among university lecturers and that the need for it has received mixed reactions. He writes that although the support is laudable, it cannot be said to transcend all category of lecturers. He continues by writing that in the academic community, there has been some concern regarding the equivalency of a distance education mode to a traditional delivery mode. In a similar vein, Keast (1997) cites Moore (1994) to have suggested that the major problems associated with bringing about an innovation is not technological or pedagogical but rather associated with organizational change, change in faculty roles, and change in administrative structures.

Saade and Bahli (2005) hold a similar view to that of Badu-Nyarko (2000) and identified that the implementation of an online learning system [distance education] does not ensure a high-quality education. There are still many problems commonly related to technological factors,

including issues of access, connection, internet familiarity, etc. Although the advancement of technology has overcome or minimized these obstacles, it seems that the problems have shifted to the learner's side when using a distance learning system. Learners may feel isolated and unmotivated. Hence, if distance learning is to overcome the many obstacles that students face, it is necessary to study the acceptance of distance learning from the students' perspective.

Many distance learning professionals and academics acknowledge that distance learning is a simplified version of the teaching and learning method. The use of innovative information and communication technology (ICT) has raised questions about the effectiveness of distance learning compared to the traditional classroom format. Currently, the subject of much controversy is whether or not the proliferation of courses offered online and the way in which this technology is used has transformed the traditional classroom format into a distance learning environment (Rovai & Barnum, 2003). Thus, student acceptance of distance learning is one of the critical factors that should be evaluated in order to adequately assess whether the successful implementation of a distance learning system can support teaching-learning activities and the student experience (Martins & Kellermans, 2004).

One striking example of how educational stake holders are reacting to the shift can be seen at the University of Maine where the faculty of seven campuses voted "no confidence" in the System Chancellor due to his advocacy for distance learning (Lick, 1996). Lick accounts for

these faculties' actions as an example of the determined resistance to innovation inherent in the faculty culture.

With the problems associated with innovation, Badu-Nyarko (2000) opines that the success of the system depends on the acceptance and support of faculty members. To this Laundstrom (1995) writes that anticipated changes include the acquisition of new skills, teachers becoming facilitators and their involvement in distance teaching. This calls for the university lecturer to be retrained or reoriented to adapt to the innovation (Olcott & Wright, 1995). This is because traditionally and historically, academics have held a less than positive attitude towards distance education (Black, 1995; Johnson, 1984; Rishante, 1985; Dillon & Walsh, 1992; Clark, 1993). Taylor & White (1993) cited in Badu-Nyarko (2000) support this assertion by stating that faculties may be resistant to public exposure, for fear that their course materials/ content or the teaching styles may come under attack. Another factor may be lack of commitment which has been identified as a basis for the rejection of distance education by faculties.

Again, for many academics their main contention rests on quality. They hold the belief that if more students are admitted, standards may fall and this seems to reflect the economic principle that what is scarce is of more value. An additional concern is that the high student-lecturer ratios will involve more work, equipment and other facilities (Blix, Cruise, Mitchell & Blix, 1994) cited in Badu-Nyarko (2000).

Harris (1987) however contends this view that the reluctance of faculty members to co-operate rests on the grounds of the "culture industry" which is about keeping to the status quo which holds that university learning must occur on campus where the lecturer controls the instruction. This view is fully endorsed by Biggs & Florat (1987) who are cited in Konrad & Small (1989) to have stated:

> *...some academics still claim that distance education lacks legitimacy, arguing that it can give the shadow but not the substance of university education, that it provides predigested instruction rather than open-ended dialogue that is the essence of good education, and that its students miss the tangible but priceless benefits of residence on campus* (p.196).

Even though distance education has many advantages, it is still plagued with many drawbacks. This delivery mode- especially as technology advances- 'has inspired hope and dismay, as well as excitement and fear' (Hellman, 2003). According to the American Federation of Teachers [ATF] (2005: 5), skeptics of distance education practice cite the following concerns:

- Whether deep understanding of difficult material- beyond amassing facts- can occur in the absence of same- time same- place interaction;
- Whether distance education may be effective for certain types of subjects and students, leading to higher drop- out rates;

- Whether needed equipment, training and technical support is reaching distance education students and faculty; and
- Whether limitations on the availability of library and learning materials impair distance education courses.

Also, Hellman (2003) states that its drawbacks include 'cost and capital intensivity, time constraints and other pressures on faculty, isolation of students from instructors and peers, the difficulty of evaluating students that faculty members have never met, dropout rates which are higher than in conventional education and deskilling of teachers'. In no fewer words Truman (1995) explains that, 'obvious barriers to adopting and implementing distance education are money, equipment and staff.... Poor teaching strategies are exaggerated in distance teaching, and territorialism among states and institutions (where there is no strong centralized government)'. Others cite the following: technology (Murphy, 1995) and the lack of skills in time management and discipline by students (Sherry, 1995).

From students' perspective, according to Keen (1999), a study conducted in 1999 by the Albertan Government on the Study of Student Satisfaction with Alberta's university and university colleges reveal the following:

- Oral presentation skills are not developed by distance education effectively as on campus

- Interpersonal skills, such as conflict resolution, team building, leadership are much more developed in face-to-face situations;
- Students have less of a broadening experience since they are denied the opportunity of meeting diverse students face-to-face on campus; and
- Drop-in services, such as careers centres are mostly not available through distance education.

However, Eaton (2001:2) explains that, 'distance education is in many ways a welcome phenomenon, even as it is creating challenges for the arousing concern among many in the higher education community… It holds enormous promise for enriching education, and focusing only on its negative aspects is a distortion'. In the same vein, Badat (2005: 193) explains that, 'high-quality distance higher education can be immensely valuable, doing public and social good'.

2.3.5 Media/ Technology in Distance Education

The implementation of new and developing technologies has been a major factor in the rapid growth of distance education. According to Bates (1993), media refers 'to the generic forms of communication associated with particular ways of representing knowledge' and in distance education, 'the most important four media are: text, audio, television and computing'. The modes of delivery have led to the term *generation* which has been used to denote historical occurrence (Garrison, 1993; Garrison & Archer, 2000; Holmberg 2000; Peters, 1998). The

concept of three generations was first identified, and used by Garrison in 1985. As said by Garrison (1993), Peters (1998:11) with the concept generations, has brought to light the two common features of education, namely the 'high degree of accessibility and the quality of each interactive learning and teaching process'.

Bates (1995) identified three generations of distance education technologies. The first generation is characterized by the predominant use of a single technology (correspondence by mail, radio, and television), and lack of direct student interaction with the teacher originating instruction. The second generation is marked by learning materials becoming more multimedia in nature with television, audiocassettes, and face-to-face tutorials used along with print. Britain's Open University is an example. The third generation of distance education is based on two-way communications media that allow for direct interaction between the teacher and remote student. This includes computer conferencing and networking, audio and video conferencing, and interactive two-way television (p. 23).

Current developments of telecommunication technologies, most notably the advent of the internet, have shifted distance education to a new instructional approach. Therefore, the internet may be considered the fourth generation of distance education (Passerini & Granger, 2000) for its power in constructing learning environments that support sustained interaction (Oblinger, Barone & Hawkins, 2001). A typical case was cited by Keast (1997) who identified that the internet helped the University of Alberta to deliver to as many as six sites

simultaneously using its website. A typical case is the British Open University which has adopted a strategy of investment in digital media, building on early use of the Internet for computer mediated communication, on a large scale from 1988 (Mason and Kaye, 1989). These early applications showed that use of e-mail and conferencing could revolutionise the potential of distance teaching by opening up communication across the student body, as well as between the tutor, course team and students.

Distance education uses media to bridge the gap between instructor and students who are separated physically during the instructional process. Keegan (1983) therefore identified four classifications of media used in distance education. These are print-, audio-, video-, and computer-based. Other distance educators (Bates, 1995; Chute et. al 1999) have identified similar broad categories of delivery technologies. Bates (1995) distinguishes media from technology indicating that the term medium is "a generic form of communication associated with particular ways of representing knowledge" (pp. 30-31). He further notes, "[a] single medium such as television may be carried by several different delivery technologies (satellite, cable, video cassette, etc.)" (p.31). Distance education today utilizes a continuum of video technologies. These range from videotapes, video broadcast, and video on demand that facilitate one-way interaction; to two-way interactive video that facilitates two-way synchronous (real time) interaction (Chute et. al 1999). A common method of delivery of one-way video broadcasts, particularly for training programs and employee communications throughout an enterprise, is by satellite (Chute et. al 1999). This is characterized by the transmission of video signals in one direction, from the instructor to students.

While distance education systems often emphasize one technology, Chute et. al (1999) point out that incorporating other technologies increases flexibility and interaction. For example, a system built on video as the primary method of delivery may use voice mail, E-mail, Internet multimedia databases, and fax technologies to provide additional interaction between and support for participants (p. 220). Major and Levenburg (1998) propose a "blended-technology" (p. 13) approach to build a mix of applications that best meet the instructional or learning objectives and characteristics of the learners. They argue that this is a learner-focused and outcome-driven model of instructional delivery that replaces the "technology-driven model" (p. 13) of distance education. They further posit that this model will result in increased learner satisfaction, and increased attainment of learning objectives by students.

Bates (1995) presents a framework for analysis of technology selection and application in distance education entitled the ACTIONS model. This model takes into consideration five elements: access, costs, teaching and learning, interactivity and user friendliness, organizational issues, novelty, and speed. Access refers to how accessible the particular technology is to learners and how flexible it is for a particular target group. Costs refer to the cost structure of each technology and the unit cost per learner. Teaching and learning takes into consideration the kinds of instructional approaches that will best meet learning needs and what technologies best support these needs. Interactivity and user friendliness refers to the kind of interaction the technology enables and ease of use. Organizational considerations include the barriers to be removed before the technology can be used successfully in addition to the kinds of changes that may need to be made. Novelty refers to how new the technology

is. Speed is how quickly courses can be mounted with this technology and how quickly materials can be changed.

Bates (1995), asserts that decision-making in selecting media is strongly influenced by personal choice which is driven by values and beliefs. In addition, the type of institution plays a significant role in the approaches utilized to provide distance education courses, programmes, and services.

The literature review shows how distance education is being used to help adult learners acquire knowledge and skills in higher education. It also shows how distance education has revolved over time taking into consideration the days of correspondence learning up to the emerging high technological period being experienced in the provision of distance education. Strategies used in implementing the distance education programme and the challenges that have been experienced was also highlighted in the literature review and finally, the media or technology used in providing distance education is also considered and the focus is on the first media being print up to the most current which is the internet.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter covers the methodology used in this research. It discusses the research design, population, sample, sampling technique, data collection instruments, data collection activities, pre-test, reliability and validity of the data collection instruments and data analysis.

3.2 Research Design

The design adopted for the research was a survey using the descriptive analytical method. This method was adopted because it enabled the researcher to systematically obtain data from a large sample of students of the University of Ghana who are learning at a distance. According to Denzin (1970), the descriptive analytic survey requires systematic collection of data from populations through the use of the interview or the self-administered questionnaire.

Fraenkel and Wallen (2003) add that the descriptive analytic survey method is the most appropriate means of obtaining data on personal and social facts when studying large and small populations through selecting and studying samples chosen from the population to discover the relative distributions and interrelations of the variables.

Denzin (1970) also states that the investigator approaches a sample of persons who have been exposed to a set of events or experiences and interviews them with respect to these experiences. Based on this the researcher personally administered a set of questions to respondents in order to gather data on the evolution and implementation of the distance education programme.

3.3 Population

The population for the study consisted all Level 200 and 300 students learning at University of Ghana by distance. Level 100 students were not covered in this research because they had not gone through at least one academic year of their studies. The study also captured the present and all past coordinators of the distance learning programme as well as regional organizers and tutors of the distance learning programme. The population was chosen since members have insight into the evolution and implementation of the distance education programme, as well as the benefits and challenges that were encountered in the implementation process.

In all 1663 learners, four coordinators (one present and three past coordinators), five regional organisers and 246 tutors formed the population of the study.

3.4 Sample

The sample used for the study was made up of 225 respondents which comprised 167 learners who formed five percent of Levels 200 and 300 learners from the five centres (Accra, Kumasi, Sekondi-Takoradi, Koforidua and Tamale), where the distance education programme originally started. The study also sampled 49 tutors from the five centres representing 20 percent of all the tutors. Additionally, the researcher purposively used all three past coordinators and the present coordinator and the five centre organizers from the five original centres.

3.5 Sampling Technique

The purposive sampling technique was used to select the present and past coordinators of the programme as well as the five organizers. This was done by way of personally contacting the coordinators and organizers for their views on the study. The purposive sampling allowed the researcher to use deliberate judgment and effort to obtain a representative sample of respondents who had the exact information on the evolution and implementation strategies for the distance education programme (Kerlinger, 1973)

The proportional sampling technique was adopted to select 167 distance learners representing 10 percent of the learners because the learners were spread over five centres which are geographically apart and are not same in terms of population. The proportional sampling

technique therefore helped in obtaining a fair representation of all Levels 200 and 300 learners spread within the five centres. The sample is shown in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1: Proportional Allocation of Learners by Site

Centre	**Population**	**Sample**
Accra	1131	113
Kumasi	245	25
Koforidua	137	14
Sekondi-Takoradi	79	08
Tamale	71	07
Total	**1663**	**167**

Source: ICDE Accounts Office, 2010

After the proportion in each group was determined, the simple random sampling technique was used to select the 139 learners from the centres using the lottery method. Under the lottery method the names of all the learners in each centre were written on a piece of paper in the form of yes or no. It was then put in a box and shuffled. The pieces of paper were picked without replacing them to give each learner an equal chance of being selected and also in order not to exert any influence on subsequent members. The technique was also free from bias because selection was solely based on chance.

Out of a total of 246 tutors in the five centres, the proportional sampling technique was applied to select 49. This represents 20 percent of their number. The result presented in table 3.2.

Table 3.2: Proportional Allocation of Tutors by Site

Centre	Population	Sample	Percentage
Accra	120	24	20
Kumasi	23	04	17
Sekondi-Takoradi	08	02	25
Koforidua	27	05	18
Tamale	68	14	20
Total	**246**	**49**	**100**

Source: Distance Education Unit, Legon.

After arriving at the proportion of tutors to be sampled, the lottery system was applied to select the 49 tutors with the aid of a sampling frame obtained from the Distance Education Unit at Legon. The lottery system was applied just as it was used in sampling the learners. Since the number of past and present co-ordinators (5) and centre organizers (5) was small, there was no need to sample these groups that were included in the respondents for the study.

In all, the research used of a sample of 225. The sample comprised of 167 learners, 49 tutors, four coordinators and five centre organizers.

3.6 Data Collection Instrument

The instruments used for collecting data were the interview guide and the questionnaire. The study made use of two sets of unstructured interview guides which solicited information from coordinators and centre organizers of the distance education programme, the interview guide was made up of ten open-ended questions. Open-ended questions were used because it allowed for generation of in-depth information and also the researcher was able to ask follow up questions to strengthen the information already gathered. The open-ended interview guide also helped respondents to freely express themselves without any restrictions and the interviewer was also able to promptly record responses given and ask respondents for clarification where things were not clear.

The researcher also made use of two sets of questionnaires which solicited information from the tutors and learners. Both questionnaires were divided into four (4) sections. Section A dealt with biographic data while Section B touched on the importance of distance education. Section C dealt with the challenges in the implementation process and Section D touched on the media/technology used in distance education.

Both close and open-ended questions were adopted. Close- ended questions were used because it enabled the respondents to select their answer from a number of options. As indicated by Fraenkel and Wallen (2003), surveys rely on closed-ended questions to measure opinions, attitudes and knowledge level of people for easy quantitative analysis. Closed-ended

questions were adopted because they are easy to use, score and code for analysis on a computer.

Open-ended questions were adopted because it allowed for more individual true responses which the researcher may not have anticipated. Open-ended questions gave the respondents the opportunity to respond to the items without any restriction to their opinions.

3.7 Pre-test of Research Instrument

To ensure that respondents would understand the questions so as to obtain valid and reliable information, the questionnaire was pre-tested on 10 students of the Commonwealth Youth Programme (CYP), who are also distance learners but not a part of this study. The questionnaires were giving to the CYP students who use the department's library. They filled the questionnaires and returned them after three days. The responses obtained were then coded and analysed which helped to find out the clarity of questions and to restructure the questions on the questionnaire. The pre-test helped in restructuring the instruments.

3.8 Reliability and Validity

To enhance the validity and reliability of the instruments, the questions were based on the research objectives of the study. In addition, fellow MPhil students were consulted to edit the instruments to achieve a fair amount of validity. Also, two lecturers who were the supervisors

with expertise in the field of research methodology scrutinized and ensured the questions on the research instruments were correctly worded and structured. This helped the researcher to examine the content, arrangement and logical sequence of wording of the questions. Subsequently, the section E of the questionnaire, which touches on the implementation strategies had to be re-arranged in order to get quality information from the respondents.

3.9 Data Collection

An introductory letter from the Institute of Continuing and Distance Education, University of Ghana, Legon was first sent to the coordinators for a date to be scheduled for the interview. On the given dates, the researcher had a one-on-one interview with them to solicit information on the evolution and implementation strategies of the distance education programme. The telephone interview was also adopted in connection to the centre organizers since they are at different locations far from the researcher.

The questionnaires were distributed to the distance learners during a face-to-face session in Accra by the researcher. However, distribution at other centres was done by the centre organizers. The distribution of the questionnaires was done almost concurrently in all the centres since learners converge on fixed days.

3.10 Data Analysis

The questionnaire and interview generated both quantitative and qualitative data which were analysed independent of each other using a combination of quantitative and qualitative methodologies. The quantitative data were edited, coded and the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used for analysis. The qualitative data responses were obtained from the interviews. The responses were summarized, organized and interpreted. The responses were transcribed. To ensure some degree of uniformity however, efforts were made to reach a consensus on the responses so that in the end what was recorded was the one on which the respondents on the whole had reached an agreement. In sum, descriptive analyses were used for the qualitative data while frequency tables, chi-squares and standard deviations were used for the quantitative data.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents results obtained from the field. The results were presented in line with the objectives of the study. They were grouped under four headings: The Evolution of the University of Ghana Bachelor of Arts Distance Education Programme; strategies adopted toward the implementation of the distance education programme; challenges in the implementation process; and how the challenges were resolved.

SECTION A: INTERVIEW RESULTS

4.2 Coordinators' Views on the Evolution and Implementation of the Programme

The views of the past coordinators and the present coordinator of the distance education programme were sought on the programme from the beginning to date. The coordinators were key people who have a large stock of knowledge about how the programme has evolved.

4.2.1 Evolution of Distance Education

Distance education at the University of Ghana started as a correspondence course by the Institute of Adult Education in 1970 for G.C.E 'O' Level examination. The correspondence programme was challenged when a directive to use continuous assessment for the final examination was issued. This meant that students were to go back to school if they had to re-sit for the 'O' Level examinations. Later on, the Senior Secondary School (SSS) system was

introduced and this posed more challenges because new modules had to be printed for the new syllabuses.

In 1991, Alhaji Issa Wali from the Commonwealth of Learning (COL) visited the Ministry of Education to find out why Ghana had not been participating in its (COL) activities since its formation in 1988 with the purpose of using distance education to open access to education throughout the Commonwealth. This was in view of the fact that seminars earlier arranged by COL in Banjul and Kaduna were not attended by Ghana. Alhaji Wali was assured of Ghana's participation actively in all subsequent COL activities.

In the same year, an invitation was extended to the University of Cape Coast, Ghana Broadcasting Corporation, University of Ghana and the Ghana Education Service to deliberate on how to use distance learning in Ghana. University of Ghana proposed distance education programme at the tertiary level which was accepted by all. Later that year, Mr Aggor went to Vancouver as a Study Fellow to COL. COL decided to fund a survey on distance education needs in Ghana. The survey was carried out by Aggor, Kenyanjui (COL), Pecku (UCC) and Yerbury (Simon Fraser University). A report was submitted to the Ministry of Education in 1992. The Ministry of Education submitted the report to the universities for their comments and recommendations.

In 1994, Yerbury and Aggor sent a proposal to the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (AUCC) for Simon Fraser University, University of Ghana, and University of Cape Coast to collaborate to develop distance education in Ghana.

However, in 1995 there was change in government from Provisional National Defence Council (PNDC) to National Democratic Congress (NDC) with Mr. Harry Sawyerr as the Secretary General for West Africa Distance Education Association (WADEA) who helped a great deal in bringing about distance education. Mr. Sawyerr had earlier in August 1994 invited Mr. Aggor to set up distance education properly at the Ministry of Education.

The SSS programme, which replaced the 'O' Level, created a backlogs of post secondary students who needed to enter the university. But facilities in the public universities could not contain them and lecturers were also on strike. This, Professor Dovlo (a past coordinator) puts as *"the concept of 'massification' in the university"* which necessitated the formation of distance education.

So upon government's recommendation in 1995, public universities were to provide complementary arrangements to enroll the qualified SSS students into the universities, for which a meeting was held at Sogakope. This meeting discussed measures and strategies to start a tertiary distance education programme in Ghana which included some lecturers from all public institutions who were going to be course writers.

The Sogakope meeting also introduced the steering committee members of distance education in Ghana and the committee at the University of Ghana was tasked to implement the programme. Professor Asomaning was the chairman of the pioneering committee in 1995. The others were Deans of Business School, Faculty of Arts, Faculty of Social Studies and the Director of the then Institute of Adult Education. The committee started doing underground work until 1997 when a coordinator was appointed to oversee the full planning and implementation of the programme.

In 1998, Dr. Samuel Badu-Nyarko was attached to the implementation committee to assist in their activities. As part of the implementation strategies, the departments in the universities were called upon for training and subsequent writing of modules for the programme. Departments that responded were Sociology, Religions, English and Psychology with Political Science joining later. One Professor Ansere from a University in Botswana, who was already working on correspondence education came in and helped in the training of the course writers.

Between 1998 and 2007, the programme was developed and tutors and course writers were trained in all departments. Finally in 2007, the distance education programme was launched and the first batch of students admitted.

4.2.2 Implementation Strategies

Any good idea conceived and not put into action forever remains an idea. For this reason, ideas have to move from the drawing board to the implementation stage. It is in this light that the implementation committee of the University of Ghana Distance Education Programme came out with strategies to bring about this programme.

Some of the strategies adopted were:

> *-Personal contact. First of all we had a forum for heads of departments. After that we moved or I moved from department to department to talk to individual lecturers* (First coordinator of the distance education programme).

> *-The major strategy was to train people from the faculty, a small core group to fully understand the distance education concept* (Second Coordinator of the distance education programme).

> *-The implementation process started when the Implementation Committee was established and it was made up of the Dean of the Business School, Faculty of Art and Faculty of Social Studies. In addition to the Director of the Institute of Adult Education being the core. I think the coordinator and Director of Academic Affairs were also part of the implementation committee* (Present Coordinator of the distance education programme).

The views of the coordinators on the implementation strategies indicate that personal contacts, collaboration with faculty and the establishment of the Implementation

Committee were mainly used. The implementation of the programme went through three stages which include the initial, developmental and current stages.

4.2.2.1 Inception Stage

The implementation team formed in 1995 focused on three thematic areas: material development, student support services and course writers' training. The focus was later (1997-2007) extended to module development. At this stage, seminars were organized for deans of various faculties. Periodic workshops were organized for course writers to equip them with knowledge and skills in developing quality modules.

Some of the respondents added the following:

> *-By and large for the subjects or departments that the courses were picked from, we were able to attract the course writers so we started training and we got to a point where some modules were almost ready* (First Coordinator of the distance education programme).

> *-The university itself was sensitized through seminars held for deans on advantages, requirements and the need for distance education, especially relating to course writing, exams and other academic facets option* (Second Coordinator of the distance education programme).

4.2.2.2 Developmental Stage

The inception stage led to the developmental stage. This was a stage that the Implementation Committee had the task of seeing to the growth and development of the programme. Funding for the programme was sought from external organizations and advertisements were placed in the Daily Graphic and the Ghanaian Times. The coordinators had these among other things to say about the developmental stage:

-A coordinator was appointed to operationalise the implementation plan. Some experts were added to the implementation team to help bring the concept into reality (First Coordinator of the distance education programme).

-One important strategy was that support staff including data entry clerks, artists/ graphic designers, organizers and other programme support officers were added to strengthen the capacity of staff (Second Coordinator of the distance education programme).

- Funding was sought from external organizations such as the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), Department for International Development (DFID), Ministry of Education and the Commonwealth of Learning. The distance education programme was advertised using leaflets, notice boards and other means. (Third Coordinator of the distance education programme).

4.2.2.3 Current Stage (2007 to Date)

Currently, the coordinator manages the programme and its operations. The director and members of the old implementation committee offer advice to the management of the programme. On this subject, the first Coordinator of the programme noted; *Although I don't have any official role to play, from time to time I am invited to participate in training tutors and to edit course materials.*

The new additions to the human resource base of the Distance Education Unit is the National Service persons, Teaching and Graduate Assistants and Adjunct Staff who serve as programme support officers. The present Coordinator of the programme adds:

> *-We now have the centre with a coordinator and we have the material development, student support staff and university administrators who are also helping us in the implementation process. But in the regions, we have the regional coordinator supported by the organizers and the other supporting staffs. When we come to the programme itself, we see that it is structured directly under the management of the Institute with the Director as the head and we also have the Pro-Vice Chancellor being the chairman of the Advisory Board (distance education) where we have the members of National Commission for Tertiary Education (NCTE), a member from University of Education-Winneba, all being part of it.*

4.2.3 Course Materials Development

From the onset of the programme, it was decided by the Implementation Committee that the module was going to be the main material to be used. For this reason, it was very important to develop quality modules which called for the training of those who would be in charge of developing these materials. To ensure this, series of training workshops were held for the material developers in Ghana and others were sent outside Ghana all in a bid to obtain quality training in material development.

The present Coordinator of the programme had this to say in relation to material development:

> *-Course writers were trained through workshops for seven days initially and three days as refresher programmes. We also had Professor Ansere who was in charge of the training. He was a professor in correspondence education from the University of Botswana who came to help in training our course writers.*

4.2.4 Challenges in the Implementation Process

The main challenges faced, in a bid to implement the distance education programme were identified in the interviews with the coordinators. Some of the coordinators strongly believed that the greatest challenge to implementing the programme was that, members of the Implementation Committee were not experts and that they had to learn on the job, which made the whole process very difficult. This, the first Coordinator of the programme puts as:

-The challenge was the fact that we were not experts running the programme so we had to learn along with those who we were already working on it.

The second major challenge that was encountered during the implementation process was finance. This is because University of Ghana provided no financial support, hence support was sought from external agencies.

The third coordinator of the programme however disagreed with the notion that finance was a major challenge in the implementation process. He rather sees resistance of faculty as a major challenge by contending that:

-Finance was not much of a problem, apart from the course writers who were demanding upfront payment, some lecturers and heads of departments were damn against the idea of distance education.

The second coordinator again added that for him, the challenge was mainly that of structure. In other words, the administration of the programme was not a good one. Other important challenges indentified were the delay in developing materials for the learners and very weak staff strength at the Distance Education Unit. In all, there were only six workers in the unit making it very difficult for them to work effectively.

4.2.5 Resolving the Challenges

With all the challenges that were faced in the process of implementing the programme, it has still seen the light of day. This means that some steps were taken to resolve the challenges. It

was revealed that with the challenge of finance, some budgetary allocations were made by the Ministry of Education and all that needed to be done by the Implementation Committee was to provide a credible balance. When this was done, the Ministry refunded some allocations to organize workshops. There was also support from TALIF for the printing of course materials.

One coordinator also noted:

> *-The Canadian government supported us with one million Canadian dollars which went into computers. UNESCO also supported us and we got money from Ghana government as well* (Third Coordinator of the distance education programme).

To help in fast tracking the development of materials, people were trained in editing the materials in order not to leave the writers to do all the work. This is because already, the writers spent a long time in writing the modules due to the workload on them, so if they were to edit, it was going to take a much longer time which will not be good for the implementation of the programme.

The current Coordinator of the programme adds:

> *-Currently we have centre co-ordinators, we also have organizers helping them, and we have the departmental coordinators who coordinate between the departments and the Institute.*

4.2.6 Coordinators' Recommendations on the Programme

The coordinators of the programme made recommendations that they think could help in implementing the programme smoothly. The first suggestion was that distance education needs state of the art equipment to enhance course delivery. It was realized that with the electronic network, information flow could be facilitated and the programme can therefore be managed efficiently.

Secondly, it was suggested that the print media should be complemented by the electronic media, such as the internet. The internet, they believed could be accessed any time and information on it could be updated more frequently than the printed materials.

Furthermore, the coordinators suggested that distance education should be separated from ICDE. This idea was supported in principle by all the coordinators but some had some reservations. Among the reservations were:

> *-It would be unfair to 'scratch' it from ICDE after they have toiled so much to see the programme running* (First Coordinator of the distance education programme).

> *-There are currently no structures to house distance education both at the head office and in the regional centres* (Second Coordinator of the distance education programme).

> *-The staff who manage distance education in the head office and the centres are ICDE staff, so that a new staff must be raised for distance education if it is made autonomous* (Present Coordinator of the distance education programme).

Other suggestions made by the coordinators were that the university's top management must understand the distance education concept so that they will treat it as a major programme and not a supplementary or inferior programme. Professor Dovlo puts it this way:

> *-the programme has a viable future; congratulations to those who took over and started it. It will catch up with those institutions that started distance education, overtake them and become a first choice distance education programme in Ghana.*

Professor Asomaning contributed to Professor Dovlo by noting that:

> *-I call it 'Parallel University' because if we manage to get all faculties involved, then we would have a university in a regular mode and a university in distance mode.*

The last three recommendations given by the coordinators were that there must be two deputy directors at the ICDE so that one of them would solely work for distance education; entrance requirements for distance education should be different from the main university; and the Distance Education Unit should design courses to suit the needs of the learners. Again, registration for distance education students should not be tied with the regular students as such students are scattered all over the country.

4.3 Organisers' Views on the Implementation of the Programme

Organisers have been very instrumental in the implementation of the distance education programme, they are in fact the fulcrum of the implementation of the programme. The views of the organisers were therefore sought for this research and it was identified that they play some major roles in the implementation process.

4.3.1 Implementation Strategies

It was revealed in the study that organizers at the Accra Centre (head office) relayed information from the administration to learners, tutors and other stakeholders of the programme. The organizers were actually seen as the middle level managers responsible for implementing the programme.

The organizers also ensure that materials needed for tutorials are provided. For instance, they see to it that the public address systems are working, batteries, dusters and markers are provided. They also ensure that the modules are distributed to the learners on the programme.

To ensure that tutorials are held successfully at all times, organizers are always present. This is how one of the organizers puts it:

-The organizer is always present at weekend tutorials as well as revision times and during examinations (Legon Organiser).

Finally, as a strategy, the organizers periodically meet students to update them on current

issues and processes involved in the programme. Such activities include registration and collection of modules.

4.3.2 Roles of the Organiser in the Implementation Process

As revealed in the research, the organizers play very instrumental roles in the implementation process. Among these roles are helping in the recruitment of tutors, liaising between tutors, learners and administration and ensuring that the various centres are well prepared for tutorials to be held.

In reiterating the roles of the organizer, some of them are quoted in this research to have said:

> *-As an organizer, I liaise between tutors, students and the administration. In fact these form the core of the work. We also make sure that the module is ready, the place is swept and have materials. We also monitor tutors' attendance* (Koforidua Organiser).

> *-The organizer is in charge of assisting the regional co-ordinator on issues of recruitment of tutors and preparation of the timetable to make sure there is a time table and then we look at the programme for the week so that we notify the tutors to ensure they know the time that they are to come for tutorials* (Kumasi Organiser).

One of the organizers however played some additional roles to the regular roles all the other organizers identified. He spelt out his roles this way:

> *-I designed what you call the module covers and the colours before one was chosen. Apart from modules, I am deeply involved in the organization of tutorials. For Accra*

centre, am involved in recruiting of tutors, preparation of tutorial time table for the academic year, semester and the weekly tutorial as well, I make sure that logistics are in place when the learners come for tutorials (Legon Organiser).

4.3.3 Challenges in the Implementation Process

In the process of implementing the distance education programme, some challenges had been faced. Some of the challenges in the view of the organisers are that first of all, tutorial facilities especially at Legon are inadequate. This is due to the fact that distance education is still struggling sometimes with the regular university programmes for the same facilities during tutorial sessions.

Failure of tutors to attend tutorial sessions without prior notice also posed a serious challenge to the implementation of the programme. This caused a lot of inconvenience during tutorial sessions as the learners would be expecting the tutor who would not be present at the tutorial.

Late arrival of modules and the late release of examination results were seen as a major challenge by one organizer. He stated:

-The main problems are the late arrival of the modules which affects tutorials at my centre and the late release of examination results. Most of the time, learners at my centre tend to feel that I am not on top of my job (Tamale Organiser).

Work overload was seen as a challenge in the process of implementing the programme. One organizer says:

> *-As an organizer, before the distance education programme started, we had our schedules. So when distance education came in as additional responsibility, we had to take care of the office administration and the short programmes, as well as distance education. So we combine that with other works and at times it becomes quite challenging* (Sekondi-Takoradi Organiser).

The situation where all learners on the distance education programme congregate at Legon for a month's revision and examination at the end of each semester was also seen as a challenge. This is because the learners, who are adults, have to leave their work places and families for the entire period.

4.3.4 Resolving the Challenges

On how the challenges that cropped up during the process of implementation were organized. The organizers agreed that they quickly informed the general office to inform the various centres when there was a change in the time table. The general office then relayed the information to the tutors and learners.

To ensure that tutors were punctual at tutorials, the organisers call and remind them of the days for tutorials a few before the tutorial day.

Regular meetings were held with learners to equip them with the necessary information needed for the programme. This was seen as a good way of resolving the challenges that

learners faced. During such sessions, academic counselling was done to aid learners make proper academic choices.

One organizer sees motivation and the delegation of responsibilities as the main tools for resolving the challenges. He noted:

> *-In managing the challenges, I would say it is the motivation we have that keeps us going. We do our best to ensure that the programme is successful. We also try to delegate some of the responsibilities at the office* (Legon Organiser).

4.3.5 Organisers' Suggestions on Improving the Programme

Among the suggestions made by the organisers on ways of improving the programme was that learners on the programme should be well oriented as to the nature of the Legon Distance Learning Programme. This will help to solve most of the complaints that learners send to the centres.

Another suggestion by the organizers was that, since it was so difficult to develop modules, module writers must be given all that is needed (financially and emotionally) to motivate them to develop the modules on time.

On the issue of writing end of semester examinations on campus, one organizer said:

> *-What I will like to say is that, the distance programme is new and for people to understand and be able to know that the programme belongs to the university. Writing the exams on campus is very good. So that they can associate themselves with*

> *the university and understand that they fall within the university. But not just people admitted by the university to be taught and given certificates* (Kumasi Organiser).

One organizer however held an opposing view and did not see why students should travel all the way to Legon for revision and examinations. He shared this view:

> *-Examinations must be decentralized and should be taken at the various centers. If the university does not trust supervisors over there, they can bring their own supervisors to do it. Mind you, this distance education thing is to give opportunity to those who could not have it earlier so that they can be working and schooling at the same time. For married people to travel to write exams it becomes a border to them just that they cannot do anything* (Tamale Organiser).

SECTION B:

4.4 Survey Results on Students' Views on the Implementation of the Programme

Students are major stakeholders in the distance education programme, hence their views on how the programme is implemented provided a lot of information for the study. It is for this reason that the views of students on the University of Ghana distance education programme was sought on orientation, modules, tutorials and examination periods for the programme.

4.4.1 Orientation for Students

Generally, orientation is meant to provide guidance to new students on what their expectations should be and how to cope with their new situation. The student respondents

were therefore asked whether they were given orientation when they joined the programme. The result showed that 142 representing 84.9 percent of them responded in the affirmative with the remaining 15.1 percent answering that they did not participate in the orientation. This was very encouraging and showed how the administrators of the programme cleared some uncertainties including; registration, examination, guidance on learning as a distance education student, tutorial systems and picking of modules, from the minds of students freshly admitted on the programme. The orientation according to learners spanned five days and three days for the third and second years respectively.

4.4.2 Registration

For students to be fully registered as students of the University of Ghana, they need to undergo an on-line registration process at the beginning of each semester. Therefore, as part of the implementation process students are made to register at the beginning of every semester. Views of learners on the registration process are presented in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1: Registration Process

Registration process	Frequency	Percent
Very difficult	102	61.0
Difficult	42	25.0
Easy	21	12.5
Very easy	02	1.5
Total	**167**	**100.0**

Source: Field Data, 2010

Responses as indicated in Table 4.1 is that majority (61%) of the respondents found the

registration process at the beginning of the semester very difficult. Another 25 percent found the process to be just difficult. Only 14 percent of the respondents found it to be easy. This calls for some measures to reduce the burden and the hassles students go through to registered on-line.

4.4.3 Tutorial Support

Tutorial support is one of the strategies distance education institutions adopt to bridge the gap between the students and the institution. The students were therefore asked whether they do receive tutorial support and the result revealed that 85 percent of them received tutorial support while the remaining 14.3 percent did not.

Respondents were further asked to choose from a list of support services that the Institute provided them. The result is presented in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2: Tutorial Support

Tutorial support	Frequency	Percent
Assignments	16	11.5
Academic Advice	45	32.4
Revision	90	64.7
Additional material	14	10.1
Counseling	9	6.5

Source: Field Data, 2010 **Multiple Responses**

According to Table 4.2, the majority (64.7%) of the respondents received tutorial support in the form of revision. Other tutorial supports are provided, but the one that received the least attention was counseling (6.5%). The researcher was also interested in knowing whether

students who faced challenges received some support. The result is presented on Table 4.3.

Table 4.3: Crosstabulation of Challenges Learners Face and Availability of Tutorial Support

	Availability of Tutorial Support		
Challenges	**Yes**	**No**	**Total**
Yes	100(84.7%)	18(15.3%)	118(100.0%)
No	14(93.3%)	1(6.7%)	15(100.0%)

Source: Field Data, 2010

The indication from Table 4.3 was that 84.7 percent of the learners who faced challenges agreed that adequate tutorial support was offered while 15.3 percent did not see the support as adequate. However, 15.3 percent saw no challenges which may be due to the fact that they agreed that adequate tutorial support was offered and a last group of 6.7 percent did not face challenges.

4.4.4 Tutorial Periods

Tutorials serve as one of the few occasions where the students could meet various tutors for clarification and also to have a feel of campus life. In order to ascertain whether the tutorial periods for each course was enough or not, the researcher asked the students for their view. The researcher further looked into the relationship between the challenges faced and the adequacy of tutorial sessions. Table 4.4 and 4.5 present the results.

Table 4.4: Tutorial Periods

Adequacy of Tutorial Period	Frequency	Percent
Yes	48	28.8
No	117	69.8
Total	165	98.6
N/R	2	1.4
Total	**167**	**100.0**

Source: Field Data, 2010

The indication from the result on table 4.4 is that 48 of the respondents (69%) answered that tutorial periods were not enough while 28.8 percent found them adequate. This might emanate from the fact that learners do not read their modules before attending tutorials.

Table 4.5: Crosstabulation of Challenges Faced and Sufficiency of Tutorial Sessions

	Adequate Tutorial periods		
Challenges	**Yes**	**No**	**Total**
Yes	34(28.3%)	86(71.7%)	120(100.0%)
No	6 (35.3%)	11 (64.7%)	17(100.0%)
Total	**40 (30.629.2%)**	**97(70.8)**	**137(100.0%)**

Source: Field Data, 2010

Table 4.5 revealed that of those who found the tutorial session not adequate were mostly those who had challenges as distance education students. This is reflected when as much as 71.7 percent of those who faced challenges disagreed that the tutorial periods were enough whereas only 28.3 percent agreed the tutorial periods were adequate.

4.4.5 Content and Structure of Modules

In the distance education programme the module is considered as the main learning material for students. Therefore careful steps are taken to ensure that they are of good quality in terms of structure and content. In view of this respondents were asked to state their opinions about the content and structure of the modules. Respondens were asked to rank the nature of modules using the scale; 5-Strongly Agree, 4-Agree, 3-Uncertain, 2-Disagree and 1-Strongly Disagree. The result is presented in tables 4.6.

Table 4.6: Content and Structure of Modules

	D	U	A	Total	
Quality of Modules	**%**	**%**	**%**	**Mean**	**Sd**
Quality of modules in terms of content	2.2	7.2	90.6	4.06	0.57
Quality of modules in terms of structure	0.7	5	94.3	4.18	0.58

N=139 for all cases across

The indication from Table 4.6 was that the modules used in the provision of distance education were of high quality both in terms of content and structure. The respondents agreed that the modules were of quality in terms of content and quality. This attests to the fact that indeed course writers were adequately trained and given incentives to be able to come out with such quality work.

4.4.6 Handouts

Print is the main medium used in the programme. Handouts to supplement the modules therefore play a very important role in helping learners to learn. Learners were therefore asked if the handouts that were given to them related to the courses they had chosen. The result is shown in Table 4.7.

Table 4.7: Views of Respondents on Handouts

Rating	Frequency	Percent
Strongly disagree	1	.7
Uncertain	13	7.9
Agree	153	91.4
Total	**167**	**100.0**

Source: Field Data, 2010

The indication from table 4.7 is that 153 respondents (91.4%) agreed that the handouts given to them were related to their courses. A minority group of 0.7 percent strongly disagreed. This disagreement may stem from the fact that students absent themselves from tutorials or deliberately do not making copies of the handouts.

4.4.7 Tutors

Tutorials are commonly termed face-to-face sessions. They form an integral part of the distance education programme and this means that without tutors there cannot be tutorials. The programme has therefore appointed tutors to handle all courses. The researcher sought the views of the students on tutors' approach to tutoring, punctuality and how they relate to learners.

The hypothesis that guided these questions was that there is no significant relationship between age of learners and;

i. Styles tutors apply in tutoring
ii. Punctuality to tutorials
iii. Tutors' relationship with learners

Table 4.8: Chi-square Analysis of Tutors by Age of Learners

	Age		
Performance of Tutors	**Chi-square**	**Degree of freedom**	**Probability value@0.05**
Tutors apply good styles	49.25	24	0.002
Tutors are punctual to tutorials	42.6	24	0.011
Tutors relate well with learners	22.77	18	0.21

Source: Field Data, 2010

Table 4.8 indicated a significant relationship between age and students' perception of styles tutors apply during tutorials and tutors' punctuality to tutorials ($p<0.05$). The various age groups have different perceptions of tutoring style and tutors punctuality. Specifically, older students tended to agree less with the fact that tutors apply good styles obviously because most of them have been out of school for a long time and would like to be taught as in the classroom at lower levels which however is against the rules of distance education and for that matter adult learning. Also, older students tended to agree more with the fact that tutors were punctual. There is however no significant difference between age tutors' relationship with students ($p>0.05$). This may be the result of the training given to the tutors and also the respect that they have for adult learners.

The sex of an individual may also determine how he/she passes judgement over issues so the sex of participants were looked at in connection to the tutors' style, punctuality and relations with learners. The result is presented in Table 4.9.

The hypothesis that guided these questions was that there is no significant relationship

between sex of learners and;

i. Styles tutors apply in tutoring

ii. Tutors' punctuality to tutorials

iii. Tutors' relationship with learners

Table 4.9: Chi-square Analysis of Tutors by Sex of Learners

	Sex		
Performance of Tutors	**Chi-square**	**Degree of freedom**	**Probability value@0.05**
Tutors apply good styles	3.08	4	0.54
Tutors are punctual to tutorials	4.07	4	0.4
Tutors relate well with learners	4.96	3	0.17

Source: Field Data, 2010

Table 4.9 indicates that there was no significant relationship between sex and tutor styles in tutoring, their punctuality to tutorial seesions and relationship with learners. This means both male and female learners have similar perceptions about styles of tutoring, tutors' punctuality as well as relationship with learners. This means the tutors treated all learners the same and did not discriminate in going about their duties.

The educational background of individuals may influence his/her assessment of the tutors in relation to the styles used in tutoring, punctuality and relation with students so this was sought for learners and the result is presented in Table 4.10.

The hypothesis underlying this was that is no significant relationship between educational background of learners and;

i. Styles tutors apply in tutoring

ii. Tutors' punctuality to tutorials

iii. Tutors' relationship with learners

Table 4.10: Chi-square Analysis of Tutors by Educational Background of Learners

	Educational background		
Performance of Tutors	**Chi-square**	**Degree of freedom**	**Probability value@0.05**
Tutors apply good styles	44.67	20	0.001
Tutors are punctual to tutorials	36.97	20	0.01
Tutors relate well with learners	40.07	15	0.00

Source: Field Data, 2010

The calculations showed that there was a significant relationship between the educational background of the learners and styles of tutors (p=0.00 at 0.05 significance level), punctuality (p=0.00 at 0.05 significance level), and tutors' relationship with learners (p=0.00 at 0.05 significance level). Learners of different educational backgrounds have different perceptions of tutoring styles and punctuality of tutors and their relationship with learners.

Whereas students with higher educational background tend to agree more with the fact that tutors apply good styles, they tended to agree less with the fact that tutors are punctual and tutors relate well with learners. This means that learners with higher educational qualifications have come to terms with the tutorial approach whereas those with lower educational qualifications have not. On the issue of punctuality and relations with students, those with

higher educational qualifications may expect to see more of the tutors, as done in the regular stream.

4.4.8 Assignments

Assignments are given to distance learners so as to keep them focused on their studies; it is actually one of the supports given to distance learners. Implementing a distance education programme can therefore not thrive without taking and marking assignments. Respondens were asked to rank the provision of assignments using the scale; 5-Strongly Agree, 4-Agree, 3-Uncertain, 2-Disagree and 1-Strongly Disagree. The result is presented in tables the result is shown in tables 4.11.

Table 4.11: Assignments Given to Learners

	SD	D	U	A	SA	Total	
Issues	**%**	**%**	**%**	**%**	**%**	**Mean**	**sd**
Assignments are given on time	27.3	17.3	34.5	15.1	5.8	2.54	1.2
Assignments are promptly marked	36	25.2	30.2	5	3.6	2.15	1.08
Feed back on assignments are given	30.9	44.6	20.1	2.2	2.2	2	0.89
Assignments are well structured	9.4	21.6	36	24.5	8.6	3.01	1.09

N=139 for all cases across

Table 4.11 indicates that respondents were not enthused with assignments given to them during tutorials. On whether assignments they (learners) submitted were promptly marked and if feedback on assignments were given to respondents, the respondents disagreed. Lastly, on the issue of assignments being well structured the respondents were again uncertain. Overall, the respondents agreed that assignments were well structured with a mean of 30.1 on the 1-5

ranking scale and on whether feedback was given o assignments, most respondents disagreed, with a mean of 2.1.

4.4.9 Time and Duration for Examinations

Examinations on the programme are organized within a one week period. Examinations serve as the main means of assessing the performance of learners. It is one of the main means through which the students are offered the opportunity to be resident on campus. The researcher therefore sought the views of the students on the time examinations were held. To this 53.2 percent of the students held that the time for examinations was okay but the remaining 46.8 percent held the view that the time too short and therefore not favourable. The researcher probed into the duration for examinations and the result is presented in Table 4.12.

Table 4.12: Duration for Examinations

Duration for Examinations	Frequency	Percent
Duration should be extended	99	47.5
Okay	87	51.8
It is too long	1	.7
Total	**167**	**100.0**

Source: Field Data, 2010

Table 4.12 indicates that 51.8 percent of the respondents were okay with the duration given of examinations whereas 47.5 percent of them wanted the duration extended and one respondent thought it was too long. The research sought to know if there was a relationship between examination periods and respondents personal characteristics. The chi-square analysis of this is presented in Table 4.13.

The research wanted to know if there was any significance between learners' personal

characteristics and the duration of examinations which is presented in table 4.13.

The hypothesis that guided these questions was that there is no significant relationship between duration of examinations and personal characteristics of learners.

Table 4.13: Chi-square Analysis of Duration of Examinations by Personal Characteristics of Learners

	Duration of Examinations		
Personal Characteristics	**Chi-square**	**Df**	**Probability value@0.05**
Sex	2.295	2	0.317
Age	5.470	12	0.940
Occupation	24.999	16	0.070
Education	5.347	10	0.867

Source: Field Data, 2010

The chi-square analysis indicated there was no significant relationship between learners' personal characteristics and the duration of examinations. Learners' perception of the duration of examinations is not influenced by their sex, age, occupation or educational background.

4.4.10 Cost of Tuition

Distance education is a self-sponsoring programme. This means that monies generated from the programme in the form of fees paid by students are used to run the programme. To ascertain students' views of the cost of tuition, they were asked how they felt about the cost of the programme. The result is presented in Table 4.14.

Table 4.14: Cost of Tuition

Cost	Frequency	Percent
High	106	63.2
Average	60	36.0
Low	1	0.7
Total	**167**	**100.0**

Source: Field Data, 2010

Table 4.14 shows that 106 respondents (63.2%) of the student respondents answered that the cost of tuition was on the high side, while 36.0 percent held that it was average. On the contrary, one respondent was of the view that the tuition fee was low.

It was also worth identifying if there was a relationship between respondents' personal characteristics and the cost of tuition which is presented in Table 4.15.

Hypothesis: There is no significant relationship between personal characteristics of learners and cost of tuition.

Table 4.15: Chi-square Analysis of Cost of Tuition by Personal Characteristics of Learners

	Cost of Tuition		
Personal Characteristics	**Chi-square**	**Df**	**Probability value@0.05**
Sex	1.653	2	0.438
Age	21.548	12	0.043
Occupation	6.015	8	0.646
Education	5.992	10	0.992

Source: Field Data, 2010

The table above shows a significant relationship between cost of tuition and age of respondents (p=0.043 at 0.05 significance level). Perception of whether the cost of tuition was high or low is dependent on the age of the learner. Sex, occupation and educational background however do not influence learners' perception of the cost of tuition.

4.4.11 Challenges Facing Respondents

Distance education students undoubtedly face some challenges. The research was therefore interested in knowing the challenges respondents face. The result shows that the majority, 87.8 percent admitted that they faced challenges while the remaining 12.2 percent said they did not face any challenges. Respondents were further asked to mention the challenges they faced as distance learners. The result is presented in Table 4.16.

Table 4.16: Challenges Learners Face

Challenges	Frequency	Percent
Lack of library services	24	14.4
Minimal time allotted for tutorials	40	23.7
Lack of support from Distance Education Unit	20	12.2
Modules not distributed on time	47	28.1
Lack of clear communication	10	5.8
Delay in exam results	08	5.0
No challenges	18	10.8
Total	**167**	**100.0**

Source: Field Data, 2010

Indication from table 14.16 is that the commonest challenge facing learners was the late distribution of modules (28.1%). Minimal time allotted for tutorials was seen as the second

commonest challenge as indicated by 23.7 percent of the learners. However, 5.0 percent of the respondents picked delay in examination results, which was the least challenge facing learners.

4.4.12 Resolving the Challenges in the Implementation Process

To keep programmes running where and wherever a problem arises there must be a solution. It for this reason that as part of implementing the distance education programme certain structures have been put in place to help address the challenges.

4.4.13 Support Provided by the University to Minimise the Challenges

One strategy distance education institutions adopt to solve the challenges faced by students in order to retain them is the provision of support services. Respondents were asked whether the university provided any support services for them. The result was that 92 representing 66.1 percent of the respondents answered that the university did not provide any support whereas the remaining 33.9 answered that the university provided some support to minimise the challenges. Respondents were further asked to identify three of the support services provided by the university and the result is presented in Table 4.17.

Table 4.17: Support Services Provided by the University

Support Services	Frequency	Percent
Library facility	33	20.1
Reading rooms	04	2.2
Tutorials	34	20.9
Accommodation in the halls and hostels during vacations	17	10.8
Access to the Internet	14	8.6
Modules	17	10.8
Lecture Halls	09	5.8
NA	04	2.2

Source: Field Data, 2010

Table 4.17 indicates that 20.9 percent of respondents acknowledged tutorials as the commonest form of support provided by the university. This was followed by library facilities, which was chosen by 20.1 percent of the respondents. On the contrary, three percent of respondents held the view that the provision of reading rooms was the support service provided to minimize their learning difficulties.

4.4.14 Learning Strategies Adopted by Learners

To be able to overcome some of the challenges learners face, learners have to make efforts since the services provided by the university will not be enough. Respondents were therefore asked the learning strategies they have adopted to learn and the result is shown in Table 4.18.

Table 4.18: Learning Strategies Learners Adopt

Learning Strategies	Frequency	Percent
Group studies	85	51.0
Private tutorials	35	20.9
Additional materials	35	20.9
Internet	12	7.2
Total	**167**	**100.0**

Source: Field Data, 2010

The survey indicated that that 51 percent of the students adopted group studies as a strategy to minimize the challenges they faced. Private tutorials were seen as another strategy, which is adopted by 20.9 percent of the learners. The least proportion of 7.2 percent of the student respondents said they resorted to the internet as their main strategy.

4.4.15 Learners' General Assessment of the Programme

The students were asked to give their general assessment of the programme and the result was that 45.3 percent of the students felt that though the programme was still in its early stages it was encouraging. Those who held that the programme lacked effective planning and management comprised 18.0 percent of the respondents. Another 15.1 percent answered that constant effort needed to be made for improvement where as 9.4 percent found the programme to be successful.

4.5 Survey Results on Tutors' Views on the Implementation of the Programme

Tutorials play a very important part in the whole distance education enterprise and the tutorials can only be held if there are tutors available to tutor. The role of tutors in the implementation of distance education programmes can therefore not be downplayed and it is

for this reason that the views of tutors were sought for this research.

4.5.1 Background of Tutors

For distance education to be implemented successfully and turn out quality products, there is the need to involve good tutors. The researcher therefore sought background information on the tutors and the result showed that out of 49 respondents, 12 representing 24.5 were holders of first degree and the remaining 75.5 percent were second degree holders.

4.5.2 Training of Tutors

After recruiting tutors they can only work well if they are equipped with the skills needed to do their work. It is for this reason that tutors were asked if they were given adequate training. The result is given in Table 4.19.

Table 4.19: Training for Tutors

Rating	Frequency	Percent
Disagree	15	30.6
Uncertain	10	20.4
Agree	19	38.8
Strongly agree	5	10.2
Total	**49**	**100.0**

Source: Field Data, 2010

From Table 4.19 it can be seen that 49 percent of the respondents agreed that they were given adequate training after being recruited while 30.6 percent disagreed. Another 20.6 percent were uncertain. Respondents were further asked if the challenges they faced had anything to do with the adequacy of training. The result is presented in Tables 4.20.

Table 4.20: Crosstabulation of Tutor Challenges and Adequacy of Training

Challenges	Adequate training for tutors				Total
	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly Agree	
Yes	14(31.8%)		18 (40.9%)	4 (9.1%)	44 (100%)
No	1 (20.0%)	2 (40.0%)	1 (20.0%)	1 (20.0%)	5 (100%)
Total	**15 (30.6%)**	**10 (20.4%)**	**19 (38.8%)**	**5(10.2%)**	**49 (100%)**

Source: Field Data, 2010

Table 4.20 shows that as to whether the challenges of the tutors had any relationship with adequacy of training, 40 percent of those who faced challenges agreed that adequate tutor training had been given while 31.8 percent disagreed that adequate training had been given to tutors. Also 40 percent of those who were not facing problems agreed that adequate training had been given while another 40 percent them either disagreed or were uncertain.

4.5.3 Follow up Training Sessions for Tutors

For people to be abreast of events and function effectively at the work place, there is need to go for initial training and follow up training. The researcher therefore thought it prudent to ask respondents if there had been follow up training for them. The result is presented in Table 4.21.

Table 4.21: Follow up Training Sessions for Tutors

Rating	Frequency	Percent
Strongly disagree	24	49.0
Disagree	10	20.4
Uncertain	5	10.2
Agree	10	20.4
Total	**49**	**100.0**

Source: Field Data, 2010

From Table 4.21, out of the 49 respondents, 49 percent of them strongly disagreed that there had been follow up tutor training sessions, 10 percent disagreed and agreed respectively while 10.2 percent were uncertain.

4.5.4 Time for Tutorials and Number of Sessions

Tutorials are very important in the implementation of distance education programmes, but then it is even more important to identify whether the time allotted for the tutorials and the number of tutorial sessions for tutorials were adequate. The results showed that 49 percent of respondents disagreed that the tutorial time and sessions were enough. Another 30.6 percent of the respondents strongly disagreed that time for tutorials were enough while 40.8 percent also strongly disagreed that tutorial sessions were enough. Those in the minority were 10 percent who agreed that tutorial times were enough and five percent who agreed that sessions for tutorials were enough.

4.5.5 Learners' Participation during Tutorials

Tutorials cannot thrive if it is a one-way traffic. There was the need for participation from learners. It is against this backdrop that respondents were asked to strongly agree, agree,

disagree or strongly disagree if learners participated during tutorials. The result is shown in Table 4.22.

Table 4.22: Learners Participation during Tutorials

Rating	Frequency	Percent
Strongly disagree	9	18.4
Disagree	5	10.2
Agree	25	51.0
Strongly agree	10	20.4
Total	**49**	**100.0**

Source: Field Data, 2010

From Table 4.22, it is indicated that 51 percent agreed that learners participated during tutorials and another 20.4 percent strongly agreed. However, a minority group of 18.4 and 10.2 percent disagreed and strongly disagreed respectively or that learners participated during tutorials. Respondents were further asked if learners were punctual for tutorials and the responses showed that 61 percent of respondents agreed that learners were punctual, 28 percent disagreed. There were other 10.2 percent who were uncertain whether learners were punctual or not.

4.5.6 Supervision of Tutorials

The distance education programme can be developed and have a smooth implementation if tutorials are well supervised. Respondents were therefore asked if there was good supervision of tutorials. The result is shown in Table 4.23.

Table 4.23: Supervision of Tutorials

Supervision	Frequency	Percent
Disagree	5	10.2
Uncertain	20	40.8
Agree	20	40.8
Strongly agree	4	8.2
Total	**49**	**100.0**

Source: Field Data, 2010

The result shows that 40.8 percent of the respondents agreed and were uncertain that good supervision was put in place for tutorials respectively. This was followed by 10.2 percent who disagreed and 8.2 percent who strongly agreed. This calls for the institution of more effective structures to be put in place to supervise tutors and how they tutor during the face-to-face sessions.

4.5.7 Challenges in the Implementation Process

In the implementation of the distance education programme challenges will undoubtedly be met. The respondents were therefore asked to mention the challenges they encountered as part of the implementation and the result is presented in Table 4.24

Table 4.24: Challenges Faced by Tutors

Challenges	Frequency	Percent
Inadequate financial motivation of tutors	15	30.6
Learners changing tutors during tutorials	5	10.2
Not enough time allocated for tutorial	15	30.6
Late attendance of students	4	8.2
Public address system faulty	5	10.2
Late delivery of modules prevent students from preparing well	5	10.2
Total	49	**100.0**

Source: Field Data, 2010

The indication from Table 4.24 is that 30 percent each of the respondents mentioned the problem of inadequate financial motivation and limited time allocated for tutorials. This was followed by five percent each for changing of tutors by students, faulty public address system and late delivery of modules respectively. The last group (8.2%) mentioned late attendance by students. Respondents were further asked if there was any relationship between challenges faced and discipline. This is presented in Table 4.25.

Table 4.25: Relationship between Challenges faced and Course(s) Taught

Challenges	Causes Taught						
	Psychology	Linguistics	Sociology	Social Work	Information Studies	English	Total
Yes	3(75.0%)	11(91.7%)	4(100.0%)	12(92.3%)	2(50.0%)	12(100.0%)	44(89.8%)
No	1(25.0%)	1(8.3%)	0(.0%)	1(7.7%)	2(50.0%)	0(.0%)	5(10.2%)
Total	**4(100.0%)**	**12(100.0%)**	**4(100.0%)**	**13(100.0%)**	**4(100.0%)**	**12(100.0%)**	**49(100.0%)**

Source: Field Data, 2010

From the survey, all Sociology, English tutors face challenges. With the Information Studies tutors, 50 percent faced challenges and the other 50 percent did not face any challenges.

4.5.8 Resolving the Challenges

The distance learning programme has been able to survive because of its ability to address some of the challenges it faces. To ascertain how the Institute has been able to curb the challenges it has encountered in the implementation, the views of tutors were solicited and the result is presented in Table 4.26.

Table 4.26: Tutors' Views on Resolving Challenges

Views for curbing challenges	Frequency	Percent
Increase tutorial time and sessions	10	20.4
Tutors allowance should be increased	10	20.4
Provide equipments necessary to facilitate tutorials	10	20.4
Students and authorities should be dedicated	5	10.2
Coordination and communication among tutors	10	20.4
Modules can be put on CDs	4	8.2
Total	**49**	**100.0**

Source: Field Data, 2010

The indication from Table 4.26 is that 20.4 percent each agreed that increasing tutorial times and sessions, increasing tutor allowances, providing equipment and facilities for tutorials and coordination and communication among tutors are ways of curbing the challenges. Another 10.2 percent believed in dedicated students and authorities and the last 8.2 percent shared the opinion that if modules are put on CDs the challenges would be curbed.

4.5.9 Getting Assistance from Distance Education Office

A good working relationship between the tutors and distance education office will by and large help in addressing the challenges tutors face. It is in this light that the tutors were asked how easy it was to get assistance from the distance education office. The result is presented in Table 4.27.

Table 4.27: Getting Assistance from Distance Education Office

Rating	Frequency	Percent
Very easy	5	10.2
Easy	24	49.0
Not easy	15	30.6
Never	5	10.2
Total	**49**	**100.0**

Source: Field Data, 2010

Table 4.27 indicates that 49 percent of respondents said it was very easy to get assistance from the distance education office while 30.6 percent said it was not easy. The extremes showed that 10.2 percent said it was very easy whereas another 10.2 percent said they never got help from the distance education office. In all 59.2 find it convenient.

4.5.10 Tutors' General Assessment of the Programme

When asked to give a general assessment of the programme, 49 percent believed the programme had been beneficial. This was followed by 20.4 percent of the respondents who believed the programme lacks necessary planning. Tutors should be adequately motivated was the view of 10.2 percent of the respondents. Another 10.2 percent said student performances had not received much attention and the last 10.2 percent held the view that the programme was still in the progressive stages and was being implemented efficiently.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the results of major findings revealed in chapter four of the study in relation to the four stated objectives for this study, issues raised in the literature review and the theoretical framework. The discussions of the results are based on the following objectives outlined for the study.

- Evolution of the distance education programme.
- Strategies adopted for the implementation of the programme.
- Challenges in the implementation process.
- Ways of resolving the challenges.

5.2 The Evolution of the Programme

Findings from the four coordinators of the University of Ghana Bachelor of Arts Distance Education Programme on how the whole programme started and has evolved over time revealed that the programme actually started as a correspondence course in 1970 for G.C.E Ordinary Level examinations. This is in consonance with Jeffries' (2002) assertion that "aspects of distance education can be traced all the way back to the early 1700s, when it was known as correspondence study". The import of this is that the distance education programme implemented at the University of Ghana was not done in isolation to others in the other parts of the world; the programme was built on what had been done successfully at a lower level.

In the words of Keast (1997) "postsecondary education institutions are faced with an unprecedented number of challenges and constraints." He continued that "to confound matters, educational services must now be provided using increasingly scarce resources. In short, institutions are being forced to undergo large-scale and fundamental change, and this is the main dilemma for higher education" (p.39). The assertion by Keast was confirmed when the SSS system replaced the O'level system and there was need to widen access for the increased number of school leavers into tertiary institutions. As a matter of urgency, the need for distance education was a must because aside the backlog created by the increased number school leavers, the existing universities were also lacking facilities to cater for the already existing students so could not admit new ones.

Needs assessment is one of the most important phases in the development and implementation processes of programmes. It is the process of identifying the need(s) of a programme and the basis upon which objectives are set. It is therefore important for organizations to assess the need for an innovation before going in for it. Jones and Lewis (1991) calls it trigger goal and they explain it as what represents the articulation of a clearly defined need, a concrete or realizable objective to which both partners can apply resources and activities for the achievement of a definable end. In the circles of training for employees, Ostroff and Ford (1994) asserted that assessing training needs provides critical information into the development and evaluation of training programmes.

The long and short of it all is that it is impossible to develop and implement an innovation successfully without conducting a needs assessment. To confirm the assertion made by

Ostroff and Ford and Jones and Lewis, a needs assessment exercise to see whether distance education would be accepted was conducted in 1992 which indicated that a majority of Ghanaians needed and will welcome distance education at the university level. This corroborates what Jones and Lewis (1991) suggested that there is need to identify a homogenous group called *critical mass of people* who are aware of the need for change and would help in bringing about it.

A request was made to the Commonwealth of Learning to support a survey of distance education needs in Ghana. The Ministry of Education then sponsored a meeting at Sogakope which saw the introduction of the steering committee of distance education in Ghana. Each public university was requested to start its own programme, so the University of Ghana set up a committee which started preparatory work till a coordinator was appointed in 1997 to see to the implementation of the programme.

The stages of acceptance of the proposal and formation of the pioneering committee fits perfectly into Rogers (1995) first stage of his innovation decision process called the knowledge stage. Rogers regards this stage as the period when an individual or other decision making unit is exposed to an innovation's existence and gains some understanding of how it functions. Furthermore, Keast (1997) suggests that for innovations to be successful there is the need for collaboration to ensure support from key stakeholders and decision makers to ensure success. He further states that collaboration is an important step in changing the

behaviour of the organization itself which in turn is one important end goal of the change initiative. Also, it can be argued that it is for the sake of collaboration that the Deans and the Director of the Institute of Adult Education were included in the pioneering committee.

Oti-Boating (2007) underscores the need for developing the human resources involved, the employment of the right calibre of personnel and improving their knowledge and skills to enhance their competence to meet the emerging challenges and respond to the operational needs of the organization which is related to conscious process of education, training and utilization of human capital for progress. Boachie-Danquah (2000) also cautioned that any organization wishing to stay afloat in the face of current technological advancement and competition must of necessity put human resource development at the highest echelons of its corporate objectives. It is in line with what Oti-Boateng and Boachie-Danquah identified earlier that training of the human resource to be involved in the distance education programme was very dear to the planners and implementers.

Between 1998 and 2007 the programme was being developed and course writers were being trained in all the departments, while materials were being developed for the programme. Finally, in the year 2007 the distance education programme was launched and the first batch of 906 students were admitted and in three years of existence the programme has a student strength of 4,557 (Coordinator, 2010).

Overall, the distance education programme like any endeavour did not come on a silver platter. It has passed through strenuous times (from 1991 to its eventual start in 2007). The good thing is that barring all odds the pioneering committee through the focus they had and commitment to the cause of distance education, collaborative effort and training, they were finally able to get the programme implemented. It can be said that the good foundation laid prior to the start of the programme by and large cleared the path for the implementation of the programme and therefore it is no surprise that the programme has grown in strength in less than three years of its inception.

5.3 Implementation Strategies

At the inception stages of the programme, an implementation team was formed in 1995 which focused on course writers' training, material development and student support services. Seminars were organized for Deans of various faculties. Periodic workshops and training were organised for course writers to equip them with knowledge and skills in the writing of modules.

After the inception followed the developmental stage where a coordinator was appointed to operationalise the implementation plan and other experts were also added to the implementation team to help bring the concept into reality. The distance education programme was advertised using leaflets, notice boards and the newspapers with funding sought from the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), DFID, Ministry of Education and the Commonwealth of Learning.

To programme implementation management, the indication is that implementing programmes can not happen overnight since it takes time and patience. Again, it needs proper planning and strategies as indicated in this research to be able to successfully implement quality programmes.

5.3.1 Student Support Services

According to Keegan (1990) in distance education the teacher and learner are geographically separated and this separation has been put forward as the most distinguishing characteristic of distance education in comparison to conventional education. Moore (1993) however identifies the distance to be pedagogical and not geographic, thereby necessitating 'special organizations and teaching procedures', while Peters (1998: 28) refers to it as 'communication of mental distance'. Problems learners encounter: academic and social an example being how to study and time management make support services are seen as indispensable in the distance education enterprise. The survey revealed that as part of the implementation of the programme, the following support services were provided; tutorials, counselling and course advisory services, notice boards and information desks are used both at the head office and study centres. Four tutorials are organized per subject, with a fifth one as revision before semester examinations.

Moore (1996) indicated that in distance learning, where there is less structure, there is more distance and vice versa. The indication is that learners on the distance learning programme

should be in the known that the face-to-face sessions are only part of support services provided and should make efforts to use other services on their own as much as possible. Programme implementers should also as much as possible make conscious efforts not to create unnecessary distance be it geographical, pedagogical or real physical distance.

5.3.2 Roles and Responsibilities of the Organiser

According to Willis (1993), 'effective distance education administrators are more idea people.' They are consensus builders, decision- makers, and facilitators. They maintain control of technical managers, ensuring that technological resources are effectively deployed to further the institution's academic mission. At the same time they lead and inspire faculty and staff in overcoming obstacles that arise.

Willis gives a vivid description of the role(s) people in the forefront of distance education should play. With the University of Ghana distance education programme, organizers both at the head office and various centres play a significant number of roles which are in concert with what Willis said. A number of the roles that the organizers perform as identified by this research are;

- Relaying information from department to students, tutors and other concerned officers or institutions.
- Drawing of tutorial and exam time table and scheduling of tutorials in consultation with the coordinator.

- Recruitment of tutors in consultation with the coordinator.
- The organiser is always present at weekend tutorials as well as revision times and during examination periods.

From the roles enumerated above, it is clear that the importance of the organizers cannot be overemphasized. They serve as the pivot around which the distance education programme evolves. This is because their ability to co-ordinate the various activities involved in distance education go a long way to see to the success of the programme.

5.3.3 Orientation for Learners

According to Olcott and Wright (1995) cited in Badu-Nyarko (2000), faculty training is an important aspect of preparing for new distance education initiatives. One of the most effective ways to begin this type of training is to provide faculty with general information about distance education, including the overall educational process, instructional models, appropriate technology, relevant research, and specific publications. Such early training could also include showcases of faculty examples and experience, workshops, forums, and newsletters.

What Olcott and Wright (1995) identified as a way of preparing for new distance education initiatives for faculty is not different from preparing newly admitted students onto the distance education programme physically, emotionally and psychologically. This is what is commonly

termed orientation. It was revealed (in the research) that 118 of respondents representing 84.9 percent agreed that they were given orientation when they were admitted into the programme.

5.3.4 Quality of Modules

The use of modules cannot be overemphasized in the distance education programme. It is for this reason that course writers were carefully selected and adequately remunerated so as to come out with quality modules. That aside the modules go through several processes such as editing and formatting before it is finally published.

The survey revealed that the modules, which are supposed to be the 'lecturers' for the learners, are of quality in terms of both content and structure. This is because 90.6 percent of respondents agreed that the modules were of quality in terms of content while 94.3 percent also agreed that they were of quality in terms of structure. The quality of modules developed for the programme is corroborated by a recommendation by Aggor et al (1992) that the universities should examine and carefully select suitable course materials produced by other tertiary institutions for use, with modifications in initiating their first programmes.

It can therefore be concluded that since course materials are studied independently by students, such materials must be well prepared so as to enhance indepth understanding by students.

5.3.5 Assignments

In the distance education enterprise, assignments are very important as it is the main means by which learners will be able to find out how well they understand what had been taught. Not only is the giving of assignment of prime importance but also its prompt marking, structure, feedback and the time the assignments are given.

The responses on the issue of assignments were however negative as respondents were not in support when asked if they were given assignments on time by tutors. On whether assignments were promptly marked and feedback given, this was found to be inadequate. However, on the issue of assignments being well structured, the students were in total agreement.

This might result from the fact that the university does not use the assignments to grade students so tutors do not put in maximum effort when it comes to giving and marking assignments. This situation is in line with what Satyanarayan (1992) found out as cited in Adda (2004) that some distance education institutions do not evaluate learners' performance continuously.

Adda (2004) also cites Sahoo (1985) and Balasubramnin (1986) who both point to the fact that problems associated with assignments are not peculiar to one institution. They further stated that most tutors, dropouts and successful learners have all pointed out several limitations concerning the form of questions and partial coverage of assignments.

It is also worth noting that assignments can be a very important tool for improving learning on the part of distance learners, sharpening and equipping them with skills in answering questions. For that matter assignments should be seen as an important component of the programme by both tutors and learners. There must be a strong system to see to all issues connected with assignments, especially giving them enough, and providing feedback as soon as possible.

5.3.6 Cost of Tuition

An interview with the current coordinator of the distance education programme gave a revelation of payment of fees. He said;

> *"Another thing I will also talk about is the need for the students who are on our distance education programme to know that distance education is not given out freely, we need money to run the programme and so students should pay their fees regularly and on time for us to be able to pay the printers who print the materials for us and also course writers who write the materials."*

The above statement by the coordinator is indicative of the fact that students were not paying their fees on time. The findings showed that the fees were too high. This was reported by 86 respondents (63.2%). However, only one respondent was of the view that the tuition fee was low. A comparison of the cost of tuition paid by distance learners and those at University of Ghana City Campus revealed that distance learners paid GH¢ 844.00 while their counterparts at City Campus paid GH¢ 802.00 which meant that the distance learners paid higher fees than those on City Campus (University of Ghana Admission Handbook, 2010). It must however be

noted that City Campus students do not benefit from tutorial and revision. They also pay for marking of scripts which is not so with students on the main campus.

The coordinator of the programme stated that *"in many distance education programmes it is dominated by workers. In our system it is the opposite, it is dominated by the non-workers; Senior High School (SHS) graduates and unemployed"*. Also the implementation Committee's proposal indicated that the programme should be run on business lines, in that cost has to be recovered, yet since the institution cannot put all cost on one cohort of students, it is spread over time. In addition to what has been said by the coordinator, the California Distance Learning Project (2000) also came out with the finding that distance learning students generally are older with jobs and families. Because of all their responsibilities, they need to coordinate their schedules to allow for careers, children, household chores, spouses, and homework. They seek degrees to broaden their education, or pursue career advancement opportunities.

5.3.7 Training for Tutors

In building the capacity of tutors for the programme, training is indispensable. The findings from the study indicated that 49 percent of the tutors agreed there was adequate training provided for them while 10.2 percent strongly disagreed. It is the need for training that Fullan (1993) said that the emerging technologies of distance learning can have a positive effect on the educational system if it is recognized that change is a journey, not a blueprint and that the development of new skills, behaviours, and beliefs is a complex process that must embrace the problems inherent in change.

Olcott and Wright (1995) also share a similar sentiment and assert that faculty training is another important aspect of preparing for new distance education initiatives. One of the most effective ways to begin this type of training is to provide faculty with general information about distance education, including the overall educational process, instructional models, appropriate technology, relevant research, and specific publications. Early training could also include showcases of faculty examples and experience, workshops, forums, and newsletters.

Training after recruitment is a very important process and this was put in place by the administrators of the distance education programme. Finding from the survey might result from the fact that the programme being new employed tutors late after the original recruitment or perhaps some of the tutors did not see the need for training.

5.3.8 Background of Tutors

Because distance learners are older and more settled than most traditional high school students, they may have more self-confidence than younger students have, giving them that extra desire to excel (California Distance Learning Project, 2000). This presupposes that quality tutors or facilitators must be recruited to help the distance learners who are adults to achieve the aim for which they enrolled in the programme.

On tutors or facilitators Lee (2001) identified that regardless of the external rewards or incentives that they may accrue in pursuing their obligations, faculty members tend to motivate and commit themselves to the teaching process. The data collected came out that out

of the total number of 49 respondents, 75.5 percent were second degree holders and the remaining 24.5 percent were holders of first degrees.

An organizer had this to say on the recruitment of tutors in an interview to find out the background of tutors:

> *We put up the advert then prospective tutors apply and we sit down to check the documents of the applicants, then we sit down and go through their application letters. We then have a look at their transcripts and from there we know who qualifies for the programme. That is what we do before organizing training for the tutors.*

It therefore came as little surprise when respondents irrespective of age, sex and educational background agreed when asked if tutors applied good tutoring styles and most of them agreed that the tutors related well with the distance learners. It might also be indicative of the fact that 75.5 percent of the tutors had second degrees, putting them on top of their jobs as tutors. Though most of the learners were uncertain or disagreed that the tutors were punctual it might be by virtue of the fact that there are only four meetings per course and for that reason, should a tutor or learner miss a tutorial just once it will seem like the last meeting had been so long ago.

5.3.9 Supervision of Tutorials

Keast (1997) suggested that when implementing a programme, monitoring and support must follow. He explained that during this stage, efforts during planning and initiation become translated into sustainable programme improvement. Keast cannot be more right because for

every programme to succeed continuous monitoring or supervisory strategies must be put in place so as to see the pros and cons and put in measures where the need be to ensure quality and success of the programme.

In view of the above respondents in the study found out that there was good supervision during tutorials as indicated by 49 percent with 40.8 percent uncertain. The uncertainty about supervision is likely to emanate from the fact that the respondents involved had not taken pains to see if there was anything of that sort going on or they were ignorant about it, since the one supervising the tutorial is not supposed to inform the tutor or the learners.

However, an organizer of the programme agreed that supervision is in place but had a problem with it. He stated that: "*I know supervisors supervise tutors during tutorials, but I don't know exactly what they supervise which is not good. This is because they don't involve us in the exercise, but this should be done for the tutors and learners to know that we are a part of the programme.*"

The current coordinator however opposes the view of the organizer and states that organizers are trained in order to supervise tutors during tutorials and they (organizers) are to look out for the mode of delivery, punctuality, absenteeism and to receive comments from learners.

5.4 Challenges in the Implementation Process

The main challenge at the inception of the programme was that the university did not understand the concept and were hostile to it. Some lecturers thought it was an additional job

for them, others thought it was going to replace the main stream thereby making them lose their jobs. This is in line with what Moore (1994) cited in Keast (1997) suggested that barriers impeding development of distance education are not technological, nor even pedagogical.... The major problems are associated with organisational change, change in faculty roles, and change in administrative structure (p.42).

In agreement with the suggestion made by Moore, Badu-Nyarko (2000) writes that distance education at the tertiary level has been controversial among university lecturers and that the need for it has received mixed reactions. He adds that although the support is laudable, it cannot be said to transcend all category of lecturers. He continues that in the academic community, there have been some concerns regarding the equivalence of a distance education mode to conventional education.

A past coordinator of the programme intimated that funding was also a major problem since the university did not see distance education as its own and would not support it in any way by way of finance. Funds therefore had to be sourced externally to support the programme, but the funds sourced were not adequate. In buttressing the fact that funding was a challenge in the implementation process, Truman (1995) explains that, obvious barriers to adopting and implementing distance education are money, equipment and staff.

Other major problems faced in the implementation of the programme were getting course writers from the departments and the fee for writing the modules which was very low. It was

because of the problem of finding course writers and the cost involved that a past coordinator of the programme said, *"one lecturer told me government wanted to exploit them so he asked for ten thousand dollars to write one module"*.

Putting down proper structures to start the programme was a challenge which made the management and operation of the programme rather difficult. One past coordinator puts it this way, *"the old mill is still grinding the new corn."* The coordinator supported this by stating that the same lecturers who mark scripts for the main campus and city campus are the same who develop the study material. They therefore demanded high remuneration in getting them to write materials. In addition to the high demands by course developers, the distance education unit is seriously understaffed. Currently, there are six people working in the unit including the coordinator of the programme.

Two other challenges the research identified were that of communication and transportation. The indication was that something must be done to facilitate easy communication with the head office. This means that apart from the telephone, other gadgets for communication must be made available. Additionally, other means of transportation must be made available so as to get course materials to the various centres on time.

5.5 Resolving the Challenges

The distance education programme has been able to come this far because some strategies were adopted to resolve the challenges faced in the implementation process. According to the coordinators the following strategies were adopted:

- Seminars and fora were organised for Deans and Departmental heads on the concept of distance education and its benefits.
- Training of course writers and tutors.
- Service persons were employed to help in the support services and trained.

According to the organizers, modules that were ready were used to schedule tutorials, to avoid the situation where tutors and learners will be at tutorials while the modules are ready. Subjects for which modules were not ready were pushed towards the end of the semester. This is in line with Jones and Lewis (1991) who outlined the need for flexibility, feedback and organizational learning. They continue that *"nothing is defined for certain. Innovation, by definition, will tend to be ambiguously defined and allowances must be made for feedback, assessment and redefinition of any aspect of planning."* To this end, marked assignments by tutors are paid for.

The second means adopted by the organisers was to call tutors and remind them a few days to the tutorials so as to get them to attend. Lastly, regular meetings were held with students to equip them with the relevant information. During such meetings, academic counselling was offered to help the students make proper academic choices.

Willis (1993) asserted that support staff is the silent heroes of successful distance education programmes. He concluded that support services function as the glue that keeps the distance education enterprise together. Both students and faculty find it invaluable to have a single organization coordinating the numerous support activities required for effective distance

education. This emphasized the importance of support services. As to whether the university provided support services, it was found out that the majority of the respondents (79.1%) identified various support services the university provided while only 20.9 percent did not identify any or did not answer the question at all. This indicated that the university provided support services in order to facilitate student learning.

5.6 Learners' and Tutors' General Assessment of the Programme

The students' general assessment showed that 54.7 percent of the students found the programme in its early stages as encouraging. The findings however revealed that 45.3 percent saw the programme lacked effective planning and management and needed constant effort to improve it. Again, a majority of the tutors (59.2 percent) believed the programme had been beneficial and was being implemented efficiently but the remaining 40.8 percent gave the indication that the programme lacked the necessary planning.

The percentages of students and tutors who were of the view that the programme lacked the necessary planning were quite significant. Considering the fact that good planning is necessary for effective implementation of such a programme, the above assessment calls for necessary structures to be put in place to help in the effective implementation of the University of Ghana distance education programme.

CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a summary of the research and conclusions drawn from the findings. It also covers recommendations made on the basis of the findings and their implications to adult education.

6.2 Summary

The research sought to investigate how the University of Ghana Bachelor of Arts Distance Education Programme has evolved over time. The research looked into the revolution through correspondence education in the 1970s and needs assessment for distance education in 1992 through 1995 when Legon was asked by the Ministry of Education to introduce the programme till it was finally launched in 1997. The programme has been in existence for nearly three years and has its students' strength growing from 907 students in 2007 to 4557 in 2009.

The main purpose of this research was to investigate the evolution of the distance education programme and the strategies used in the implementation process to see to its success, and to see if it conforms to the theories identified by Moore, Rogers and Keast.

The objectives that guided the study were first of all to identify the evolution of the distance education programme. It also found out strategies adopted for the implementation of the programme. Again, the study sought to reveal the challenges in the implementation process and finally, strategies to resolve the challenges were identified in this research.

The research used the descriptive analytic survey design. An interview schedule and a questionnaire were the main data-gathering instruments used in gathering data. Face-to-face interviews were conducted on nine respondents (four coordinators and five organizers) who were purposively sampled. The questionnaire was administered to 188 respondents (139 learners and 49 tutors) using the proportional sampling procedure. In all, information was gathered from 197 respondents. They comprised of 139 learners, 49 tutors, four coordinators and five centre organizers.

6.3 Major Findings

6.3.1 Evolution of the Distance Education Programme

The results of the study revealed that the centre running distance education now was running a GCE 'O' Level correspondence programme in the 1970s. When the O'level was replaced by the SSS system in 1987, re-sit candidates had to go back and register in schools. However, a survey on distance education needs in Ghana 1992 revealed that Ghanaians would accept distance education. This finding led to the establishment of distance education programmes in public universities.

It was also revealed that in 1995 the University of Ghana was asked by the Ministry of Education to start its distance education programme. A steering committee was formed to deal with the issue. A chairman for the committee was however appointed as a coordinator in 1997 to start with the implementation but the programme only started in 2007 with a student population of 907 and four out of the seven disciplines initially planned.

6.3.2 Implementation Strategies

The study established that between 1998 and 2007 some course writers were trained and some course materials were developed. Additionally, material writers were given adequate remuneration for them to deliver quality materials on time.

One major strategy that was used was to embark on personal contact with faculty in departments whose courses had been identified for delivery through the programme. The aim was to get them on board by making them see the importance of distance education and also to establish the fact that the programme was for the university, and not for the Centre of Distance Education.

As part of the implementation strategies, regional heads of the various centres were made to play a number of significant roles such as helping in recruiting tutors, making sure things

were in order for tutorials to be held and serving as liaison between the centres and the head office. They also solved some learner grievances.

One other important strategy employed was the recruitment of quality tutors, the majority of whom were holders of Masters Degrees. They were trained for their task. On the part of the learners, they were taken through orientation after gaining admission and were given tutorial support in addition to the face-to-face sessions held four times per course per semester.

6.3.3 Challenges in the Implementation Process

It was revealed from the study that members of the steering committee that started the implementation process were not experts, hence had to learn on the job thereby slowing the implementation process. Additionally, the committee and earlier coordinators faced resistance as most departments and faculty were not in support of the introduction of distance education in the University of Ghana.

Management of the programme was also identified as a major challenge in the implementation. This challenge stemmed from the fact that the same management team for distance education being the same people who worked for the Institute of Adult Education. Because of this challenge, some of the respondents suggested that distance education should

be decoupled from the Institute of Continuing and Distance Education where it is operating from.

Apart from the fact that assignments given to learners by tutors were well structured, it was revealed that the turn-around-time was too long. Tutors did not return the scripts on time or they did not discuss with learners what was really expected in the answers.

6.3.4 Resolving the Challenges

A major strategy adopted in resolving the challenges was to employ staff to edit and format the modules as well as appointing organizers to assist the coordinators of the programme.

Also, there is flexibility in the time tabling so that modules that are ready are used for tutorials, which means that the time table is always changed to suit the modules instead of waiting for the modules before organizing tutorials.

Service personnel are used to help provide support services to the learners. This served mainly as a way of helping the staff of the programme to carry on with activities that go on at the distance education unit.

Finally, it was revealed in the study that support services such as like tutorials, residential revision, use the University library and encouraging learners to form study groups are provided to ease the challenges learners face. These support services provided are in addition to the quality modules that are provided for the learners.

6.4 Conclusions

In relation to the objectives of the study, some conclusions could be drawn. In the development of distance education programmes, proper identification and inclusion of all structures were essential with a strong implementation committee in place.

In a bid to have a smooth implementation; involvement and deliberations with faculty, training of course writers, training for tutors recruited for the programme, orientation for learners as well as training of all stakeholders are involved.

The implementation of the programme encountered some major challenges including funding, resistance by faculty and delay in the development of materials and proper recruitment of tutors.

6.5 Recommendations

Based on the major findings, the following recommendations are made:

- The first coordinator of the programme revealed that those on the programme had to learn on the programme, because they were not giving training hitherto being on the committee. This slowed down the process of implementation. The study therefore recommends that to plan and implement important programmes such as the University of Ghana Bachelor of Arts Distance Education Programme, people to serve on committees or boards must be given training in order to avoid the situation where people would have to learn on the job.

- One of the major challenges that hindered the smooth implementation of the programme as reveled in this research was resistance by faculty. The recommendation therefore is that universities where such programmes are being established must see it as a programme of their own and embrace it whole heartedly. This will by and large make the universities contribute meaningfully, especially when it comes to funding to enhance smooth implementation.

- If distance education should continue to exist within the Institute of Continuing and Distance Education and be handled by the same staff then more hands should be employed to man the affairs of the programme. Other than that distance education must be decoupled from the Institute entirely.

- Course materials must be produced and distributed early and on time to ensure that tutorials are held on schedule.

- Examination results must be released on time to ensure that the motivation that learners had prior to enrolling on the programme would not be eroded.

- Assignments should be seen as a very important component in the distance education enterprise. For that matter the authorities must ensure that assignments are given on time, marked promptly and feedback such as discussions on learners' performance and what was expected of them are discussed with the learners.

- Finally, tutorial sessions, especially for courses that involve calculations must be increased. This is by virtue of the fact that the four sessions per semester put too much pressure on both tutors and learners to either finish the module without doing quality work or do quality work and not finish with the module.

6.6 Implication of the Study to Adult Education

In order to ensure that distance learners who are adults feel that they are a part of the university, the distance education unit must always be ready to give them all the necessary assistance and treat them (learners) as adults as well as see to the provision of more support services such as counselling, more tutorial sessions and well stocked libraries in all centres. This will make the learners comfortable in their endeavours as possible.

6.7 Areas for Further Research

- An exploratory study of distance education in Ghana.
- A comparative study of the distance education programmes in Ghana and Nigeria.

REFERENCES

A Brief History. (2001, April 15-21). *PBS Distance Learning Week.* Retrieved January 18, 2002, from http://www.pbs.org/als/dlweek/history/index.html

Adda, K. (2004). *An Assessment of the Operations of the Commonwealth Youth Programme (CYP) for Distance Learners in Ghana.* Ghana: A Master of Philosophy Thesis submitted to the University of Ghana. (Unpublished).

Aggor, R. A. (1994). *Ghana Distance Education Development Project. A Report for the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Ghana and Director-General of UNESCO.*

Aggor, R. A., Kinyanjui, P.E., Pecku, N. K., and Yerbury, J.C (1992) *Survey on Distance Education in Ghana.* A Report for the Deputy Secretary Higher Education. MOE Ghana. COL.

Amedzro, K. A. D. (2005, p. 4) *Theory and Practice of Adult Education.* Accra: Ghana University Press.

Ansere, J. (2002). Issues of Distance Education in Ghana. *The Ghanaian Chronicle: 3.6* .

Asiedu, K., Adoo-Adeku, K. and Amedzro, K. (2005). *Theory and Practice of Adult Education.* Accra: Ghana Universities Press.

Badat, S. (2005). South Africa: Distance Higher Education Policies for Access, Social Equity, Quality and Social Economic Responsiveness in a Context of the Diversity of Provision. *Distance Education, 26 (2)* , 183-204.

Badu-Nyarko, S. (2000). Faculty Attitudes Towards Participation in University-Based Distance Education in Ghana. *Ghana Journal of LIteracy and Adult Education* , 195-212.

Bates, A. (2005). *Technology, E-Learning and Distance Education.* London: Routledge.

Bates, A. (2001). *National Strategies for E-Learning in Post Secondary Education and Training.* Paris: UNESCO/ International Institute for Educational Planning.

Bates, A. (1995). *Technology, Open Learning and Distance Education.* London: Routledge.

Bates, A. (1993). Theory and Practices in the Use of Technology in Distance Education. In Keegan, D. *Theoretical Principles of Distance Education.* London: Routledge.

Bischoff, W. E. (1996). Transactional Distance and Interactive Television in the Distance Education of Health Professionals. *The American Journal of Distance Education 10 (3)* , 4-19.

Black, E. J. (1995). Faculty Support for University Distance Education. *Journal of Distance Education 7 (2)* , 5-29.

Blix, A. G. (1994). Occupational Stress Among University Teachers. *Educational Research* , 157-169.

Boachie-Danquah, Y. (2000). Training Needs Identification for Effective Workforce Development and Continuing Education in Ghana. *Journal of Literacy and Adult Education, Vol. 2:1, Ghana University Press* .

Brey, R. A. (1988). *A Study of Telecourse Students.* Washington, DC: Corporation for Public Broadcasting/ Annenberg Project.

Brookfield, D. S. (1986). *Adult Learners, Adult Education and the Community.* Open University.

Brookfield, D. S. (1987). *Developing Critical Thinkers.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Burnett, N. (2009). Investigating Out of the Crisis: The Education Dynamic. *UNESCO Future Forum.* . Paris: Available at http://portal.unesco.org/en/.

California Diatance Learning Project. (2000). *What is Distance Education.* Retrieved January 25, 2002, from http://www.pitnews.com/home/index

Catalano, E. (2007). Web Classes Gain Popularity, Garner Criticism at Colleges. *The Pit News. Retrieved 2007, April 23 from http://www.pitnews.com/home/index* .

Chute, A. T. (1999). *The McGraw-Hill Handbook of Distance Learning.* New York: McGraw- Hill.

Cini, M. A. (1999). On-line Teaching : Moving from Risk to Challenge . *Syllabus 12 (10)* , 38-40.

Clark, R. A. (2001). A Comparison of Traditional and Online Formats in a Public Speaking Course. *Communication Education, 50* , 109-124.

Clark, R. (1983). Reconsidering Research on Learning from Media. *Review of Educational Research Vol. 53* , 445-459.

Daniel, J. S. (1996). *Mega-Universities and Knowledge Media: Technology Strategies for Higher Education.* London: Kogan Page.

Daugherty, R. H. (n.d.). Univesity Faculty and Student Perception of Web-based Instruction. *Journal of Distance Education. Revue de l'seingnement a distance. Retrieved September 30, 2001 from http://cade.athabascau.ca/vol 13.11/daughterty.httm* .

Dave, R. H. (1976). *Foundations of Lifelong Education.* Hamburg: UNESCO Institute for Education and Oxford, Pergamon Press.

Denzin, N. K. (1970). *The Research Act in Sociology: A Theoretical Introduction to Sociological Methods.* London: Butterworths.

Dewey, J. (1938). *Experience and Education.* New York: Collier Macmillan Publishers.

Dubois, E. (1996). *Historical Reflection on Teaching Women's History.* Radical Historical Review.

Eaton, J. (2001). *Distance Learning: academic Challenges for Higher Education Accreditation.* Chea: Monograph Series, Number 1.

Fast Facts-NCET.mht U.S. Department of Education, N. C. (2008). *Distance education at Degree-Granting Postsecondary Institutions:2006-07.*

Fraenkel, J. R. (2003). *How to Design and Evaluate Research in Education.* New York: McGraw Hill.

Fraser, W. A. (2002). Prominent Paradigms of Performance and the Delimma of Distance Education to Deliver. *Perspective in Education, 20 (3)* , 85-102.

Fullan, M. (1993). *Change Forces.* Bristol,PA: The Falmer Press.

Garrison, D. A. (2000). *A Transactional Perspective on Teaching and Learning: A Framework for Adult and Higher Education.* Oxford: Pergamon.

Garrison, D. (1993). Multifunction Microcomputer Enhanced Audio Teleconferencing: Moving into the Third Generations of Distance Education. In K. J. Harry, *Distance Education: New Perspective.* London: Routledge.

Garrison, D. (2000). Theoretical Challenges for Distance Education in the 21st Century. A Shift from Structural to Transactional Issues. *International Review of Research in Open and Distance Learning. Available url: http:www.icaap.org/iuicode? 149.1.1.2* .

Ghana. (2002). *Meeting the Challenges of Education in the Twenty First Century- Report of the President's Committee on Review of Education Reforms in Ghana.* Accra: Adwinsa Publications (GH) Ltd.

Gorsky, P. A. (2005). A Critical Analysis of Transactional Distance Theory. *The Quarterly Review of Distance Education, 6 (1)* , 1-11.

Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy (GPRS II, p. 4. *Human Resource Development.* Handbook, U. o. (2010).

Hellman, J. (2003). Distance Education:its Advantages and Shortcomings. *UN Chronicle online edition. Retrieved August 13, 2004 from url: http://www.un.org/Pubs/chronicle/2003/issue4/0403p47.asp* .

Historical Overview of Distance Education. (2000). Retrieved June 8, 2003, from www.people.memphis.edu/-ffowler/overview.html

Hunter, C. (1998). *Technology in the Classroom: HAvnt we Heard this Before?* (Retrieved August 28, 2001, from http://www.asc.upenn.edu/usr/chunter/edtech.html.

Hyatt, S. (1992). Developing and Managing a Multi-Modal distance Learning Program in the Two-year college. *A Paper Presented t the Annual International conference of the National Institute for Staff and Organizational development on Teaching excellence and Conference Administrators.* Austin, TX: ERIC Document Reproduction Service No.ED 346 068.

Impact of the Economic Crisis on Children. (2009). *Conference Report.* Singapore: Available at http://www.unicef.org/eapro.

Jeffries, M. (2002). *IPSE.* Retrieved January 18, 2002, from Research in Distance Education: http://old.ihets,org/consortium/ipse/fhandbook/research.html

Jones, P. A. (1991). Implelementing a Strategy for Collective Change in Higher Education. *Studies in Higher Education* , p. 51.

Keast, D. (1997). Towards an Effective Models for Implementing Distance Educaton programme. In *The American Journal of Distance Education* , pp. 11:2, 39-55.

Keegan, D. (1983). On Defining Distance Education. In D. K. Sewart, *Distance Education: International Perspectives* (pp. 6-33). New York: St. Martin's Press.

Keegan, D. (1994). A Typology of Distance Education System. In D. K. K. Harry, *Distance Education New Perspectives, M. Routledge* (pp. 7-23). London, New York.

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

Keen, C. (1999). Is distance education as Good As Traditional, Campus-based Education? *Informative Article. Retrieved January 10, 2005 from url: http://www.dist-ed.alaska.edu/About/isdistance.htm* .

Kerlinger, N. F. (1973). *Foundations of Behavioural Research (2nd Ed.)*. New York: McGraw Hill.

Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology. (2003). *Basic Statistics* . University Press.

Kwapong, O. A.T.F. (2008, p. 47) A Case for Using Open and Distance Learning (ODL) to Widen Access to Tertiary Education for Women.. *International Journal of Instruction Technology and Distance Education. Vol.5. No. 5.*

Kwapong, O. A.T.F. (2007, p. 47) Providing Quality Teacher Education for Women in Ghana through Open and Distance Learning. *Indian Journal of Open Learning, 2007, 16(3) Vol.5. No. 5. 217- 238*

Laundstron, M. (1995). The Perceptions and Needs of Faculty in Distance Education Courses in a Conventional University. *Canadian Journal of Educational Communication 23 (2)* , 149-157.

Laws, R. (2000). *Alt.Education.Distance*. Retrieved January 25, 2002, from FAQ: http://www.faqs.org/faqs/education/distance-ed-faq/part1/

Lee, J. (2001). Instructional Support for Distance Education and Faculty Motivation, Commitment, satisfaction. *British Journal of Education Technology, 32(2)* , 153-160.

Liveratos, B. A. (1992). Alternative Learning Modes: Spring 1992 Telecourse and weekend College Enrollees. *ERIC document reproduction Service No.ED 352* , 105.

Major, H. A. (1998). A Blended Technology Approach to Distance Education Delivery. *ACHE Proceedings, Association for Continuing Higher Education 60th Annual Meeting* (pp. 13-14). Texas: Ft.Worth.

Martins, L. A. (2004). A Model of Business School Studnet's Acceptance of a Web-based Course Management System. *Academy of Management Learning and Education, 3 (1)* , 7-28.

Mason, R. A. (1989). *Mindweave: Communication, Computers and Distance Education.* Oxford: Pergamon Press.

McIsaac, M. A. (2001). Distance Education. *The Association for education Communications and Technology. Retrieved June 8, 2003, from http://seamonkey.ed.asu.edu-mcisaac/dechapter/* .

Midgley, D. (1978). Innovativeness: The Concept and its Measurement. *Journal of Consumer Research, 4* , 229-242.

Moore, M. A. (1996). *Theory of Transactional Distance: A Systems View.* New York: Wadsworth.

Moore, M. (1993). Theory of Transactional Distance. In D. (. Keegan, *Theoretical Principles of distance Education.* New York: Routledge.

National Academy of sciences. (1996, February 22). *Reinventing Schools: The Technology is Now! A New Model for Education.* WWW Document.

Olcott, D. J. (1995). an Instructional Support Framework for Increasing Faculty Participation in Postsecondary Distance Education. *The American Journal of Distance Education 9 (3)* , 5-17.

Online Students Fare Better. (1997). *CNET News. Retrieved April 16, 2002 from http://News.*

Online Studnets Fare Better. (1997). *CNET News. Retrieved April 16,2002, from http://news.com/2102-1023-263035.html.*

Oti-Boateng, D. (2007). *Academic Excellence and Human Resource Developpment.* Accra: Daily Graphic No. 150091 (4th July, 2007).

Owston, R. (1997). The Word Wide Web: A Technology to Enhance Teaching and Learning? *Educational Researcher* , Jossey-Bass.

Palloff, R. A. (1999). *Building Learning Communities in Cyberspace.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Passerini, K. A. (2000). A Developmental Model for Distance Learning Using the Internet. *Computers and Education, 34 (1)* , 1-15.

PerKins, D. N. (1996). Forward: Minds in the 'hood. In B. H. Khan, *Web-based Instruction* (p. 45). New Jersey: Educational Technology Publications.

Peters, O. (1998). *Learning and Teaching in Distance Education.* U.K: Kogan Page.

Rausch, A. S. (2003). A Case Study of Lifelong Learning in Japan: Objectives, Curriculum, Accountability and Visibility. *International Journal Of Lifelong Education, Vol.22 No 5*, 518-532.

Rogers, M. (1962). *Diffusion of Innovations.* Glencoe: Free Press.

Rogers, M. (1995). *Diffussion of Innovations (4th ed.).* New York: Free Press.

Rosenberg, M. J. (2001). *E-Learning.* New York: McGraw-Hill.

Rovai, A. P. (2003). On-line Course Effectiveness: An Analysis of Student Interactions and Perceptions of Learning. *Journal of Distance Education, 18 (1)* , 57-73.

Russell, T. L. (1999). *No Significant Difference Phenomenon.* Montgomery, AL: International Distance Education Certification Centre.

Saade, R. A. (2005). The Impact of Cognitive Absorption on Perceived Usefulness and Perceived Ease of Usse in On-line Learning : An extension of the Technology Acceptance Model. *Information and Management, 42* , 317-327.

Schramn, W. (1985). *Bid Media, Little Media.* SAn Francisco, CA: Sage.

Schulman, A. A. (1999). Learning in an Oline Format Versus an In-class Format: An Experimental study. *T.H.E Journal Online. Retrieved on January 31, 2002, from http://www.thejournal.com/magazine/vault/articleprintversion.cfm?aid=2090* .

Scott, J. A. (1985). Integration of Non-traditional Programs into the Main Stream of Academic Institutions. *Innovative higher Education 9* , 81-91.

Senge, P. (1990). *The Fifth Discipline: The Art and Practice of the Learning Organization.* New York: Doubleday.

Sherry, L. (1995). Issues in Distance Learning. Retrieved September 19, 2006, from http://www.cudenver.edu.public/education/edschool/issues/html.

Siaciwena, R. M. (1989). Staff Attitudes towards Distance Education at University of Zambia. *Journal of Distance Education 4(2)* , 47-62.

Stirling, D. (19997). Toward The Theory of Distance Education: Transactional Distance. *Oline. Retrieved August 13, 2004, ;file://C://Documents%20and%20Setting/Local%20Settings\Temp\Temporary...,* .

Strother, J. (2002). An Assessment of the Effectiveness of E-learning in Corporate Training Programs. *Internstional Review of Research in Open and Distance Learning, Vol.3, No.1*

Symonds, W. (2001). Giving it the Old Online Try. *Bussiness Week,* , pp. 37, 76.

Taylor, J. (2002). *Automating E-learning: The Higher Education Revolution. (Retrieved on January 4, 2007, from www.backnigaustraiasfuture.gov.au/submissions/issues sub/pdf/i43 3.pdf.*

Taylor, J. C. (1999). Distance Education: The Fifth Generation. *Proceedings of the 19th ICDE World Conference on Open Learning and Distance Education.* Vienna, Austria.

Taylor, J. (2001). Fifth Generation: Distance Education. *Higher Education Series, No.40 (Retrieved on August 13, 2004, from url:http://www.dest.gov.au/archive/highered/hes/hes40/hes40/pdf* .

Truman, B. (1995). *Distance Education in Post Secondary Institutions and Business.* University of Central Florida. Paper Submitted for an Instructional Technology Graduate Class.

UNESCO (2002). Open and distance learning – Trends, policy and strategy considerations. Retrieved May 11, 2007 from http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0012/001284/128463e.pdf.

Vail, K. (2002). A New Kind of School. *American School Board Journal, 189* , 1-5.

Williams, M. P. (1999). *Distance Learning: The Essential Guide.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Willis, B. (1993). *Distance Education a Practical Guide.* New Jersey: Englewood Cliffs.

Wolcott, L. L. (1997). Tenure, Promotion and Distance Education: Examining the Culture of Faculty Rewards. *The American Journal of Distance Education* .

APPENDIX I

THE EVOLUTION AND IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES OF THE UNIVERSITY OF GHANA BACHELOR OF ARTS DISTANCE EDUCATION PROGRAMME

Any information provided by respondents will be used solely for this study. You are assured of the utmost confidentiality of information disclosed.

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR CO-ORDINATORS

1. How did the distance education programme start?
2. What were the motives behind the establishment of the distance education programme?
3. What processes did the implementation go through?
4. What strategy or strategies were used in the implementation process?
5. How were the strategies applied in the implementation process?
6. What challenges were faced in the implementation process?
7. How were the challenges resolved?

APPENDIX II

THE EVOLUTION AND IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES OF THE UNIVERSITY OF GHANA BACHELOR OF ARTS DISTANCE EDUCATION PROGRAMME

Any information provided by respondents will be used solely for this study. You are assured of the utmost confidentiality of information disclosed.

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR ORGANISERS

1. What is your role as a centre organiser of the distance education programme?
2. What role(s) do you play in implementing the distance education programme?
3. What challenges do you face in helping to implement the distance education programme?
4. How were the challenges resolved?
5. What suggestions would you make to ensure the successful implementation of the programme?

APPENDIX III

THE EVOLUTION AND IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES OF THE UNIVERSITY OF GHANA BACHELOR OF ARTS DISTANCE EDUCATION PROGRAMME

Any information provided by respondents will be used solely for this study. You are assured of the utmost confidentiality of information disclosed.

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR LEARNERS

A. DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

1. Sex: Male [ ] Female [ ]

2. Age: 18–22 [ ] 38-42 [ ]
   23-27 [ ] 43-47 [ ]
   28-32 [ ] 48+ [ ]
   33-37 [ ]

3 Occupation.....

4. Marital Status: Married [ ] Single [ ]
   Divorced [ ] Widowed [ ]
   Single [ ]

5. Number of children: Nil [ ] 3-4 [ ]
   1–2 [ ] 5+ [ ]

6. Educational Background:
   S.S.C.E / W.A.S.S.C.E [ ] G .C.E 'A' level [ ]
   G.C.E 'O' LEVEL [ ] Others (specify).....

7. Current level: 200 [ ] 300 [ ]

8. Region of residence: .....

B. IMPORTANCE OF DISTANCE EDUCATION

8. Please give two reasons why you decided to study at a distance.

i) .....

ii) .....

9. Please state two main benefits you have gained by studying at a distance.

i) .....

ii) .....

C. CHALLENGES FACED BY DISTANCE LEARNERS

13. Do you face any challenges by learning at a distance?

Yes [ ] No [ ]

14. If your answer to question 13 is yes, please tick from the list below the challenges you face.

a) Lack of library services

b) Minimal time allotted for tutorials

c) Lack of support from distance education unit

d) Modules not distributed on time

e) Others (specify).....

15. How have you coped with the challenges?

.....

.....

16. Does the University provide support to minimize the challenges?

Yes [ ] No [ ]

17. If your answer to question 16 was yes, please mention the support service(s) services the university has provided.

Assignments	[ ]	Advice	[ ]
Revision	[ ]	Additional Materials	[ ]
Counselling	[ ]	Others (specify).....	

D. MEDIA/ TECHNOLOGY IN DISTANCE EDUCATION

18. Tick the media you would like to be used in the teaching learning process?

Print	[ ]	Audio conferencing	[ ]
Radio/ TV	[ ]	Computer technology	[ ]

19. How do you receive copies of the modules?

.....

20. In which two main ways do the time of arrival of the modules affect your work as a tutor?

i).....

iii) .....

21. How will you describe the modules in terms of its content?

Excellent	[ ]	Good	[ ]
Very good	[ ]	Very bad	[ ]

E. IMPLEMENTATION OF DISTANCE EDUCATION

22. Were you giving orientation after joining the programme?

Yes [ ] No [ ]

23. Are you given tutorial support?

Yes [ ] No [ ]

25. Are tutorial periods enough?

Yes [ ] No [ ]

Based on your experience as a distance learner, please circle one response to the following statements, using the scale: 5. Strongly Agree 2. Disagree

4. Agree 1. Strongly Disagree

3. Uncertain

26. Study materials:

Modules are of quality in terms of content	5	4	3	2	1
Modules are of quality in terms of structure	5	4	3	2	1
Handouts are related to courses	5	4	3	2	1

27. Tutors:

Tutors apply good tutoring styles	5	4	3	2	1
Tutors are punctual to tutorial	5	4	3	2	1
Tutors relate well to learners	5	4	3	2	1

28. Assignments:

Assignments are given on time	5	4	3	2	1
Assignments are promptly marked	5	4	3	2	1
Feedback on assignments are given	5	4	3	2	1
Assignments are well structured	5	4	3	2	1

29. What is your view on the time end of semester examinations are held?

.....

30. Please comment on the duration given for examinations.

.....

31. How do you find the registration process at the beginning of the semester?

Very difficult [ ] Easy [ ]

Difficult [ ] Very easy [ ]

32. What is your view on the cost of tuition?

High [ ]

Average [ ]

Low [ ]

33. How would you like the mode of tuition fee to be?

Per semester [ ]

Monthly [ ]

Yearly [ ]

34. What is your general assessment of how the distance education programme is being implemented?

.....

.....

APPENDIX IV

THE EVOLUTION AND IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES OF THE UNIVERSITY OF GHANA BACHELOR OF ARTS DISTANCE EDUCATION PROGRAMME

Any information provided by respondents will be used solely for this study. You are assured of the utmost confidentiality of information disclosed.

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TUTORS

A. DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

1. Sex: Male [ ] Female [ ]

2. Educational Background: First Degree [ ]
   Second Degree [ ]
   Others (specify) [ ]

3 Area of specialization in first degree

Accounting & Finance [ ] Linguistics [ ]
Management [ ] Sociology [ ]
Psychology [ ] Others (specify)
.....

4. Course(s) taught

Accounting & Finance [ ] Linguistics [ ]
Management [ ] Sociology [ ]
Psychology [ ] Others (specify) .....

5. Number of years as a tutor: One year [ ]

Two years [ ]

Three years [ ]

6. Please state one reason why you have stayed on the programme till date.

.....

7. Have you taught university students before joining this programme?

Yes [ ] No [ ]

B. IMPORTANCE OF DISTANCE EDUCATION

8. Please mention two importance of the distance education programme.

i) .....

ii) .....

9. Please mention two main ways a tutor can make the programme beneficial to learners.

i) .....

ii) .....

10. Can the distance education programme be made more beneficial than it is now?

Yes [ ] No [ ]

11. Please give two reasons for your response to question nine

i).....

ii).....

C. CHALLENGES IN TUTORING

12. Do you face any challenges by tutoring at a distance?

Yes [ ] No [ ]

13. If yes, please mention at least two of the challenges.

.....

.....

14. How do you think the challenges can be curbed?

.....

15. How appropriate is the time allotted for tutorials?

Very appropriate [ ] Inappropriate [ ]

Appropriate [ ]

16. Please explain your answer to question 16.

.....

.....

17. How easy is it to get assistance from the DE office?

Very easy [ ] Not easy [ ]

Easy [ ] Never [ ]

18. Please explain your answer

.....

.....

D. IMPLEMENTATION OF DISTANCE EDUCATION PROGRAMME

Based on your experience as a tutor, please circle one response to the following statements, using

the scale: 5. Strongly Agree 2. Disagree
4. Agree 1. Strongly Disagree
3. Uncertain

19. Tutor training:

Adequate training has been given to tutors	5	4	3	2	1
The content learned at the training was okay	5	4	3	2	1
There has been follow up tutor training sessions	5	4	3	2	1

20. Tutorial:

Adequate time giving for tutorial	5	4	3	2	1
Enough sessions giving for tutorials	5	4	3	2	1
Learners participate a lot	5	4	3	2	1
Learners are punctual for tutorial	5	4	3	2	1
Good supervision of tutorial	5	4	3	2	1

21. What is your general assessment of how the distance education programme is being implemented?

.....

.....